



# **ZORRO**

*Applause Series* CURRICULUM GUIDE  
CIVIC CENTER OF GREATER DES MOINES

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May 15-18, 2012

## Dear Teachers,

Thank you for joining us for the Applause Series presentation of *Zorro*. The character of Zorro has been capturing imaginations since he first appeared in the pages of pulp fiction magazines in 1919. Now, the masked hero of the West finds new life in a stage production from our friends at Visible Fictions — a world-renowned theater company from Scotland that believes that theater has the remarkable power to transform, challenge, and inspire. Their unique production — with its kinetic and pop-up book-like set— breathes new life into the classic tale while delivering all the swashbuckling fun associated with the iconic character. Moreover, Visible Fictions uses this hilarious, fast-paced adventure to raise important questions about leadership, self-esteem, and social responsibility.



As you prepare your students for this experience, we hope that this study guide helps you connect the performance to your classroom curriculum in ways that you find valuable. In the following pages, you will find contextual information about the performance and related subjects, as well as a variety of discussion questions and activities. Some pages are appropriate to reproduce for your students; others are designed more specifically with you, their teacher, in mind. As such, we hope that you are able to “pick and choose” material and ideas from the study guide to meet your class’s unique needs.

See you at the theater,

Civic Center Education Team

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This study guide was compiled and written by Karoline Myers; edited by Michelle McDonald.  
Based on the “Zorro—Study Guide” from Visible Fictions.

# ABOUT THE CIVIC CENTER



The Civic Center of Greater Des Moines is a cultural landmark of central Iowa and is committed to engaging the Midwest in world-class entertainment, education, and cultural activities. The Civic Center has achieved a national reputation for excellence as a performing arts center and belongs to several national organizations, including The Broadway League, the Independent Presenters Network, International Performing Arts for Youth, and Theater for Young Audiences/USA.

Five performing arts series currently comprise the season— the Willis Broadway Series, Prairie Meadows Temple Theater Series, Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield Family Series, the Dance Series, and the Applause Series. The Civic Center is also the performance home for the Des Moines Symphony and Stage West.

The Civic Center is a private, nonprofit organization and is an important part of central Iowa’s cultural community. Through its education programs, the Civic Center strives to engage patrons in arts experiences that extend beyond the stage. Master classes bring professional and local artists together to share their art form and craft, while pre-performance lectures and post-performance Q&A sessions with company members offer ticket holders the opportunity to explore each show as a living, evolving piece of art.

Through the Applause Series— curriculum-connected performances for school audiences— students are encouraged to discover the rich, diverse world of performing arts. During the 2011-2012 season, the Civic Center will welcome more than 45,000 students and educators to 13 professional productions for young audiences.

**Want an inside look? Request a tour.**

Group tours can be arranged for performance and non-performance dates for groups grades 3 and above.

Call 515-246-2355 or visit [CivicCenter.org/education](http://CivicCenter.org/education) to check on availability or book your visit.

## DID YOU KNOW?

More than 250,000 patrons visit the Civic Center each year.

The Civic Center opened in 1979.

The Civic Center has three theater spaces:

- *Main Hall, 2744 seats*
- *Stoner Studio, 200 seats*
- *Temple Theater, 299 seats (located in the Temple for the Performing Arts)*

No seat is more than 155 feet from center stage in the Main Hall.

Nollen Plaza, situated just west of the Civic Center, is a park and amphitheater that is also part of the Civic Center complex. The space features the Brenton Waterfall and Reflection Pool and the Crusoe Umbrella sculpture.

The Applause Series started in 1996. You are joining us for our 16th season of school performances.

# GOING TO THE THEATER . . .



## YOUR ROLE AS AN AUDIENCE MEMBER

Attending a live performance is a unique and exciting opportunity. Unlike the passive experience of watching a movie, audience members play an important role in every live performance. As they act, sing, dance, or play instruments, the performers on stage are very aware of the audience's mood and level of engagement. Each performance calls for a different response from audience members. Lively bands, musicians, and dancers may desire the audience to focus silently on the stage and applaud only during natural breaks in the performance. Audience members can often take cues from performers on how to respond to the performance appropriately. For example, performers will often pause or bow for applause at a specific time.

