



THE LION KING EXPERIENCE: AT HOME

Welcome to *The Lion King* Experience! This innovative and comprehensive theater curriculum was originally created to help schools and community groups bolster their arts-education offerings. These instructions for *The Lion King* Experience: At Home will guide you to explore theater at home on your own (or teachers might facilitate it remotely)! Check out the instructions below and have fun delving into the world of theater!

STRUCTURE

The Lion King Experience KIDS curriculum is divided into eleven sessions designed for ages 8-11 (with options to “level up” for those ready for a greater challenge!). Each session should take approximately 45-minutes and is divided into the following sections:

- **WATCH** the provided video by clicking on this icon in the lesson plan  or by finding the video on our website: <https://www.lionkingexperience.com/sessions/kids>.
- **EXPLORE** the session topic through an at-home activity.
- **CREATE** a theatrical project related to the session topic. Occasionally, we'll provide links to additional materials. Look for this icon: . If you aren't able to access the links, visit our webpage and navigate to the corresponding session: <https://www.lionkingexperience.com/sessions/kids>
- **SHARE** your work with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.
- **REFLECT** on what you've learned using a journal you will create in the first session.

TEACHER TIP:

These instructions have been developed for students to learn on their own at home. If you are facilitating these sessions for your students remotely, however, we suggest the following approach:

- Connect digitally with your students with your students digitally at the start of each session and WATCH the video together if everyone has the technology to do so.
- Facilitate the EXPLORE section of the session as a full group over video chat.
- Instruct students to complete the CREATE section independently at home.
- Identify your preferred way for them to SHARE their work (e.g., online with the class, in their journals, etc.)
- At the end of all the sessions, collect the REFLECTIONS digitally, have students send in photos of their work.

The complete *Lion King* Experience, which is now unlocked, also includes a variety of tools to support your teaching. Head to [LionKingExperience.com](https://www.lionkingexperience.com) to explore the full version of the curriculum, including assessment tools, facilitation tips, a theater glossary, skills tracking, and to learn how *The Lion King* Experience aligns with many national standards.

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Familiarize yourself with the story and characters of *The Lion King*.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Pencil or Pen
- Paper
- Materials to create a journal. This journal can be physical (paper, pen, markers, etc.) or digital (document or email).

WATCH: ⌚ 10 minutes

Play the video for *The Lion King*: Experience: Session 1. 

EXPLORE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Read the story synopsis for *The Lion King* on the next page. Draw pictures of the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

CREATE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Now it is time to bring an iconic moment of the story to life: the presentation of Simba to the animals of the Pridelands. There are many different ways you might choose to depict this moment, get creative! Here are some ideas:

- Act it out
- Make a tableau, or frozen picture, using other people in your home, toys, or found objects
- Draw a comic strip
- Make a short live-action or stop motion movie
- Design a diorama

LEVEL UP: Create a movie trailer or television commercial for *The Lion King*.

SHARE: ⌚ 5 minutes

Share what you've created with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: ⌚ 10 minutes

Every session in *The Lion King* Experience ends with a journal activity. Create your own unique *Lion King* Experience journal that you can use for the remaining sessions! Whether you choose to embellish a journal you already have at home, make one from scratch using loose pieces of paper, or keep a digital journal throughout your process, the important thing is that you find a way to make it uniquely yours.

STORY SYNOPSIS: THE LION KING

It is sunrise on the African savannah. Rafiki, a wise old mandrill, calls the animals to Pride Rock to bow to Mufasa and welcome the newborn prince, Simba. This playful young cub will someday be King, and his best friend Nala the future Queen. Meanwhile, the King's brother Scar resents Simba who will replace him as heir to the throne. He recruits the Hyenas in his murderous plan to become king himself.

One day, Scar brings young Simba to the gorge to meet his father for a "surprise." Scar leaves and the Hyenas start a stampede of wildebeests. Simba runs for his life. Mufasa rescues him, but is thrown back into the stampede by Scar, and is trampled. The King is dead. Scar convinces Simba that he is to blame for his father's death, and tells him to leave the Pridelands and never return. The Hyenas chase the lion cub into the desert.

Scar assumes the throne, and rules Pride Rock with the Hyenas. Lost in the desert, Simba meets Timon and Pumbaa who take him to their worry-free home in the jungle. Under the rule of Scar, the Pridelands are nearly destroyed. Nala leaves the Pridelands to find help.

