The Emperor and the Nightingale

Pre and post visit activities for the play performed by Center Stage, Shelton
Designed for 3rd graders
By The Barnum Museum
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The Emperor and the Nightingale

Pre-visit activities

1. Read story, “The Nightingale.”
Introduce the story as a fairy tale written by Hans Christian Anderson. Ask your students do you know what a fairy tale is? If they don’t know you can explain to them that fairy tales usually begins with Once Upon a Time, Once long ago, the story setting is usually in a castle, forest, or town, story has both good and mean characters, many of the characters are animals or members of royalty, the story has magic, the story has a problem which is to be solved, where good wins / outsmarts bad, and the ending is "happily ever after.” A fairy tale doesn’t have to have all of these characteristics, but will have many of them.

*While reading the story, you could play Chinese music during parts and/or play sounds of the Nightingale that can be downloaded from the web. This can be found in the resource section of this program.

2. Questions for Discussion
   o What do you learn about the emperor in the beginning of the fable?
   o What kind of person do you think the emperor is?
   o Do you think the people of China like their emperor? Why or why not?
   o Why do you think the emperor and the emperor and the people of his court have never heard of the nightingale and the fisherman and the maid have?
   o How does the emperor and the court respond when they hear the nightingale sing?
   o Why does the Japanese emperor send a mechanical nightingale to the emperor of China?
   o Why is the Nightingale sad to stay at the palace?
   o How did the emperor act when the artificial nightingale died?
   o Why did the real nightingale return?
   o What do you think the moral of this story is?

3. Map exercises of China
   A. As a class, look at a map or globe of China in relation to the rest of the world. Discuss with your students its location. Make a KWL chart on the board to get a general knowledge of what they know about China.

   B. Looking at a map of China or a printout of the China worksheet, ask the students:
      o What bodies of water surround China?
      o How many countries border China?
      o Name the four rivers that run through China?
      o Where are the Himalayas located? The desert?
**Activity:** Using a blank map of China from the worksheet section, ask the students to color in the different areas on the map.
- Color in the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, and the South China Sea blue.
- Color in the surrounding countries purple.
- Draw in the Huang River and the Chang River in green.
- Label the Himalayan Mountains in brown triangles.
- Color the Gobi desert in yellow.
- Put a red star over Beijing.

4. **The Nightingale**

**Activity:** Have the students research the Nightingale using books and the internet to design a bird fact card.

5.)  **Inventions**

The Ming dynasty was a time of great discovery and inventions; paper money, dictionaries, the concept of the novel, and piston bellows (a device that blows air into a furnace).

**Activity:** Either individually or as a group have students brainstorm and write a list of new inventions that they can think of. They should choose one and give it a name. Using the invention worksheet in the back have the students design their invention and write a physical description of it and how it works. If working in a group, have the students write and act out a commercial selling their product. If working alone, have them draw an ad selling their product.

**Post-visit activities**

1. Write an essay describing the differences between the fairytale and the play.
2. Have the students write a fairytale with illustrations or design a book cover.
3. Have the students divide up into groups and write a different ending to the play and act it out.

**Information**

Hans Christian Andersen

Hans Christian Andersen was born in Odense, Denmark in 1805. His father was a poor cobbler so Andersen was not able to attend school; however he was very supportive of his son’s special interests. Hans Christian would perform puppet shows, memorize plays and he had a general passion for literature that his father nurtured. Hans Christian’s father died at the age of 11. He was forced to work, he worked at several factories until decided to move to Copenhagen and pursue his career as an actor. He sang at the Royal Danish Theatre where the director took a special interest in him and paid for him to go to school. He was sent to grammar school where he was older than the other pupils. He experienced great humiliation and alienation at the hands of the other students who often mocked and criticized Andersen for his homely appearance. Though he had a learning
disability he excelled in school and attended the University Of Copenhagen where he sharpened his writing skills.

He had some moderate success with the publishing of several novels, plays and travel books but nothing like the acclaim he would win for his work of 150 stories for children called “Fairy Tails” published in 1835. These stories were innovative in their handling of sophisticated feelings and ideas and in their use of the vocabulary and constructions of spoken language. He would become world renowned for his ability to write stories with themes both children and adults could relate to.

It was his story entitled “The Nightingale” was considered a tribute to the Swedish songstress Jenny Lind for which she got the nickname “The Swedish Nightingale.” It is the story of a nightingale that sings so beautifully it can restore health. Andersen had befriended Lind and soon fell in love with her, however she did not return his feels and thought of him as brother.


**China**

China or the Peoples Republic of China is one of the world’s oldest civilizations. It is the 3rd largest country in the world after Russia and Canada. China has a population of over 1 billion people. China is undergoing rapid, profound economic and social change and development. Political power remains centralized in the Chinese Communist Party.

The 1st unified Chinese empire was formed in 221BC. This new emperor standardized weights and measures that were used in trade. He also standardized its writing system so all Chinese can understand one another. After Qin Empire, China was ruled by a series of dynasties. In 1911 an uprising occurred and warring political parties fought for control of the country. In 1949, Mao Zedong, the chairman of the Communists party became the new leader of the People’s Republic of China.

**Beijing**

Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. In English, it is also known as Peking. The name Beijing literally means northern capital and it has been China's capitol continuously since the 13th century. Beijing is China’s second largest city, after Shanghai and the 17th largest in the world. It is believed that Beijing was the largest city in the world from 1425 to 1650 and from 1710 to 1825. During this time, the Forbidden City was constructed which housed all the emperors, it is one of the foremost examples of ancient Chinese architecture The Forbidden City was completed in 1420 and for the next 500 years, common Chinese citizens were not permitted to enter and the punishment for trespassing was death. It still stand today and its over 900 buildings are recognized as one of the oldest standing wooden structures and an architectural marvel.