As you experience the performance, consider the following questions:

- \* What kind of live performance is this (a play, a dance, a concert, etc.)?
- \* What is the mood of the performance? Is the subject matter serious or lighthearted?
- \* What is the mood of the performers? Are they happy and smiling or somber and reserved?
- \* Are the performers encouraging the audience to clap to the music or move to the beat?
- \* Are there natural breaks in the performance where applause seems appropriate?

### A SPECIAL EXPERIENCE

Seeing a live performance is a very special experience. Although it is not required, many people enjoy dressing up when they attend the theater.

## THEATER ETIQUETTE

Here is a checklist of general guidelines to follow when you visit the Civic Center:

- \* Leave all food, drinks, and chewing gum at school or on the bus.
- \* Cameras, recording devices, and personal listening devices are not permitted in the theater.
- \* Turn off and put away all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices before the performance begins.
- \* Do not text during the performance.
- \* Respect the theater. Remember to keep your feet off of the seats and avoid bouncing up and down.
- \* When the house lights dim, the performance is about to begin. Please stop talking at this time.
- \* **Talk before and after the performance only.** Remember, the theater is designed to amplify sound, so the other audience members and the performers on stage can hear your voice!
- \* Use the restroom before the performance or wait until the end. If you must leave the theater during the show, make sure the first set of doors closes before you open the second — this will keep unwanted light from spilling into the theater.
- \* Appropriate responses such as laughing and applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists on stage — they will let you know what is appropriate.
- \* Open your eyes, ears, mind, and heart to the entire experience. Enjoy yourself!

GOING TO THE THEATER information is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts study guide materials.

# CIVIC CENTER FIELD TRIP INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS



**Thank you for choosing the Applause Series at the Civic Center of Greater Des Moines. Below are tips for organizing a safe and successful field trip to the Civic Center.**

## ORGANIZING YOUR FIELD TRIP

- Please include all students, teachers, and chaperones in your ticket request.
- After you submit your ticket request, you will receive a confirmation e-mail within five business days. Your **invoice will be attached to the confirmation e-mail.**
- Payment policies and options are located at the top of the invoice. (Complete payment and cancellation policies may be viewed at [civiccenter.org/education](http://civiccenter.org/education).)
- The Civic Center reserves the right to cancel unpaid reservations after the payment due date.
- Tickets are not printed for Applause Series shows. Your invoice will serve as the reservation confirmation for your group order.
- Schedule buses to arrive in downtown Des Moines at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the performance. This will allow time to park, walk to the Temple for the Performing Arts, and be seated in the theater.
- Performances are approximately 60 minutes unless otherwise noted on the website and printed materials.
- All school groups with reservations to the show will receive an e-mail notification when the study guide is posted. Please note that study guides are only printed and mailed upon request.

## DIRECTIONS

- The Civic Center's Temple Theater is located in the Temple for the Performing Arts located at Tenth and Locust Streets in downtown Des Moines.
- Directions from I-235: Take Exit 8A (downtown exits) and the ramp toward Third Street. Travel south on Third Street approximately six blocks to Grand Avenue. Turn west on Grand Avenue and travel to Thirteenth Street. Turn south on Thirteenth Street and then east on Locust Street.
- Buses will park on the south side of Locust Street in front of the Nationwide building. See next column for additional parking information.

### QUESTIONS?

Please contact the Education department at 515.246.2355 or [education@civiccenter.org](mailto:education@civiccenter.org).  
Thank you!

## PARKING

- Police officers stationed at the corner of Tenth and Locust Streets will direct buses to parking areas with hooded meters near the theater. Groups traveling in personal vehicles are responsible for locating their own parking.
- Buses will remain parked for the duration of the show.
- Buses are not generally permitted to drop off or pick up students near the theater. If a bus must return to school during the performance, prior arrangements must be made with the Civic Center Education staff.