Nala finds Simba alive in the jungle. She urges him to come back home to take his rightful place as King, but he refuses. Rafiki appears and helps him remember his father, convincing him to return to the Pridelands. Timon and Pumbaa distract the Hyenas while Nala rallies the lionesses. Simba confronts his uncle and the truth of the murder of Mufasa is revealed. Scar is banished from the Pridelands. He runs away, pursued by angry Hyenas. With peace restored in the Pridelands, Simba takes his place as king and the circle of life continues.

SESSION 2: PRIDE

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Learn about the influences and inspiration behind *The Lion King* and explore the idea of an ensemble.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Journal
- Pencil or pen

WATCH: ⌚ 0 minutes

For this at-home adaptation of *The Lion King* Experience, the video does not apply. Skip this one!

EXPLORE: ⌚ 10 minutes

An ensemble is a group of people who work together to get something done. In the theater, an ensemble includes members of the cast, creative team, backstage crew, musicians, and more!

Although you are not be working as an ensemble in these sessions, consider who the ensemble members are in your life (family, friends, teachers, etc.). Jot down your ideas in your journal.

CREATE: ⌚ 15 minutes

The Lion King draws inspiration from many cultures, especially those of South Africa, which are brought to life by the ensemble through music, choreography, costumes and languages.

Think about what cultural elements make your community unique (language, clothing, food, etc.). Then, find an object that represents your culture. In your journal, make a list of things you know about this item and questions you might have about it. Include answers to the following questions:

- Why did you choose this object?
- What is the significance of this object in your culture?
- Where do you keep it in the home?
- What does this object mean to you?

LEVEL UP: Research how this object became culturally significant, or why it holds significance for you, and find a way to creatively share this story with other members of your community.

SHARE: ⌚ 5 minutes

Share what you've created with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: ⌚ 10 minutes

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- How did you pick the object to share, and why is it important to you?
- What is something in your life that brings you pride (e.g., a trait you possess, a connection with a loved one, etc.)? How does that effect the decisions you make day to day?

SESSION 3: PLOT

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Become familiar with the dramatic structure of *The Lion King*.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Journal
- Pencil or pen
- Items to create a tableau (see CREATE activity for more information)

WATCH: ⌚ 5 minutes

Play the video for *The Lion King*: Experience: Session 3. 

EXPLORE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Write the answers to the below questions in your journal:

- What is the conflict between Scar and Mufasa? How does this conflict get resolved?
- What is the conflict between Scar and Nala? How does this conflict get resolved?
- What is the conflict between Nala and Timon? How does this conflict get resolved?
- What is the conflict between Scar and Simba? How does this conflict get resolved?
- What is Simba's conflict with himself? How does this conflict get resolved?

Which of these conflicts do you think is the main conflict? Circle it in your journal.

CREATE: ⌚ 15 minutes

Using a moment in the story that depicts the conflict you circled, create a tableau (a frozen pose that tells a story) of that moment. Consider which other characters you might want to include in this tableau, and how you want to create it. Consider using other people or objects in your home!

LEVEL UP: If you want to explore further, repeat this activity with the other conflicts in the list above. Pay close attention to how you can make each tableau specific so they all look unique to the story being told.

SHARE: ⌚ 5 minutes

Share your tableau with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: ⌚ 10 minutes

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- How did you pick which conflict to focus on?
- How did you make your tableau clear?
- What moment in your own life could you bring to life in this way? Draw a picture of that moment.

SESSION 4: CHARACTER

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Explore the tools actors use to create strong characters.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Journal
- Pencil or pen
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils (optional)

WATCH: ⌚ 5 minutes

Play the video for *The Lion King*: Experience: Session 4. 

EXPLORE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Embody different characters from *The Lion King* using your voice, body, and imagination.

- In your journal, list three character traits for Nala, Simba, and Scar.
- Circle one character to focus on for the rest of the activity.
- Now imagine that you are that character in the African savannah.
- Silently cross from one end of the savannah to the other as that character.
- Next, cross the savannah as if:
 - your character is hungry and in search of food.
 - your character is running to see an old friend they have greatly missed.
- Now, cross the savannah again, but this time, when you get to the middle of the space, use your voice to say the line “Remember your pride” as your character.
- Finally, try the same activity with the other two characters.

