

Fort Wayne youth theatre

Education Guide



2024-25 SEASON

2024-2025 Arts Education Sponsors



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Fort Wayne youtheatre

About Us...

As the fifth oldest active children's theatre in the nation, Youtheatre is dedicated to its mission to "educate, engage and entertain" through quality theatrical experiences. In 1934, Dr. Clive McAllister, president of the Old Fort Players (now the Civic Theatre), appointed a committee to create a junior or children's theater branch of the organization. The committee established the philosophy that the new "Children's Theatre" would develop poise, better diction, and self-esteem for children through dramatic instruction. They would give at least one play a year, and awaken enthusiasm in children for beauty in art and integrity in dramatic literature.

The first class began with an enrollment of a whopping 40 students, each of which paid just \$1.00 for 8 classes! The first production, "The Steadfast Tin Soldier," was performed at the Majestic Theatre in Fort Wayne and had a cast of 75 young people. Tickets were only 10 cents for children and 25 cents for adults.

In 1954, the Majestic Theatre was deemed unsafe for children by the fire department and so the Children's Theatre spent the next 10 years at various locations in the city. By the time it rejoined the Civic Theatre at the Old Palace Theatre, it had a new name, the "Fort Wayne Youtheatre." In 1973, both organizations moved to their current home in the Arts United Center on E. Main Street in downtown Fort Wayne. The Youtheatre became autonomous in 1984.

In 1978, Broadway star Harvey Cocks became the Executive Director of Youtheatre. Even after retiring from that position, Harvey remained as our Artist in Residence; inspiring young artists for over forty years until his death in 2022. In 2010, Leslie Hormann took the reigns, serving as Executive/Artistic Director until 2018, followed by Todd Espeland (2018-2024).

Today, Youtheatre is led by Executive Director Heather Closson, Artistic Director Christopher J. Murphy, and a staff of outstanding local artists who serve as teaching artists, directors, choreographers, music directors, designers, and more.

For over three quarters of a century, Youtheatre has produced classes, camps and theatrical productions for the artists and audiences of northeast Indiana. Our touring "Youtheatre-On-The-Go" troupe takes literature-based shows into the community, performing in hospitals, libraries, community centers and more. In 2018, our Linda L. Ruffolo "Young Heroes of Conscience" Series, which has spotlighted the likes of Anne Frank, Ryan White, Harriet Tubman and Ruby Bridges, won the "Mayor's Arts Award."



ELEMENTS OF A PRODUCTION

SETS

The scenery pieces that form the area in which the performers act out the play. Sometimes scenery is very realistic, making the audience think they are inside a real house, for example. Other times the scenery is quite fanciful or limited. What different sets can you name in the show? What time and place does it look like?

LIGHTS

The lighting instruments that help to create the right atmosphere on the stage. Lights direct the attention of the audience to specific areas of the stage or to a specific performer. The lights may be different colors to add special effects such as nighttime or a storm. How do the lights in this production show changes in the time and place?

PROPS

The objects performers carry to help them act out the story. Look for important props that help define character or place. Can you name a few?

MAKE-UP

The cosmetic bases, blushes, lipsticks, mascara and eye liners which helps the performer physically become the character he/she is playing. Make-up is also used so that the performers facial features can be seen clearly under the bright stage lights from a distance. Do you notice any special make-up in the show?

COSTUMES

The clothing the performers wear. Depending on the story being acted out, this clothing may be what a character of the time would have actually worn. It may also be very exaggerated or fantastic in the case of a dream or a fairy-tale. Costumes help the audience know what a character is like or where and when he/she lived. Are the costumes drab or colorful? Do they look realistic? What do they tell you about the time and place?



BEHIND *the* SCENES

Any play or musical takes an army of artists behind the scenes working countless hours to create the world you see on-stage. One of these artists is the Costume Designer. Today, we are proud to shine a spotlight on our DRAGONS LOVE TACOS Costume Designer and longtime member of the Youtheatre family, Reuben Albaugh.

Reuben Albaugh has acted, directed, designed, and stage-managed at PFW, First Presbyterian Theater, Fort Wayne Civic Theatre, and Arena Dinner Theatre. Some of his acting credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Corpus Christie*, *You Can't Take it with You*, *Seussical*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *The Tempest*, and *Eurydice*. His directing credits include *Godspell*, *Into the Breeches*, *Sylvia*, *Dashing Through The Snow*, *Christmas Belles*, *Four Old BROADs*, *She Loves Me*, *Stepping Out*, and *Little Shop of Horrors*. Reuben is a 2004 graduate of the IPFW Department of Theatre and is currently the Director of Box Office Services for the ArtsTix Community Box Office. He is also a longtime Teaching Artist for the FW Youtheatre.