## ARRIVAL

- When arriving at the theater, please have an **adult lead your group** for identification and check-in purposes. A Civic Center staff member may be stationed outside the building to direct you.
- Civic Center staff will usher groups into the building as quickly as possible.
- Seating in the theater is general admission. Ushers will escort groups to their seats; various seating factors including group size, grade levels, arrival time, and special needs seating requests may determine a group's specific location in the theater.
- We request that an **adult lead the group into the theater and other adults position themselves throughout the group**; we request this arrangement for supervision purposes, especially in the event that a group must be seated in multiple rows.
- Please allow ushers to seat your entire group before rearranging seats or taking groups to the restroom.

## IN THE THEATER

- In case of a medical emergency, please notify the nearest usher.
- We ask that adults handle any disruptive behavior in their groups. If the behavior persists, an usher may request your group to exit the theater.
- Following the performance groups may exit the theater and proceed to their bus(es).
- If an item is lost at the Temple Theater, please see an usher or call 515.246.2355.

# VOCABULARY



Photo Credit: Douglas Robertson

**California:** state in the Western United States, on the Pacific Ocean. *Zorro* is set in 19<sup>th</sup> century California, prior to the Gold Rush. In the play, the action takes place during a period when California is a colony of Spain.



Modern day California in relationship to the United States of America. California was admitted as a state in the USA in 1850. Image courtesy of californiagoldenblogs.com.

**colony:** a group of emigrants or their descendants who settle in a distant territory but remain tied to their parent country. In the play, Zorro fights Spanish soldiers who are in California because it is a colony of Spain.

**disguise:** something that hides or conceals an identity. Don Diego de la Vega takes on the identity of Zorro by wearing a disguise of a cape and mask.



Zorro's disguise.

**fight choreography:** a staged fight scene in a play where each move is choreographed, rehearsed, and performed. The play *Zorro* contains examples of fight choreography.

**nobleman:** a man of high birth or rank. Don Diego de la Vega (whose secret identity is Zorro) is a nobleman.

**oppression:** the exercise of authority in a way that is cruel or overly burdensome. Zorro fights against the oppression experienced by the people.

**outlaw:** a criminal or fugitive of the law. Zorro is an outlaw because he refuses to follow the laws set forth by the government officials.

**pulp fiction:** magazines of the first half of the 20th century printed on cheap "pulp" paper that were a popular form of entertainment. Zorro was one of the most popular characters in pulp fiction.



Pulp fiction magazines featured illustrated covers. Image courtesy of vintagelibrary.com.

**ranch:** a large farm used to raise livestock, such as cattle, who are allowed to roam and graze. *Zorro* is set on a California ranch.



Image courtesy of nature-crusaders.wordpress.com

**zorro:** the Spanish word for "fox." Zorro is sly and cunning like a fox, which makes it nearly impossible for

his adversaries to catch him.

# ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE



Photo Credit: Douglas Robertson

A mysterious figure has arrived in town. A flurry of a cape, the glint of a sword and a flash of a mask. Who is this baffling character? Exciting friend or formidable foe? In this fast-paced adventure, our masked champion ricochets from one sticky situation to another in a world where justice is the name and adventure is the game!

**Run time:** Approx. 65 minutes

## THE STORY

*Zorro* (Spanish for fox) is the secret identity of Don Diego de la Vega, a nobleman living in the Spanish colonial era of California. He is a black-clad masked outlaw who defends country people against tyrannical officials and other villains. Cunning like a fox, Zorro delights in publicly humiliating the bumbling authorities who fail to catch him. The play takes place on a ranch in Spanish-ruled California during the early 1800's. It's a fast paced adventure of disguise and mistaken identity that pits Zorro against Spanish soldiers. Falsely accused of murder, Zorro escapes aided by the beautiful Rosa.