CREATE: ⌚ 15 minutes

Choose one of the three characters from the last activity (Nala, Pumbaa, or Scar) and make an “All About Me” profile for them in your journal. Make sure to include:

- Picture(s) of your character
- Birthday and birthplace
- Family members and friends
- Interests (favorite food, activity, etc.)
- Greatest wish and biggest fear

LEVEL UP: Put on an imaginary talk show! Step into role as this character. Have someone in your home ask you the questions below or to do it yourself, write down the following questions on note cards, shuffle them up, and answer each one.

- What’s your name? Age?
- How do you feel about Simba? Why?
- What is your biggest challenge?
- What is your goal in life?
- Who are some of your friends?
- If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?

SHARE: ⌚ 5 minutes

Share what you've created with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: ⌚ 10 minutes

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- What information about your character came from the story itself?
- What information about your character did you invent?
- Are there any similarities between you and your character? If so, what are they?

SESSION 5: SPACE

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Explore blocking and learn the parts of the stage.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Journal
- Pencil or pen
- Index cards or small pieces of paper

WATCH: ⌚ 10 minutes

Play the video for *The Lion King*: Experience: Session 5. [🔗](#)

EXPLORE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Imagine the room you are in is now a stage! Choose where the audience would sit. Using a pen and index cards (or cut up pieces of paper), create labels for the parts of the stage and place them in the appropriate spots in the room to match the below diagram:

AUDIENCE		
DSL (downstage left)	DSC (downstage center)	DSR (downstage right)
SL (stage left)	CS (center stage)	SR (stage right)
USL (upstage left)	USC (upstage center)	USR (upstage right)

Now, move to the different parts of the stage, using the following prompts. For an added level of difficulty, try it without the labels!

- Move to UPSTAGE RIGHT as though you are tall grass
- Move to UPSTAGE LEFT as though you are a lion on the hunt
- Move UPSTAGE CENTER as though you are flowing water
- Move STAGE LEFT as though you are an elephant
- Move STAGE RIGHT as though you are a gazelle
- Move CENTER STAGE as though you are caught in a thunderstorm
- Move DOWN STAGE RIGHT as though you are walking through an extremely hot jungle
- Move DOWN STAGE LEFT as though you are a giraffe
- Move DOWN STAGE CENTER as though you are caught in a stampede

CREATE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Create your own blocking for the following scene: Timon and Pumbaa enter, chased by a hungry Nala. Simba steps in to protect his friends. Write at least five steps of blocking, using these rules:

- Include at least one entrance.
- Include at least one exit.
- Use the parts of the stage (example: upstage right).
- Write using the standard abbreviations (example: USR).

Next, using other people – or objects – to play the characters, act out your scene!

LEVEL UP: Notate your blocking by drawing an outline of the stage and mapping out where each character would move. Make sure to include all entrances, exits, and make note of any props or set pieces. During a rehearsal process, an actor must always keep good track of their blocking so they remember it later.

SHARE: ⌚ 5 minutes

Share your blocking with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: ⌚ 5 minutes

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- How can knowing the parts of the stage help actors or directors?
- What was challenging about creating blocking?

SESSION 6: LANGUAGE

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Introduce the work of a playwright and explore writing for the stage.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Journal
- Pencil or pen

WATCH: ⌚ 10 minutes

Play the video for *The Lion King: Experience: Session 6*. 

EXPLORE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Write birthday cards for Simba from three different characters in *The Lion King*: Zazu, Pumbaa, and Scar. How would the language each character use differ? Write these messages so that Simba would know exactly who sent it, even if they were not signed. What image would be on the front of each card?

Once you've finished the cards, try reading them aloud in each character's voice!

CREATE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Now, step into role as playwright and write a scene for the character you selected.

If you picked Zazu: write a scene about Zazu's first day as royal advisor to Mufasa.

If you picked Pumbaa: write a scene about the day Timon and Pumbaa first met.

If you picked Scar: write a scene about Mufasa and Scar when they were cubs.

- Before you start writing, think of a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- Consider if there is an element of conflict in your scene.
- Brainstorm other characters that might be present in your scene.
- Now begin writing dialogue! A dialogue is a conversation between two or more people. Remember to use clear voices for each character, and use stage directions for any important action in your scene, or to clarify your character's intentions.