REUBEN ALBAUGH
COSTUME DESIGNER



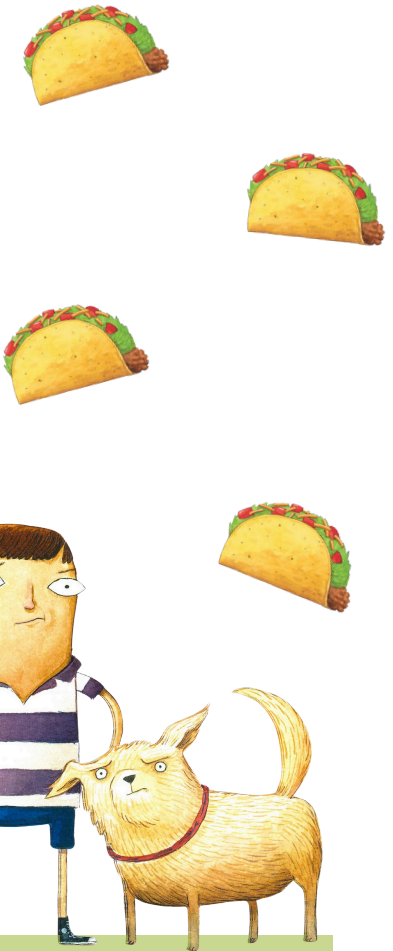
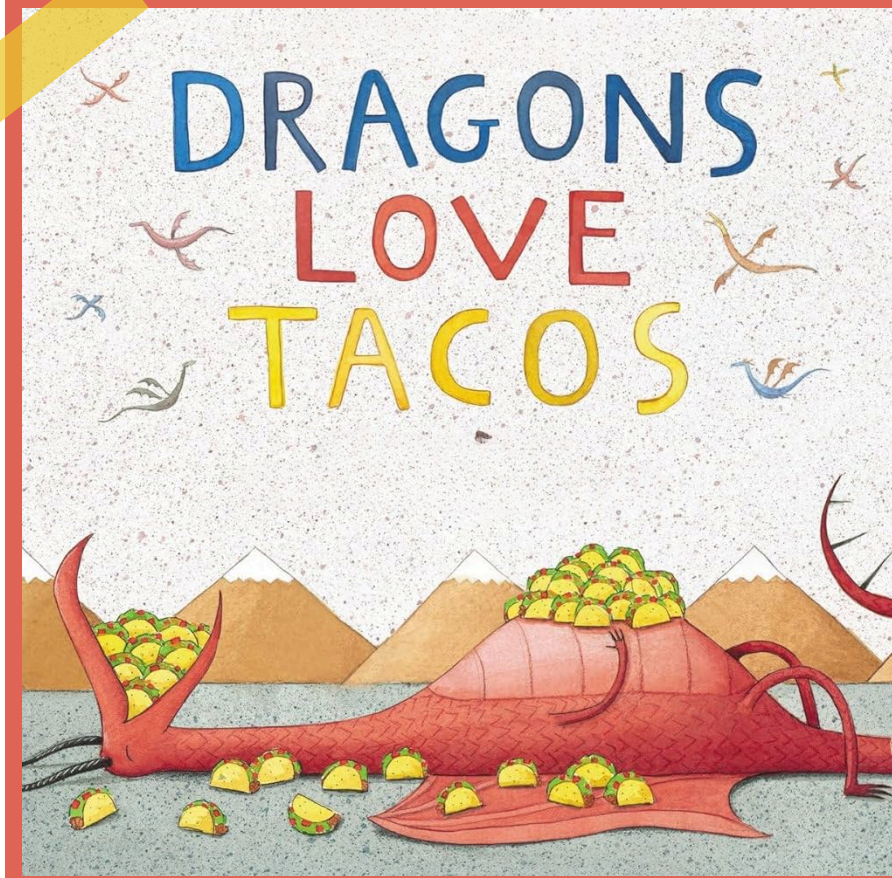
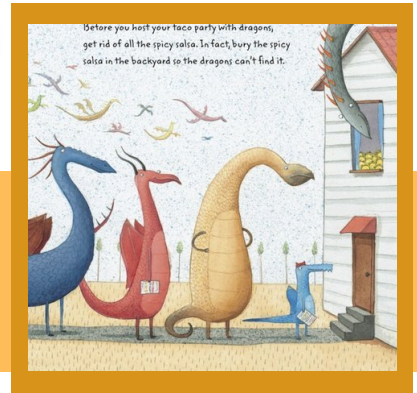
Q: What does a Costume Designer do?