## THEMES

*Zorro* examines the themes of leadership, self-esteem, aspiration and tolerance. Through the character of Zorro, questions are posed about how an individual can contribute to the wider society.

## STAGING

Drawing inspiration from Zorro's relationship with pulp fiction and comic books, the staging of the production resembles a pop-up comic book. Utilizing two-dimensional cutouts for set pieces, props and puppets, Visible Fictions creates a boldly colored and playful world.

## FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHY

As Zorro's adventures unfold, audiences will witness fight choreography. Fight choreography is not real fighting; it is planned to look dangerous on stage without putting performers in actual danger. Fight choreography is carefully planned, rehearsed, and performed. A minute of fight choreography takes much more time in rehearsal than most other moments of the play.

## AUDIENCE REACTIONS

"Think spaghetti western meets Batman."

— The Herald, Mary Brennan

"This is a compelling piece of third-person storytelling in which the three actors create a vivid sense of a pre-gold rush California with the swashbuckling pace of an adventure movie."

—The Guardian, Mark Fisher

"I was really, really impressed by the energy and imagination. It renewed my love of theatre."

—Audience member

"I cannot remember a better time at the theatre. The creative wit and fun in the execution and conception of the production were absolutely enthralling."

—Audience member

"Fantastic! I was on the edge of my seat as you sword fenced over that chasm!"

—Audience member

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE adapted from Walton Arts Center's *Zorro* Performance Guide.

# ABOUT THE CREATOR AND COMPANY



The performance of *Zorro* that you will experience is based on the characters and stories of writer Johnston McCulley. The company that created the stage adaptation is Visible Fictions from Scotland.

Read on to learn more about the author who created the iconic character and the creators of the stage performance.



Cover of pulp fiction magazine *All-Story Weekly* which featured "The Curse of Capistrano" — the very first Zorro story. Image courtesy of <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Capistrano2.jpg>

## THE CREATOR

Writer Johnston McCulley, born February 2, 1883, created the first Zorro story, *The Curse of Capistrano*, in 1919 for publication in the pulp magazine, *All-Story Weekly*. The character's popularity led McCulley to continue writing Zorro stories, publishing them serially in 77 issues. The story was later released as a novel under the name *The Mark of Zorro*.

In addition to Zorro stories and novels, McCulley wrote more than a hundred Westerns and twenty mystery novels. His pen names include Raley Brien, George Drayne, Grant McAlpine, Frederick Phelps, Rowena Raley and Harrington Strong. McCulley's fiction developed from his experience as a police reporter and as a Public Affairs officer during World War I. McCulley died on November 23, 1958.

## THE SHOW'S CREATORS

The theater production of Zorro is the product of Visible Fictions, one of the United Kingdom's leading theater companies.

The company, which is based in Glasgow, Scotland, works with only the finest artistic talents and creates professional performances that are innovative, memorable, and relevant to their audiences.

The company's dedication to placing both audience and participants at the heart of all they do has allowed the company to build an international reputation for creating high quality artistic experiences for young people and adults alike. For over 16 years, their work has inspired and entertained audiences across the world – from Broadway to schools in the Scottish Highlands. No two Visible Fictions performances are alike but all guarantee an equally memorable and powerful experience.

Visible Fictions is regularly invited to perform at the Bank of Scotland Imagine Festival as well as festivals around the world.

# ABOUT SCOTLAND, HOME OF VISIBLE FICTIONS



*Zorro* is coming to Des Moines from the international company Visible Fictions, which is from Scotland. Learn more about Scotland prior to seeing the show.

## GEOGRAPHY

Scotland is in northwest Europe and is part of the United Kingdom. It shares a land border to the south with England and is surrounded by the North Sea on the east and the Atlantic Ocean on the west.

Scotland is a mountainous country that is famous for its fresh water lochs (lakes). There are over 600 square miles of them. (One of the most famous is Loch Ness, where a mysterious monster is said to live.)

