



# JACK'S ADVENTURE IN



## Bright Star Touring Theatre Study Guide



### ***About the show:***

Jack is in big trouble! He's just learned that he has to take an American History test - NOW! Fortunately, his teacher gives him a few minutes to study before the test. She reminds him to spend time thinking about what history would have been like if Jack had lived then.

Well, Jack doesn't need to be told twice! He cracks open his history book and immediately begins a journey through 400 years of American history. From Virginia Dare to Neil Armstrong, some of the most influential, exciting and colorful figures in our country's past emerge to help Jack prepare for his test. In turn, Jack is able to help solve problems along with help from the audience in order to get the Constitution written, insure that women have the right to vote with the 19th Amendment, and work on Ford's assembly line! When his teacher returns, Jack is ready to take his test!

At the end of the play, Jack's teacher asks that we all think hard about the contributions we can make in order to see our names in the American History book. Our history is constructed by people who contributed magnificent inventions to our world. Can you think of any inventions you would like to create to help your fellow Americans? Take time after the play to think about that and come up with an answer. Other people were wonderful statesmen and patriots. What contributions would you like to make to our government and political landscape? Or perhaps your mark will be in the arts, in literature, or in sports! The possibilities are endless, so take your time and think about what you would most like to do to see your name in the history book. All of us have the power to make the world a better place, simply by starting small in our own communities!

### **About Our Production:**

This production is a touring show with Bright Star Theatre. During its run, this production may be seen by audiences in as many as 15 different states! Professional actors join Bright Star from across the United States to tour our shows. In a typical week, they'll perform in 10-13 venues for all kinds of audiences. Our actors travel in minivans, averaging 800-1000 miles of driving *per week*, and they have performed for as many as 10,000 people *in one week*! After the show, our actors are available for you to ask questions about this production and their lives as actors - it's one of the most exciting parts of the Bright Star experience - and we hope you'll have a chance to have your question answered!



# Words to Know:

Theatre is a form of storytelling that has been entertaining people for thousands of years. Theatre has its own kind of language. Here are some terms that actors, directors, and other "theatre people" use all the time!

**Audition:** A hopeful actor will either read, sing or dance (or sometimes all three!) in order for the director to decide which actor she wants to cast in a particular role.

**Director:** The director reads the script, and tells the actors where they should go and what they should do. Each director has a different way of telling a story from every other director, and this means that each play will be unique from every other play!

**Set:** All of the scenery on the stage is part of what is called the "set." It helps to paint a picture of where the story takes place, so it is easier for the audience to follow the play. For *Jack's Adventure*, our actors use a backdrop, which is the colorful painted background.

**Costumes:** All of the clothes that are worn onstage by the actors are costumes. The hats, the wigs, and even Jack's shirt and shoes are all part of the costumes!

**Props:** Anything that an actor carries during the show is a prop. Can you remember any of the props used by the actors in this play?

**Rehearsal:** Once the cast of the play is set, everyone on the show needs to practice to get ready for the show. This can take weeks, and that gives time for the sets and costumes to be built, and for the actors to learn their lines.

**Actors:** These are the people that you see on stage. They each have a character to play, and they spend a long time rehearsing before they perform. They have to learn where they should walk, when they should talk, and how their characters should act. It's a lot of work!

## and of course -

**Audience:** Perhaps the most important element in the show! The audience consists of the people who come out to watch the play. You were our audience for *Jack's Adventure*!

# Jack's Timeline:

**12000+ BC** - Native Americans cross into "America" via an ice bridge from Asia.

**1000 AD** - Viking explorer Leif Ericsson explores the Atlantic coast of America.

**1492** - As many as 100 million indigenous people live in the Americas when Europeans begin exploration of the "New World" with Columbus as captain!

**1587** - The English attempts at a second colony soon becomes the infamous "Lost Colony." The disappearance of this colony remains one of history's great mysteries.

**1607** - Jamestown becomes the first permanent English settlement in Virginia.

**1620** - Pilgrims land at Plymouth Rock and introduce the "Thanksgiving Dinner!"

**1760** - Ben Franklin, inventor of the printing press, flies a kite in a lightning storm.

**1773** - Settlers protesting high taxes imposed by England enjoy a "Boston Tea Party"

**1776** - Thomas Jefferson writes the Declaration of Independence

**1777** - Betsy Ross is credited as the designer of the first "stars and stripes" style American flag.

**1781** - The Constitution is developed with the help of the Continental Congress.

**1861** - The Civil War breaks out between the North and the South. It lasts four years and costs hundreds of thousands of people their lives.