A: In a theatre production, the costume designer dreams up and creates all the clothes the actors wear on stage. They think about who each character is—Are they fancy? Messy? Magical?—and then draw designs to match their personality and story. But that's not all! This costume designer doesn't just imagine the outfits—they actually make them too! They sew, stitch, and glue together pieces of fabric, buttons, ribbons, and more, turning simple materials into pirate coats, fairy wings, royal robes, or whatever the play needs. Costume designers help the audience know who's who and what kind of world the story is set in—all before a single line is spoken. They're like storytellers, but with thread and scissors!

INSPO:

The Source Material

Our production of Dragons Love Tacos is based on the popular children's book! Here's everything you need to know about the source material.



"Dragon Love Tacos" is based off a whimsical children's book written by Adam Rubin and illustrated by Daniel Salmieri. The story revolves around a young boy who learns that dragons absolutely adore tacos. They love all kinds of tacos—big tacos, little tacos, beef tacos, and chicken tacos. However, there's a critical catch: dragons must avoid spicy salsa at all costs. The boy hosts a taco party for the dragons, but accidentally includes spicy salsa, resulting in a chaotic and fiery mishap. Through playful humor and delightful illustrations, the book teaches a lighthearted lesson about the importance of attention to detail and the unpredictability of even the best-laid plans. This enchanting tale has become a beloved favorite among children and parents alike, celebrated for its imaginative storyline and engaging artwork.

BIOGRAPHY:

Adam Rubin

Learn more about the author of
DRAGONS LOVE TACOS, Adam Rubin!



Adam Rubin is a celebrated author known for his whimsical and humorous children's books. Born in the United States, Rubin has a knack for crafting engaging and imaginative stories that captivate young readers and adults alike.

His most famous work, "Dragons Love Tacos," has become a beloved bestseller, charming audiences with its quirky premise and delightful humor. Rubin's other popular titles include "Those Darn Squirrels!" and "El Chupacabras," each showcasing his talent for blending playful storytelling with creative plots.

Beyond writing, Rubin is a passionate advocate for literacy and often participates in school visits and literary events, inspiring the next generation of readers and writers. His work continues to resonate with a wide audience, making him a prominent figure in contemporary children's literature.



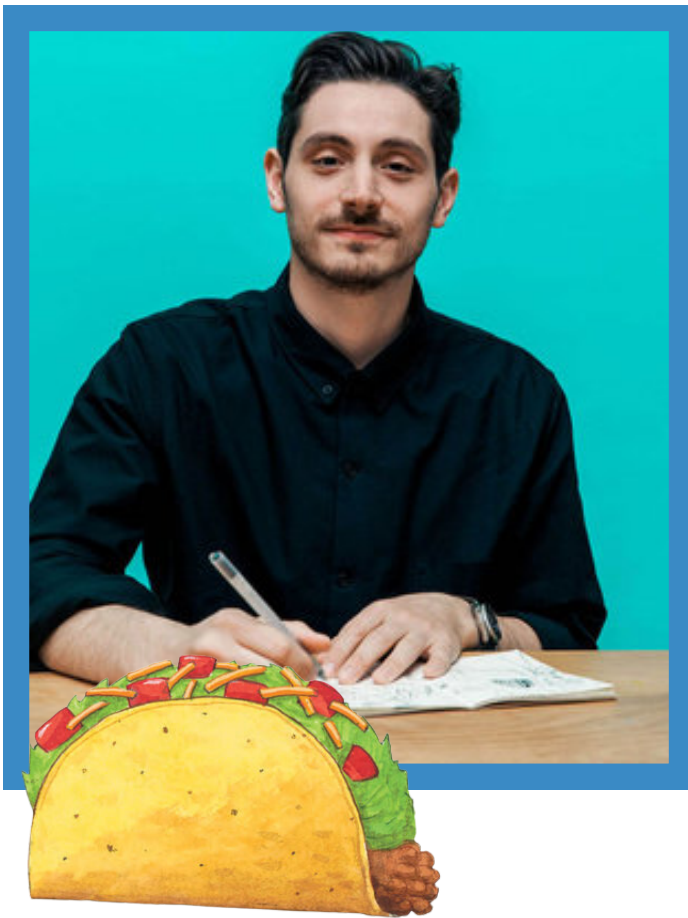
Q: What does an author do?