## GLASGOW

Glasgow — where Visible Fictions is based — is the largest city in Scotland. It is located on the River Clyde and has a large maritime history. The city served as one of Britain's main hubs for transatlantic trade.

## KNOWN FOR

Scotland is also famous for its clans, kilts, medieval castles, and poetry.

Well-known people from Scotland include:

- Walter Scott
- Robert Louis Stevenson
- Arthur Conan Doyle
- David Hume
- The actor Sean Connery

ABOVE: Scotland's largest lake, Loch Lomond, surrounded by mountains.  
Image courtesy of loch-lomond.net.

## OTHER FACTS

**Currency:** Pound Sterling (£)

**Capital:** Edinburgh

**Largest lake:** Loch Lomond  
(24 miles long)

**National Animal:** Unicorn



# THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE PLAY



Image courtesy of Visible Fictions.

From the people who develop the show to the performers you see on stage, it takes a lot of effort and teamwork to bring a story to the theater, and even more cooperation to take the show on an international tour.

Think about the many careers in the theater by reviewing the following information about many of the people who work to create the play *Zorro*.

## SCRIPT WRITER

The character of *Zorro* has many short stories, books, television series, and movies created about him. To create the theater production, a writer had to decide what to include in the play. The writer then developed a script that contained the lines and actions that the actors use to tell the story.

## DIRECTOR

The director is in charge of telling the actors where to go on stage and how to interpret their characters. The director guides all the designers to make sure everyone is telling the same story.

## ACTORS

Actors are all of the people who you see on the stage. They work together as a team to rehearse the play, memorize their lines, and tell the story. In *Zorro*, the actors play multiple characters and even serve as puppeteers at times.

## SET DESIGNER

The set designer creates the world where the actors tell the story. The set designer imagines and draws all of the pieces that you see on the stage. The set designer also figures out how the stage changes from scene to scene.

## COSTUME DESIGNER

The costume designer works with the director to create the clothes and costumes that the actors wear to help them become the characters. Each actor may have many "costume changes."

## LIGHTING DESIGNER

The lighting designer makes sure the audience can see what they are supposed to see and use lighting and effects to create a mood or scene.

ABOVE: The actors in *Zorro* are just a few of the people who work to create the play.

## PROPSMASTER

The propsmaster carefully reads the script and collects, buys, or makes any of the objects that an actor picks up or carries.

## BACKSTAGE CREW

There are lots of people backstage who build and operate the scenery, costumes, props, lights, and sound during the performance. They rehearse with the actors to learn their "cues" and make the show run smoothly.

## STAGE MANAGER

During the show, the stage manager "calls the cues," which means he or she makes sure all the elements of the show, like lights, sound, and actor entrances and exits are timed correctly.

## AUDIENCE

There can be no performance without you, the audience. You are a collaborator in the performance and your polite attention and applause is one of the most important parts of any live show.

# ZORRO AND THE COMIC BOOK HERO



Photo Credit: Douglas Robertson

Zorro has become an iconic character and played an important role in pulp fiction magazines and the later creation of the superhero genre.

Read on to learn more about Zorro, pulp fiction, and the superheroes inspired by Zorro.

## PULP FICTION

Pulp fiction is a term that describes magazines of the first half of the 20th century that were printed on cheap “pulp” paper. The magazines contained fantastical stories written to entertain the masses. Bigger-than-life heroes, pretty girls, exotic places, and mysterious villains ran through their pages.

Available for as little as 10 cents an issue, the magazines were affordable to working-class young adults and teens. Despite the cheap page material, the covers were of higher quality and often featured beautiful illustrations.

The pulp fiction era was a time of immense creativity. Many new genres of storytelling emerged — including the hardboiled detective, science fiction, and in the 1930s and 1940s, the superhero.

Zorro was first created in 1919 by popular pulp fiction writer Johnston McCulley. McCulley’s masked hero was so popular that he wrote more than 77 Zorro stories that were printed serially in pulp magazines.

