

A MESSAGE TO THE TEACHER

Your class is about to participate in an educationally rewarding experience—a performance of the Big Apple Circus!

Students attending this show will have a richer experience if they have discussed the circus before attending the performance. With your guidance, students can learn about the history and current art of the circus. Their vocabulary and knowledge will be enriched and expanded as you prepare them with additional and personalized activities.

The following pages contain information and suggested activities to make this already entertaining experience more educational. Students are certain to improve their skills in the art of communication as they learn about the circus.

The **Big Apple Circus Study Guide** focuses on literacy skills. You may feel free to adapt the ideas presented in this packet to meet the special needs, maturity, and interests of your students. For example, you could use the *History of the Circus* sections for in-class practice reading aloud, as take-home reading comprehension exercises, or to summarize the material yourself. Topics labeled “*for discussion*” may be used to stimulate in-class discussion or as paper topics for homework. We would like to hear back from you and your students about this unique learning experience and how we can continue to modify it to make it most effective for you. Send us examples of what you’ve done.

At the back of this booklet is a bibliography of circus sources. Some of these have served as resources for us in preparing this study guide. We hope they will also be helpful to you and your students in the classroom.

We hope you enjoy the performance. And now, on with the show!