Beijing is recognized as the political, educational, and cultural center of the People's Republic of China. Modern Beijing is interspersed with old, traditional style homes and
modern high rises. The city is famous for its many expansive parks. The city will host the 2008 Summer Olympics.

The Forbidden City
The Forbidden City is a walled imperial city that is surrounded by a 12m wide moat and a 12m wide and 12m high wall. Imperial emperors lived there until 1911. Today, it is a museum, the Palace Museum. In 1403, a Ming Dynasty emperor built the Forbidden City. It is a complex of ornate halls and palaces for members of the imperial court and their servants. No one except for the emperor was allowed to spend the night in the Forbidden City.

Ming Dynasty
The Ming dynasty began in 1368, and lasted until 1644 A.D. Its founder was a peasant, the third of only three peasants ever to become an emperor in China. He is known as Hongwu Emperor, and led the revolt against the Mongols and the Yuan Dynasty. During the Ming Dynasty, there were many cultural, artistic and diplomatic advances. The concept of the novel was developed during this time by Chinese storytellers. Encyclopedias and dictionaries were written. The Great Wall of China, though built during an earlier dynasty was remodeled and strengthened. The production of luxury goods flourished. Block printing of art became very popular and porcelain production was expanded to include several colors as opposed to the simply blue and white which was predominant. Trade reached as far as the eastern coast of Africa as Chinese political officials traveled to many countries to establish diplomatic relationships. During this time period the capital was moved to Beijing from Nanjing. The Ming Dynasty began to decline because of internal power struggles. The high taxes imposed on the people left them poor and angry. Peasant rebels overthrew the last Ming emperor in 1644.
Nightingale
Nightingale
Luscinia megarhynchos

- Large, black eye surrounded by white
- Light brown head
- Pointed brown bill
- Cream-colored breast
- Brown legs and feet
- Long, brown tail
- Brown wings
Invent It!

**Directions:** In the box below, illustrate the invention you created you chose to invent. Give your invention a title. Describe how your invention works and what purpose it will have.

Title:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Resources

Books

The Nightingale

Hans Christian Anderson

China

Websites

Hans Christian Anderson
Hans Christian Anderson Center. [http://www.andersen.sdu.dk/liv/minibio/index_e.html](http://www.andersen.sdu.dk/liv/minibio/index_e.html)

Other Hans Christian Anderson Tales
KidSpace.  http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/

China
"Kid's Connect - China". 2008 Kid's Connect  http://www.studygs.net/citation/mla.htm
Asia for Educators.  http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/
Lesson Plans on China.  http://members.aol.com/MrDonnHistory/K12east.html#CHINA

Beijing

Birds
Handbook of the Birds of the World.  (www.hbw.com/ibc/)
Audubon.  www.audubon.org

Bird Sounds
The Free Sound Project.  (http://freesound.iua.upf.edu)
The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.
www.rspb.org.uk/.../name/n/nightingale/index.asp

Interactive websites

Movies
Let's go to [the] market in China [videorecording] / producers, Jade Qian, Eric Duell; writers, Jade Qian, Eric Duell; director, Xiao Lin. Cincinnati, OH: Master Communications, c2003.

Informational Websites
Connecticut State Curriculum Standards
These standards include all pre and post activities listed above.

Language Arts
Standard 1: Reading and Responding
   1.1 Students use appropriate strategies before, during and after reading in order to construct meaning.
   1.2 Students interpret, analyze and evaluate text in order to extend understanding and appreciation.
   1.4 Students communicate with others to create interpretations of written, oral and visual texts.

Standard 2: Exploring and Responding to Literature
Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.
   2.2 Students explore multiple responses to literature.
   2.3 Students recognize and appreciate that contemporary and classical literature has shaped human thought.
   2.4 Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.

Standard 3: Communicating with Others
Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.
   3.1 Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.
   3.2 Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Standard 4: Applying English Language Conventions
Students apply the conventions of standard English in oral, written and visual communication.
   4.1 Students use knowledge of their language and culture to improve competency in English.
   4.2 Students speak and write using standard language structures and diction appropriate to audience and task.

History
Content Standard 3: Historical Themes
   3.3-4.3 Describe some goods, products and ideas which were exchanged as the result of movement.
   3.3-4.4 Describe the impact of various technological developments on the local community and on the nation.
   3.3-4.5 Identify individual achievements of scientists and inventors from many cultures and different historical periods and describe their achievements.
Content Standard 12: Human and Environmental Interaction
12.3-4.1 Explain the characteristics and purposes of maps, globes and other geographical tools and technologies.
12.3-4.2 Create information from maps, globes and geographic models in graphs, diagrams and charts.

**Science**
3.2 Organisms can survive and reproduce only in environments that meet their basic needs.
3.4 Earth materials provide resources for all living things, but these resources are limited and should be conserved.

**Technology**
Content Standard 4: Problem Solving/Research and Development
4.2-3.1 Describe methods of problem solving.
4.2-3.2 Develop a written action plan to solve a problem.
4.2-3.3 Use a variety of (technology) methods to communicate a solution to a problem.
4.2-3.4 Evaluate a solution to a problem.
4.2-3.5 Work cooperatively in a small group to solve a technical problem.

Content Standard 6: Materials and Processes
6.2-3-.1 Identify the characteristics of different resources and describe how these resources can serve different purposes.
6.2-3-.2 Safely select and use a tool or resource.
6.2-3-.3 Safely use the appropriate tool for a given need.
6.2-3-.4 Use manual and electronic measuring devices accurately.