## INSPIRATION FOR COMIC BOOK HEROES

Zorro was one of the first precursors of the superhero genre of American comic books.

Like many superhero characters, Zorro is an independently wealthy person with a secret identity that he protects by wearing a mask. He also works for the good of the people with his superior fighting abilities and resourcefulness.

Zorro became a key inspiration for the characters of:

- \* The Phantom
- \* The Lone Ranger
- \* Batman
- \* The Green Arrow

## ZORRO FUN FACTS

*The Mark of Zorro* was one of many works that inspired comic book artist Bob Kane when he created the Batman character in 1939. This inspiration has been worked into the comics themselves — *The Mark of Zorro* was the film which the young Bruce Wayne attended with his parents at the movie theater the night he witnessed their murders.

Puss in Boots, the cat from the *Shrek* film series voiced by Antonio Banderas (who also played Zorro in the films *The Mask of Zorro* and *The Legend of Zorro*), mimics Zorro’s fighting style, accent and personality. When fighting Shrek, the character uses his sword to scratch a “P”, a parody of Zorro’s trademark move.

Many television characters have dressed in Zorro costumes, including on the programs *Smallville*, *That 70s Show*, *Family Matters*, *Sesame Street*, *The Bob Newhart Show*, and *The Simpsons*.

# PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

## 1) DESTINED FOR GREATNESS

**Goal:** To explore the theme of destiny as it relates to students' personal lives.

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will explore the theme of destiny to better understand the character of Zorro by performing a stream-of-conscious writing exercise.

**When:** Before or after the performance

**Materials:**

- \* Paper
- \* Pencils

**Activity:**

1. Explain to students that in the play they will see, Zorro's destiny is to find the man who murdered his father. He is a character who has devoted his life to righting wrong from his past.
2. Ask the class if they know what destiny means.
3. Share with students how the dictionary defines destiny:

destiny [des-tuh-nee]

1. The future destined for a person or thing; fate; fortune; lot
2. The predetermined or inevitable course of events
3. (Philosophy) the ultimate power or agency that predetermines the course of events

4. Give each student a piece of paper and a pencil.
5. Explain that students will complete a very quick writing exercise which encourages a stream of consciousness. The rules of the activity are:
  - \* Students have exactly 2 minutes – no more or less.
  - \* During those 2 minutes, students have to write continuously. At no point are they allowed to stop writing. If they can't think of anything to write they have to write "I am writing, I am writing, I am writing," until something comes into their head.
  - \* The theme they must write about is 'my destiny.'
6. Make sure the class understands the rules of the exercise.
7. Start the 2 minutes.

8. Once the 2 minutes are over, ask students to form a circle and then for each person to read out what they have written. Some may not want to do this as it is personal information but try and encourage as many as possible to contribute.

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. What was challenging about this exercise?
2. What surprised you about this exercise?
3. What do you think of when you think about the word 'destiny'?

**Helpful Hints for the Facilitator:**

This activity can produce very surprising results. It is important it is very quick and immediate to allow students to feel liberated to write anything. This is not an English or grammar test.

**Extension Activities**

The quick exercise text that students have produced can be used as stimulus for further work.

For example:

- \* Ask students to work in small groups to create images from their text;
- \* Ask students to work individually and pick out 1-2 lines they have written and to create a tableau (frozen picture with their body) to illustrate the lines' meaning;
- \* Ask students to work in pairs to discuss and then create a scene which brings to life images from each of their text.

## 2) WHAT MAKES A HERO?

**Goal:** To explore the defining characteristics of heroes.

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will discuss what it means to be a hero by finding examples of heroes in current events.

**Activity:**

1. Invite students to find a current event example of someone who they think displayed heroism.
2. Once the research is completed, ask students to share as a group the examples that they found.
3. As a class, compile a list of characteristics that the individuals displayed.

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. Which characteristics did our heroes share?
2. Are there different types of heroes? What led you to that conclusion?