LEVEL UP: If you have more time or if you want to explore further, write a monologue (a speech performed by one actor) from the point of view of one of the characters.

SHARE: ⌚ 5 minutes

Share your scene with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: ⌚ 10 minutes

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- If you were the playwright, would you include this scene in a stage version of your story? Why or why not?

SESSION 7: MUSIC

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Explore the function of song in a piece of musical theater.



MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Journal
- Pencil or pen
- The scene you wrote in Session 6

WATCH: ⌚ 10 minutes

Play the video for *The Lion King*: Experience: Session 7. 

EXPLORE: ⌚ 10 minutes

- Read the “Be Prepared” scene from *The Lion King* KIDS. 
- When you reach the point in the scene when the song begins, play the “Be Prepared” audio file. 
- Listen closely to the music and answer the following questions:
 - What do you notice about the tempo of the song, is it fast or slow?
 - What do you notice about the melody? Does it make you feel calm? Angry? Excited?
 - What do the lyrics tell you about the story and the characters?

CREATE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Now, add a song into the scene you wrote last session. Start by reading your scene aloud. Think about the emotions of the scene and determine the point when the emotions are the highest. This is where you will place a song.

In your journal, answer the following questions about the song:

- Which character(s) would be singing?
- How should the song make you feel?
- What should the song tell you about the story or the characters?
- Would this be uptempo or a ballad?

Think of a song that fits this description and rewrite the lyrics to it for your mini-musical. Or you can write a new song from scratch. Some writers start with the lyrics and then add rhythm and melody and some do the opposite. Find what works best for you!

LEVEL UP: Continue writing your song to include ensemble voices. Most songs in musical theater feature the ensemble – listen to “Be Prepared” again for inspiration.

SHARE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Share your song with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: ⌚ 5 minutes

- What music do you connect with and why? Think about lyrics, tempos, rhythms, etc.
- If you were to write lyrics to a brand-new song about your life, what might they be?

SESSION 8: MOVEMENT

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Explore the function of dance and movement in a piece of musical theater.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Journal
- Pencil or pen

WATCH: ⌚ 5 minutes

Play the video for *The Lion King*: Experience: Session 8. 

EXPLORE: ⌚ 10 minutes

- Think of an everyday activity that involves movement, such as brushing your teeth or getting dressed.
- Silently practice that movement.
- Repeat that movement, this time exploring the following:
 - **Levels:** high, medium, low
 - **Speeds:** slow, medium, fast
 - **Qualities:** sharp, fluid, bouncy, grounded, light, heavy
- Now, pick one word from each category and do them together (e.g., down low, fast, and sharp).
- Next, exaggerate that movement. How can you incorporate your entire body?
- By adding and exaggerating movement qualities, you are beginning to create choreography!

CREATE: ⌚ 15 minutes

- Now, you will be a choreographer and create a dance to your song from Session 7.
- First, list the different types of everyday movements the characters in this scene might do (fly, prowl, play, etc.).
- Next, decide what types of levels, speed, and qualities you want to use based on the music. (High, Medium, Low, Fast, Slow, Bouncy, Grounded, Light, Heavy, Sharp, Fluid).
- Now, create some movements!
- Finally, combine the movements into a full dance for your song!

LEVEL UP: Choreograph movements that the ensemble could do during this song. Are they all doing the same dances, or are different characters doing different things?

SHARE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Share your choreography with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: ⌚ 5 minutes

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- What styles of dance inspire you?
- Choose a few key steps from those dance styles, combined with actions in your own life, and create a dance that best describes you! Give each dance step a name (e.g. slide right, rainbow arms, shimmy, etc) and write the steps down in your journal.

SESSION 9: VISION

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Explore the role of the director and the concept of directorial vision in the theater.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Journal
- Pencil or pen
- Glue or a glue stick
- Scissors
- Scrap materials and images for a collage (magazines clippings, fabric swatches, stickers, etc.)
- Large sheet of paper (optional)

WATCH: ⌚ 5 minutes

Play the video for *The Lion King*: Experience: Session 9. 

EXPLORE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Imagine that you are now the director of the mini-musical you have written and choreographed in sessions 6-8. Answer the following about your mini-musical:

- What is the setting of this song and scene?
- What does the environment look like in that location?
- What emotions are you exploring in this scene?
- What colors might you use to represent the emotions, characters, and setting?