A: An author uses their knowledge to write stories to help our imagination take flight! They may write books, poems, or essays to help us understand complex feelings, or tell a silly story to make you laugh!

BIOGRAPHY:

Daniel Salmieri

Learn more about the Illustrator of
DRAGONS LOVE TACOS, Daniel Salmieri!



Daniel Salmieri is a distinguished artist and illustrator hailing from New York City. With a rich career in illustrating children's books, he has brought to life 12 picture books, four of which have become best-sellers. Among these is the beloved "Dragons Love Tacos," which has captivated young readers with its charming and playful illustrations.

Salmieri's talent extends beyond children's literature; he is a regular contributor to prestigious publications such as The New Yorker and The New York Times. His work in both print and digital media showcases his versatility and broad appeal.

Currently residing in Brooklyn, NY, Salmieri enjoys life with his wife, son, and their dog, Ronni. His contributions to the world of illustration continue to inspire and delight audiences of all ages.

Q: What does an Illustrator do?

A: An illustrator uses their artistic talent to help authors tell stories by drawing pictures to help explain what's happening in the story!

Signature Scales!

These mythical creatures are on fire! Below are some of the most famous dragons in fiction. Do you spot any you know?



Mushu
Mulan



Hungarian Horntail
Harry Potter



Charizard
Pokemon



Tiamat
*Jeremy Thatcher
Dragon Hatcher*



Toothless
How to Train your Dragon



Smaug
Lord of the Rings



Elliott
Pete's Dragon



Maleficent
Sleeping Beauty



Sisu
Raya and the Last Dragon

ACTIVITY #1:

PAPER PLATE TACOS

This activity is best suited for early elementary through upper elementary students.



Materials needed:

- Large Paper Plate
- Shredded Green Paper
- Tan Craft Paint
- Paint Brush
- Red Tissue Paper
- Orange Tissue Paper
- Tan Tissue Paper
- Craft Scissors
- Stapler



- First have your child paint their paper plate completely tan.
- Set aside to let it dry completely.
- Once dry, fold the paper plate in half to make the taco shell.
- Have your child stuff their taco shell with the shredded green paper {lettuce} and red/tan/orange tissue paper {tomatoes, cheese, ground beef}
- Once it's stuffed, staple the "taco" shut.
- Then repeat for however many tacos you want.
- Now display them all for the dragons to enjoy!

DISCUSSION TOPIC:
Spicy or Mild Salsa? Why?

ACTIVITY #2:

MILD SALSA SLIME

This activity is best suited for elementary through lower middle students.



Materials needed:

- 1/2 cup Clear School Glue
- Food Coloring
- 1 tbsp Saline Solution (must contain Sodium Borate or Boric Acid)
- 1/2 tsp Baking Soda
- Craft Foam (Red, Green +White)
- Glitter (Red + Green)
- 1/2 cup Water
- Rubber Spatula, Bowl, Scissors +Measuring Spoons
- Salsa label print out

Instructions:

- Measure 1/2 cup clear school glue into a bowl.
- Stir in 1/2 cup warm water.
- Add a few drops of red food coloring and desired amount of red and green glitter; mix well.
- Add 1/2 tsp baking soda; stir.
- Cut craft foam into tiny rectangles (tomatoes, peppers, onions); sprinkle into mixture and stir.
- Add 1 tbsp saline or contact lens solution (must contain Sodium Borate/Boric Acid). Stir until slime starts to separate from the bowl.
- If slime is sticky, add a few more drops of saline solution.
- Add your slime to an empty jar or container, and paste our salsa label on the front!



DISCUSSION TOPIC (Have fun debating this age-old question): Is a taco a sandwich? Yes or No? Why?

TOTALLY
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Fort Wayne Youtheatre
ACADEMY
of Performing Arts

RIISING STARS
SUMMER CAMPS 2025

Beginning Stages

(Grades K-2nd)

June 9-13 | 9:30am-12pm

Let's Put on a Show!: Nemo KIDS

(Grades 2nd-5th)

June 9-20 | 10am-2pm

Musical Theatre

(Grades 5th-12th)

June 16-20 and/or June 23-27 | 10am-2pm

Acting

(Grades 3rd-6th & 7th-12th)

July 7-11 and/or July 14-18 | 10am-2pm

www.fortwayneyoutheatre.org

Suggested Reading...