# POST-SHOW ASSESSMENT AND DISCUSSION, pg. 1

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Characters

1. Describe the characters in *Zorro*. Who were they? What were they doing? Why?
2. If you were in the performance of *Zorro*, how would you play Colonel Corti, Padrea Mateo, Don Diego, Rosa? Why would you perform them that way?

### Fear and Power

1. Why do you think the villagers in *Zorro* do what they are told?
2. Is fear a good method of control or are there other ways of managing people?

### Destiny

1. What is fate? Is it something that you believe in?
2. Is *Zorro* destined to meet the man who killed his father? Do you think he would kill him if he did?

### Uniforms and Masks

1. What masked characters do we have in our culture or society? Why do you think they wear masks?
2. What happens when people wear uniforms? Do you think the uniform changes them?

### Personal Responsibility

1. Why did *Zorro* use his skills to fight for the good of the people?
2. If you were a hero, what would you like to change in your neighborhood? Your town or city? The world?

### Theater

1. How did the set help tell the story? What sounds did you hear?
2. How did the costume designer show the various personalities and California culture through the costumes?
3. How did the lighting designer use light and shadow to tell the story?
4. What questions do you have for the artists?

## POST-SHOW ASSESSMENTS

### 1) WRITE A REVIEW

**Goal:** To write a review of the performance.

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will reflect on the performance by writing their own review.

#### Activity:

1. Ask students to imagine that they are a critic for the school newspaper. They are going to write a review of *Zorro* to inform others about what they experienced.
2. In the review they should describe with detail:
  - what they saw
  - what they heard
  - how the performance made them feel
  - what the performance reminded them of
  - what their favorite part was and why
3. Remind students that they must paint a picture of the experience with their words so that others who did not see the performance can imagine it as vividly as possible.

#### Follow-up Question:

1. What did you include in your review? Why was it important to include?

### 2) WRITE AN ORIGINAL SHORT STORY

**Goal:** To write a short story inspired by *Zorro*.

**Explanation:** *Zorro* was the inspiration for many superhero characters. In this activity students will create their own superhero story.

#### Activity:

1. Invite students to write a short story about a man or woman with a secret identity and special skills.
2. In the story, students should include what this man or woman did to work for the good of others.

#### Follow-up Question:

1. How was your character like *Zorro*? How was he or she different?

## POST-SHOW ASSESSMENT AND DISCUSSION, pg. 2 of 2

### 3) HOW DO YOU FIND BRAVERY?

**Goal:** To explore the themes of bravery and fear

**Explanation:** In this drama-based activity, students will create tableau (frozen pictures) of key moments in *Zorro* to better understand Zorro's character and the relationship between fear and bravery.

**Activity:**

1. Divide the group up into groups of 4 or 5.
2. Ask them to choose a moment from the story when Zorro needed to be brave but he was feeling afraid.
3. Explain that they are to create two tableau (frozen pictures) of that moment – one where Zorro is feeling afraid and one when he is feeling brave.
4. The groups will need to think about who else is in the picture and how they are feeling when Zorro is feeling afraid and when he is feeling brave.
5. Explain that when they show the tableau that you are going to come around and tap each character on the shoulder and that they are to say what they are thinking at that moment. This is called 'thought track'.
6. Give students time to prepare, practice their tableau, and revise. Encourage the use of multiple levels, strong action, and facial expression.
7. When it is time to share, ask each group to show their 'afraid tableau' and 'thought track' it. Then discuss:
  - \* Why is Zorro afraid?
  - \* How is Zorro's fear affecting the others in the tableau?
  - \* What could help Zorro by brave?
8. Next, have each group show their 'brave tableau' and 'thought track' it. Then discuss:
  - \* Why does Zorro need to be brave?
  - \* What is helping Zorro to be brave? Does his mask and cape help?
  - \* How is Zorro's bravery affecting the others in the tableau?

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. What was challenging about this activity?
2. What does it mean to be brave? Can you be both brave and scared at the same time?
3. Can you think of an example of a real person (someone you know or someone in the news) who has displayed bravery? What did that person do?

