



Major Conrad Flapps' Traffic Safety Show STUDY GUIDE

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STUDY GUIDE

Description of Performance

Choking from the air pollution, caused by too many cars on the road, clown aviator, **Major Conrad Flapps** decides to walk instead of flying to school. Flapps transforms students and adults into cars, drivers, traffic lanes, and sound effect machines, while hilariously blazing a trail through the "urban jungle". Using clown humour to parody Hip-Hop and Rap, Major Flapps demonstrates the wrong and right ways to approach cross walking thus encouraging input from audience volunteers. A climactic unmasking of the clown brings the seriousness of his message home as the man behind the clown, Stuart Nemtin shares true stories of students and pets being hit.

Adding live music on fiddle, Major Flapps parodies Country Music and R&B to re-iterate the safety themes of the show as well as the eco/health benefits of leaving the car at home. The hilarious finale, features the *Cross-Walk Jive Band* composed of "famous audience musicians."

Suitable for K-Grade 4/5/6, 45 minutes in length

Themes of Performance

Ecology Protection

Young people can make a difference to the quality of our air by using their legs instead of the car even once a month more than they are currently.

Question: Why does Major Flapps have the world on his head?

What is the surprising fact that Flapps discovers which changes his mind about flying? **30% of the pollution in our atmosphere is caused by gasoline exhaust on the roads.**

Health/Wellness

"If you pump up your heart
Instead of the gas
You'll make yourself strong
And let the clean air last." (Flapp's Rap)

Question: What are three ways which Flapps mentions that you can "pump up your heart" in getting to school ?

Answer: Walking, Rollerblading, Cycling, Skateboarding, Scooting

Question: What are other benefits of walking to school?

Answers: It helps (oxygenate) wake up your brain in the morning, which prepares you for certain schoolwork activities. It makes you feel more comfortable and safe by knowing your neighbourhood streets and neighbours. You can also make new friends by walking

Themes of Performance

Three Common Crosswalking Mistakes

- 1) Dashing or running across the Crosswalk or street
- 2) Not checking to see if **all** the automobile lanes have stopped for you before you cross.
Assuming the driver will stop just because you are crossing.
- 3) Forgetting to re-check the empty lane of traffic before you cross it. (i.e. 4th lane)

Question: Why does Major Flapps let the volunteer car drivers drive fast and then have them stop?

Answer : To illustrate how speeders don't have time to stop for pedestrians if they dash across the crosswalk. To illustrate the instability of speeding drivers.

Question: Why does Major Flapps have some drivers talking on cell phones, or to passengers in their vehicles or daydream?

Answer: To illustrate how some drivers don't pay attention to crosswalkers because they are involved in other activities. Consequently, you need to make sure they stop before you cross into their lanes.

Question: Why does Major Flapps take off his clown nose and helmet in the show?

Answer: To illustrate the seriousness of someone getting hurt in real life as compared to cartoons or video games where no one really gets hurt.

Question: Why does Major Flapps not get injured when he is hit by one of the drivers and falls down?

Answer: In his training as a clown, he practiced acrobatics and learned how to fall.

Math Question: The painted backdrop in the show took 100 hours to paint by Kym Spencer, a professional painter. If she worked 5 hours per day painting. how many days did it take her to finish the backdrop? If she charged \$20/ hr, how much money did she make?

Question: Why does Major Flapps make certain students with dark clothes stand up after the show?

Answer: To illustrate how dangerous it is at night by becoming invisible to cars' headlights.

Language Arts/Music/Drama Activities

The rhyming format could be ABAB or AABB Possible topics: clothes, your siblings, your parents, being popular at school, sports at school, garbage on the schoolyard grounds.

- 3) **Parody**: a form of comic imitation of a particular style. How does Flapps parody Hip Hop, Rap, Square Dance or Rhythm and Blues music and musicians?
Clues: Flapps body gestures, “yeehah, you hah”, sunglasses, singers lip synching.
- 4) **Transformation**: Flapps transforms hoola hoops into cars. Take an everyday object like a hoola hoop and use it in a totally different way and have your classmates guess what you have transformed it into. Pass the object around in a circle or have the object in the centre of the circle as one person uses it at a time for the others to guess.

Biography: Stuart Nemtin (Major Conrad Flapps)

A graduate in theatre from University of British Columbia and the Professional Teaching Programme of Simon Fraser University, **Stuart Nemtin** was the first clown in the history of B.C. Cultural Services to be funded through their Artist-in-the-Schools programme.

As an actor he has performed on film, television and with theatre companies across Canada, including Green Thumb, Kaleidoscope, Carousel, Belfry, and Neptune. He has directed for Trickster Company of Calgary and taught professional development workshops in clown, drama and comedy in B.C., Alberta, Nova Scotia and Switzerland.

Stuart has been performing his clown character, **Major Conrad Flapps** since his first appearance in 1978 at the Vancouver International Children's Festival. He has delighted audiences of all ages in seven countries at a variety of festivals including, Wellington, (New Zealand) Universal CityWalk (Los Angeles), Bumbershoot (Seattle), Edinburgh Fringe, Winnipeg Folk, Ottawa-Canada Day, International Health Race (Scotland), Canada Winter Games (Jasper) and Expo 86. He was awarded a Canada Council Explorations grant for the creation of his adult clown performance **Let's Redress Stress** which has toured throughout Canada, Switzerland and the United States since 1986. A Canadian Heritage Grant for his anti-racism story theatre collaboration with musician composer David Kaetz of **The Story of Esther** enabled Stuart to tour Children's festivals and schools in Canada and subsequently Switzerland.

Most recently he has been commissioned to create a **traffic safety performance** for young audiences by the Autoplan Brokers in partnership with the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. As well, Stuart has recently created a **symphony show** for young audiences which he performed with the Edmonton and Vancouver Symphonies.

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