

DAVID PRATHER

Theatre Workshop

MEET THE ARTIST:

David Prather has worked with Music Center Education for nearly two decades. Beginning as a company member of We Tell Stories, he has created his own solo shows “The World of Myths” and “Prather’s Poetry Jam” (also an *Artsource*® Unit) and has worked extensively as a teaching artist. He has helped to create and lead the Music Center’s *Summer Institute for Educators* several years, as well as working on a pilot institute for the San Francisco Symphony. He has performed in the Music Center’s *Pillow Theatre* at the Walt Disney Concert Hall and *Performing Books* at the Central Library. Mr. Prather is also associated with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, hosting concerts at various venues, as well as the popular Hollywood Bowl family series “Summer Sounds.” He recently wrote and performed in the shows “Elaborate Measures” at the Getty Museum, and a commissioned play “When Harlem Was in Vogue” at the Alley Theatre in Texas. He has toured widely with his play “John and Juan”, and has worked with various other California arts organizations including the California Dance Institute, the Pasadena Symphony, and the Orange County Performing Arts Center. He is a graduate of Princeton University and American Conservatory Theatre.



ABOUT THE WORKSHOPS:

Mr. Prather's workshops focus on basic storytelling techniques and dramatic skills. Class sessions will be drawn from the following material:

Storytelling

Sequential workshops can incorporate one or more of the following elements: play production, improvisation, verbal and movement games, creative writing, concentration, imagination and problem solving. All workshops impart an understanding of the concepts of group support and trust, as well as an eagerness to accept new ideas.

Poetry

Poetry will be used to take a dramatic leap with language, exploring a poem's images, characters, sounds and rhythms. Choral reading and story theatre techniques will be employed to get students on their feet and in action. Poetry will be tailored to specific grade levels from authors such as Shel Silverstein, Carl Sandburg and A.A. Milne.

Star Stories: Myths and Constellations

This two-part workshop explores the mythology behind various star groups and introduces students to the ancient origins of the stories. Participants will create their own constellations using silver stars and paper. Once completed they will imagine, write and enact myths which explain the constellations' history, power and character. Each student will need one sheet of black or dark blue construction paper (approximately 9" x 12") and ten (peel-and stick) silver stars.

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP:

- Please have the students wear nametags for the workshop. It saves time if they are made beforehand!
- Review the importance of listening. Ask the students what it means to be a good listener. Why is it important in daily life? Why is it important when the artist is here?
- For the storytelling workshops, ask students to bring ideas for stories or they would like to write or ideas for characters they would like to become.
- For the Star Stories workshops, review some of the major constellations with the students before the artist comes.
- Remind students of the importance of respecting the ideas of their peers and of working cooperatively together.

AFTER THE WORKSHOP:

- Review the major points presented in the workshops. What were the most important ideas? What parts of the workshop did the students like best?
- Have the class create and write another original story using the processes outlined in the workshop sessions.
- Use a favorite book being studied in class as a point of departure for creating scenes for a play or retelling as a story. Students can also draw their favorite part of the story, sequence all of their pictures and tell the story using their drawings as a prompt.