### 4) TRUE IDENTITY

**Goal:** To explore the following questions:

- 1) *Does a uniform change the person?*
- 2) *What happens when you put on a disguise or uniform?*

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will take on the character of a person in uniform through dramatizing the character's morning routine.

**Activity:**

1. Ask everyone in the class to pick one person from their community that wears a uniform.
2. For the next 5 minutes, take them through a silent movement exercise of their morning routine, i.e. wake up, brush teeth, wash etc. You can lead this by saying things like:
  - \* Everyone is still sleeping
  - \* The alarm is now going off and you know you need to get up
  - \* First thing you do is head for breakfast – what do you have to eat?
3. Vocally lead the activity whilst students follow with movement.
4. The last thing they need to do is to get dressed and put on their uniform. Ask them to take some time when does this. Allow them to think of all of the different elements of the uniform they need to put on i.e. a policeman would have a badge, hat, polished shoes, etc.
5. Once everyone is dressed, ask them to leave their 'imaginary' house and walk around the room/town. Ask them to think about their relationship to other people – can they tell who people are from the way they are moving?
6. Ask students to create a final frozen image which represents their uniformed character. Go around the room and see if the rest of the class can guess who everyone is.

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. Did the uniform make you feel any different from others in the room?
2. How did putting on the uniform make you feel?
3. Do you remember what other people were moving like and did it help you guess who they were?
4. How do you think Zorro feels when he wears his mask and cape – does it make him brave or is it something different?
5. What do you assume about a person's identity if he or she is wearing a uniform?

# RESOURCES AND SOURCES



Image courtesy of Visible Fictions.

## BOOKS

Read the original Zorro stories by writer Johnston McCulley. McCulley originally published the Zorro stories serially but later released them as a novel:

[The Mark of Zorro](#)

Check your local or school library for other books inspired by the character and adventures of Zorro. Titles include:

[The Mask of Zorro: Mighty Chronicle OP](#)

By John Withman

[The Mask of Zorro YA](#)

by Frank Lauria

[The Secret Swordsman: Zorro](#)

By William McCay

[Skull and Crossbones: Zorro](#)

by Frank Lauria

[The Treasure of Don Diego: Zorro](#)

By William McCay

[Young Zorro: The Iron Brand](#)

by Diego Vega and Jan Adkins

## CLASSROOM RESOURCES

“Spanish Missions of California.” Scholastic, created with Grolier Online.  
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/researchtools/researchstarters/missions/>

*Overview of 19th century California and the role of Spanish missions in establishing European settlement in the region, as well as research topics and links for further study.*

Spolin, Viola. [Theater Games for the Classroom: A Teacher's Handbook](#).  
Evanston: Northwest UP, 1986.

*Viola Spolin is the recognized originator of theater games.*

## STUDY GUIDE SOURCES

“Facts about Scotland.” Project Britain: British Life and Culture.

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/britain/scotland.htm>

Visible Fictions. Official Website. <http://www.visiblefictions.co.uk>

“What is Pulp Fiction?” The Vintage Library.

<http://www.vintagelibrary.com/pulpfiction/introduction/What-Is-Pulp-Fiction.php>

“Zorro.” Holden and Arts Associates Website.

[http://www.holdenarts.org/zorro\\_2012.html](http://www.holdenarts.org/zorro_2012.html)

“Zorro” Performance Guide. Walton Arts Center.

[http://www.waltonartscenter.org/images/cms/pdf/Walton\\_Zorro\\_Performance\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.waltonartscenter.org/images/cms/pdf/Walton_Zorro_Performance_Guide.pdf)

“Zorro Study Guide.” Visible Fictions.

[http://www.holdenarts.org/pdfs\\_2012/Zorro%20Study%20Guide%20-%20FA.pdf](http://www.holdenarts.org/pdfs_2012/Zorro%20Study%20Guide%20-%20FA.pdf)