CREATE: ⌚ 20 minutes

Now, you will create a vision board for your mini-musical! A vision board is a collage of images, words, colors, and textures that represent the way director wants a show to look and feel. You can create in your journal or by using a large piece of paper.

Gather all items you might want to use from around your house: crayons, markers, magazine clippings, stickers, fabric, etc. Cut or tear off items and add them to your collage using glue or tape.

LEVEL UP: Use this collage as inspiration and sketch a set or costume design for your show.

SHARE: ⌚ 5 minutes

Share your vision board with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: ⌚ 5 minutes

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- How did you choose what to include on your vision board?
- How would your vision board help the actors and designers?
- Create a collage and/or draw a vision board for a play about your life. What images and colors will you use? How would this inform the costume and set designs for your play?

SESSION 10: SPECTACLE

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Create designs for the stage.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Journal
- Pencil or pen
- Additional craft materials (e.g. colored paper, fabric scraps, pipe cleaners, glue, paper plates, scissors)
- Vision boards (from Session 9)

WATCH: ⌚ 5 minutes

Play the video for *The Lion King*: Experience: Session 10. 

EXPLORE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Now, you are going to step into role as mask designer. Follow these steps in your journal:

- Write the names of the characters in your mini-musical.
- Below each name, list the physical characteristics that come to mind when you think of that character (e.g., shaggy mane, sharp teeth, strong, etc.)
- Next, list the personality traits and emotions that come to mind when you think of that character (e.g., cunning, wise, angry, proud, sneaky, etc.)
- Sketch a mask design for each character. Consider the traits you listed and how that can inform your design. Also, remember to consider the age of each character when the scene takes place.

CREATE: ⌚ 20 minutes

Now it is time to make a mask! Choose one character to create a mask for using materials in your home. Use items from the recycling bin, scraps of paper, cardboard tubes, or other found items.

LEVEL UP: Create masks for the other characters in your scene. Then, put on the mask and explore how it might inform an actor's movement. Practice lines from your scene while wearing the mask.

SHARE: ⌚ 5 minutes

Share your designs with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: ⌚ 5 minutes

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- What does your mask design tell the audience about your selected character?
- Choose an animal from *The Lion King*. Draw a mask combining your personality with that animal's qualities. What would you want the mask to show people about who you are?

SESSION 11: REFLECTION

USE THIS LESSON TO:

Bring your mini-musical to life and reflect on all that you've learned.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Journal
- Pencil or pen
- Mask (from Session 10)

WATCH: ⌚ 5 minutes

Play the video for *The Lion King: Experience: Session 11*. 

EXPLORE: ⌚ 5 minutes

Create a word cloud in your journal that includes all the theater jobs listed below. Make that you connect with the most the largest on the page, and the words that have less importance to you smaller. Get creative with how you write each word, exploring different directions and designs!

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| • Performer | • Composer |
| • Choreographer | • Dancer |
| • Singer | • Set Designer |
| • Costume Designer | • Mask/puppet Designer |
| • Stage crew | • Director |
| • Actor | • Music director |
| • Playwright | • Stage manager |

CREATE: ⌚ 20 minutes

Perform your work (using stuffed animals, making a video, etc.) and include at least three of the following based on the interests you identified in the last activity:

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| • Blocking for the scene | • Lighting elements |
| • Choreography for the song | • Masks and/or puppets |
| • Costumes based on your vision board | • Additional music |
| • Set design based on your vision board | |

LEVEL UP: Write additional scenes for your musical until it has a clear beginning, middle, end, and moral to the story. Bring the whole thing to life incorporating all the components above!

SHARE: ⌚ 10 minutes

Share your mini-musical with the people in your home, or by documenting the process in your journal.

REFLECT: 🕒 5 minutes

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- What was your proudest accomplishment during *The Lion King* Experience?
- What is one thing that surprised you about yourself during this experience?
- What is something you learned through this experience that you will apply to your life?

Congratulations on completing *The Lion King* Experience: at home!

We hope you continue to explore the world of the theater, create art, and share it with the world!

If you'd like to create a certificate to celebrate your work, visit

<https://www.lionkingexperience.com/sessions/kids>

and click on "Generate Certificate" at the bottom of the page.