**1863** - The Gettysburg Address is delivered by Abraham Lincoln.

**1869** - The transcontinental railroad is completed.

**1903** - The Wright Brothers fly their famous airplane in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

**1908** - Henry Ford sells the first Model T! The assembly line is launched in Michigan, making the car affordable for the first time!

**1915-1923** - George Washington Carver finds more than 100 uses for the peanut. As a black inventor, he became one of the most significant contributors to agriculture in the southern United States!

**1920** - Women receive the right to vote with the Nineteenth Amendment.

**1950s-1960s** - Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. leads peaceful demonstrations that result in legislation that recognizes American citizens as equals, regardless of race.

**1969** - Neil Armstrong is the first person to step foot onto the moon!

# Classroom Activities:

## Create Your Own Historical Play!

*This activity incorporates creative thinking, knowledge of history, writing, and performance!*

1. Break students into small groups. Have each group develop a short play from other historical events that they have studied this year. Some ideas could be: George Washington becoming president, the Native Americans and the Pilgrims working together, expeditions to explore the Western United States, or events specific to your state's history!
2. Discuss all the things that make a play possible. Have each group think about how costumes, props, and the set could help bring their new story to life. If there's time, try to create some of these props or costume pieces from everyday items!
3. Have each group think about and practice how the people in their story move and talk. Voila! The beginning steps of performing a play have been accomplished! This is the same work our actors do when preparing for a role in a play!
4. Time for performance! Have each group perform their short play. Remind the other students about being good audience members while they watch their friends onstage!

## Design a Flag!

*This activity incorporates creative thinking, visual arts, and writing!*

1. Have students pull out the paper and the crayons or colored pencils.
2. Create a personal flag that includes pictures or symbols of things that are important to you. Be creative!
3. Have each student create a new flag for the United States of America. Have them write a short description of the flag they have drawn. Talk about why the student made his/her specific choices.

## Seeing the Play:

Attending the theatre is very different than going to the movies or watching television. For one thing, the actors are real people who can hear and see everything that's happening in the audience. It's important to know a few rules before seeing a play:

- ★ Please be quiet and respectful during the performance so that those around you can hear what's happening.
- ★ If something's funny, it's okay to laugh!
- ★ If you like the play, be sure to clap at the end.

What else can you add to the list?

## Questions for Discussion:

1. If you had the chance to meet anyone in history, who would you choose? Why?
2. What would it be like to leave everything you know behind in order to sail to a "New World"?
3. Imagine trying to build a nation from scratch just as our early leaders did. What kinds of things must be established for a good nation to work? What are the first things that need to be done?
4. What are some other significant events in history that our play didn't dramatize?
5. If this play were to be produced again in 100 years, what events do you think would be talked about?

# Jack's History Test:

Using the words from below, fill in the blanks to help Jack ace his American History test. All of these answers can be found in our play!



In 1492, \_\_\_\_\_ discovered the New World!

Jamestown, Virginia was settled in \_\_\_\_\_.

The Boston \_\_\_\_\_ happened in 1773.

Thomas Jefferson wrote the \_\_\_\_\_ in 1776.

The Continental Congress helped to write the \_\_\_\_\_.

iN 1903, The Wright Brothers flew the first plane in \_\_\_\_\_.

In 1908, Detroit, Michigan resident \_\_\_\_\_ created the assembly line for the production of the Model T.

The first person to walk on the moon was \_\_\_\_\_ in 1969!

\_\_\_\_\_ was President in 1861 when the Civil War started.

In \_\_\_\_\_, The Nineteenth Amendment was passed, giving women the right to vote.

America's national bird is the Bald \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ is our current Nation's Capital, but \_\_\_\_\_ was the first Capital when America was just starting out!

Dr King worked on the Civil Rights Movement during the \_\_\_\_\_.

Leif Ericsson was a Viking Explorer who explored America way back in \_\_\_\_\_.

Ben Franklin tied a \_\_\_\_\_ to his kite to help attract lightning!

The very first settlers in America were known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Americans.

The Pilgrims landed at \_\_\_\_\_ in 1620!

Betsy Ross is credited with creating our first \_\_\_\_\_ in 1777.

## FIND YOUR ANSWERS IN THESE CHOICES

Neil Armstrong Tea Party 1920 US Constitution 1607 Henry Ford North Carolina  
Washington DC Abraham Lincoln Philadelphia Key Declaration of Independence  
1000 AD Christopher Columbus Eagle Native Flag Plymouth Rock 1950s-1960s

