Olympia Junior Programs presents

The Lightning Thief

A Musical Production Adapted from the Book by Rick Riordan
Produced by TheatreworksUSA, New York, NY

February 18-19 & 22-24, 2016
The Washington Center for the Performing Arts

A Study Guide for Teachers of Grades 4-6
To Prepare Students for a Positive Theater Experience

THE PLAY

“The Lightning Thief” is a musical production adapted from the book by Rick Riordan. Much of the story is summed up in the lyrics of a number of songs. Among the musical numbers are: “The Day I Got Expelled”, “The Weirdest Dream”, “The Oracle” and “Good Weird”. Joe Tracz, a playwright and screenwriter, adapted the first book in the popular Percy Jackson Series for this play, and Robert Rokicki is the composer/lyricist for the musical production.

As the play begins, Percy Jackson is about to be kicked out of boarding school again and that is the least of his troubles. Mythological monsters and the gods of Mount Olympus seem to be walking straight out of the pages of Percy’s Greek mythology textbook and into his life. And worse, he has angered a few of them. Zeus’s master lightning bolt has been stolen and Percy is the prime suspect. Percy Jackson discovers he is not completely human; he is part god, or a demigod. He is pretty shocked when he finds out that he is the son of Poseidon, the god of the sea.

Percy has ten days to find and return Zeus’s stolen property and bring peace to a warring Mount Olympus. To succeed in his quest, Percy will have to do more than catch the true thief; he must come to terms with the father who abandoned him; solve the riddle of the Oracle, which warns him of betrayal by a friend; and unravel a treachery more powerful than the gods themselves.

MAIN CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

Percy Jackson-Son of Poseidon, a good kid with a teenage temperament
Annabeth-Daughter of Athena, smarter than you
Grover-Happy-go-lucky satyr, like a hippie kid with hooves
Luke-Camp counselor, son of Hermes, your cool big brother
Mr. Bruner/Chiron-A wise centaur and part-time Latin teacher
Sally Jackson-Percy’s mother

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rick Riordan was born June 5, 1964 in San Antonio, Texas. He is the #1 New York Times bestselling author of the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series, the Kane Chronicles, the Heroes of Olympus, and Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard. He is also the author of the multi-award-winning Tres Navarre mystery series for adults.
Riordan turned to children's fiction when he started "The Lightning Thief" as a bedtime story for his oldest son.

While in college, Mr. Riordan worked as a music director at a summer camp and that is where he got the idea for Camp Half-Blood, the Greek demigod training facility featured in "The Lightning Thief". After graduating from college, he was a teacher for a number of years and mythology was one of his favorite courses to teach. He started writing in middle school and first submitted a story for publication when he was 13 years old. It was not published. He is now a writer fulltime.

Mr. Riordan states, “The first book I remember reading for fun was The Lord of the Rings. I probably read it ten times. I also have liked Greek and Norse mythology since I was in middle school. I read mostly fantasy and science fiction in high school, then got interested in mysteries when I got to college”.

ABOUT THE COMPANY
Founded in 1961, TheatreworksUSA is America's largest and most prolific professional not-for-profit theatre for young and family audiences. The mission of TheatreworksUSA is to create, produce, and provide access to professional theatre for young and family audiences nationwide, including disadvantaged youth and under-served communities. TheatreworksUSA is one of the most honored theaters of its kind.

BEFORE ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE
• Review the OJP Theater Etiquette Guide regarding student behavior.
• Talk about the theater, especially if you have students coming to the Washington Center for the first time. Discuss how seeing a live performance is different than watching a movie or a television show.
• Read “The Lightning Thief” and, if time permits, watch the video.
• Familiarize the students with the names of the gods mentioned in the play and their roles in the play.

VOCABULARY WORDS
The following gods and mythical creatures are mentioned in the play:
Apollo-God of the sun and music
Ares-God of War
Athena-Goddess of wisdom and arts
Centaur-Mythical creature with head and torso of a man and body of a horse
Chiron-Eldest and wisest of the centaurs
Cyclops-One-eyed giant
Furies-Avenging spirits controlled by Hades
Hades-God of the underworld and brother to Poseidon and Zeus
Harpies-Female monsters in the form of birds with human faces
Hercules-Son of Zeus--Mortal hero
Hermes-Messenger of the gods
Kronos-Titian god of time and the ages
Medusa-Gorgon sister who bragged about her beauty and was turned into a monster by Athena
Minotaur-Monster with body of a man and head and tail of a bull
Oracle-A person (such as a priestess) through whom a god was believed to speak
Odysseus - Leader in the Trojan War
Pan - God of nature and the wild—shepherds and flocks, mountains, forest, rustic music
Poseidon - God of the sea, brother of Zeus and Hades and father of Percy Jackson
Prometheus - Creator of mankind; gifted mankind with the fire stolen from Mt. Olympus
Satyrs - Poets and companions to Pan
Tartarus - In Greek mythology the deep abyss that is used as a dungeon of torment and suffering for the wicked and as the prison for the Titans; as far below Hades as the earth is below the heavens
Titans - The elder gods who ruled the earth before the Olympians overthrew them
Zeus - King of the gods, ruler of Mt Olympus, brother of Hades and Poseidon

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

- After the play have the students discuss the differences between the book and the play. If they have seen the film, “The Lightning Thief”, have them discuss the similarities and differences of the three mediums and which they liked best and why.
- Discuss with the students a few of the ideas as presented in the play—Normal is a myth. Everyone has issues. Things that make you different are the things that make you special.
- Choose some Greek myths for students to read and explore the characters, storylines, and messages of the myths.
- Have the students create a god/goddess with powers and attributes of their choosing and have the students write a short story about that god/goddess.
- Discuss what the students did or did not like about the play, the characters, costumes, or set. Send letters or pictures to Olympia Junior Programs, PO Box 1371, Olympia WA 98507-1371.

READING SUGGESTIONS
“The Lightning Thief” by Rick Riordan
Heroes of Olympus series by Rick Riordan
“Percy Jackson’s Greek Gods” by Rick Riordan
Kane Chronicles—“The Red Pyramid”, “The Thrones of Fire”, “The Serpent’s Shadow” by Rick Riordan
“D’ Aulaire’s Book of Greek Myths” by Ingri d’Aulaire
“A Wonder Book: Heroes and Monsters of Greek Mythology” by Nathaniel Hawthorne

EVALUATIONS
Teachers, please complete the Evaluation Form provided by the school’s OJP Representative, or post comments online at the Evaluation Tab of www.olympiajuniorprograms.com. Thank you.

Information about this production and some of the activities/discussion were taken from the TheatreworksUSA Study Guide which can be found at: http://www.theatreworksusa.org/. More facts about Greek mythology and a teacher’s guide for the book, “The Lightning Thief”, can be found on Rick Riordan’s website—www.rickriordan.com.
The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical has music and lyrics by Rob Rokicki and a book by Joe Tracz. It is based off the bestselling Percy Jackson books by Rick Riordan, namely the first one in the series. The musical was introduced in New York City in 2014 as a one-hour musical and went on a national tour.