Toddler: *Don't Tickle the Dragon* by Sam Taplin, *Dragons First Taco* by Adam Rubin, *Tacos! An Interactive Recipe Book* by Lotta Nieminen

Preschool: *There's A Dragon in Your Book* by Tom Fletcher, *Dragons Love Tacos* by Adam Rubin, *Dragons Love Tacos 2: The Sequel* by Adam Rubin

Elementary: *Dragons Love Tacos* by Adam Rubin, *Dragons Love Tacos 2: The Sequel* by Adam Rubin, *Pete the Cat's Wacky Taco Tuesday* by Kimberly and James Dean



POP QUIZ:

Test Your Memory

See how much you remember from the performance of **DRAGONS LOVE TACOS** this brief quiz on the play, the plot, and characters.



1. What do dragons love to eat?
 - a. Pizza
 - b. Tacos
 - c. Spinach
 - d. Ice-cream sundaes
2. What do dragons hate on their tacos?
 - a. Cheese
 - b. Salsa
 - c. Lettuce
 - d. Tomatoes
3. What happens when the dragons eat spicy salsa?
 - a. They become happy
 - b. They fly away
 - c. They have a dance party
 - d. They breathe fire
4. What kind of party do they throw for the dragons?
 - a. A Pizza party
 - b. An Ice-cream party
 - c. A Taco party
 - d. A Watermelon party
5. Why do dragons love parties?
 - a. They love music
 - b. They love the dancing
 - c. They love games
 - d. They love tacos
6. What ingredient is added to the tacos?
 - a. Spicy salsa
 - b. Extra tomatoey ketchup
 - c. Mild salsa
 - d. Guacamole
7. What happens to the boys house?
 - a. It catches fire, and is burnt to a crisp
 - b. It shakes, then falls down
 - c. Nothing, it is a strong house!
 - d. It magically transforms into a dragon lair
8. How does the boy feel after his house is burnt down?
 - a. He is happy. He didn't like his room anyway!
 - b. He feels very sad and angry
 - c. He bursts out laughing!
 - d. None of the above
9. How do the dragons help?
 - a. They fly away
 - b. They cry and apologize to the boy
 - c. They clean up the yard
 - d. They help rebuild the boys house
10. What do they have for dinner at the end of the story?
 - a. Hotdogs
 - b. Tacos, of course!
 - c. Pasta
 - d. Pizza

Answer Key

Q1: B) Tacos, Q2: B) Salsa Q3: C) They breathe fire Q4: C) A taco party Q5: D) They love tacos Q6: A) Spicy salsa Q7: A) It catches fire Q8: B) He is upset Q9: D) They help rebuild his house Q10: B) Tacos!

LANGUAGE ARTS

STANDARDS

Most Youtheatre productions are literature-based and on the recommended reading list of the Library of Congress.

Language Arts Standard: Perceive, identify, describe and analyze the distinguishing characteristics of form, structure and style of story.

- Retell story identifying plot, theme, characters, and setting.
- Recall story plot utilizing chronological order.

Language Arts Standard: Evaluate Theatre/Literary work based on critical perception and analysis.

- Share perception of theatre experience in the area of voice, movement, mood and motivation.
- Make suggestions for alternative endings.
- Analyze and critique story and performance through creative writing.
- Create a similar story through creative writing.

Language Arts Standard: Use Theatre /Literary work to develop affective areas of self-concept, problem solving and interpersonal skills.

- React to feelings of self and others within a production.
- Identify conflict within story as it relates to self and others.
- Compare and contrast problems and resolutions found in different stories and real life situations.
- Express personal attitudes, values, and belief systems as it relates to theatre piece.
- Interact freely in conversations, class discussions and dramatic activities.
- Contribute to the solving of problems through dramatization/improvisation.

Language Arts Standard: Examine Theatre /Literary work in a historical and multicultural context.

- Identify similarities and differences between characters from diverse cultures depicted.
- Identify historical differences/figures in different time frames depicted in story.
- Identify significance of historical aspects in story.

Exploring Aesthetics: A Philosophical Basis for Life!

- Attending live theatre helps children value its importance to the community and helps develop a lifelong commitment and love of Theatre and Literature. Students experience aesthetic growth through appreciation of Theatre.
- Students discover through experience that making art is an essential human activity. It requires collaboration, and enhances creative thinking.

