

Study Guide For Teachers

The Gizmo Guys *in* **Objects in Motion**

presented by

Young Audiences

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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Combine world-class juggling and solid links to science and math. Mix in a load of laughs and you've got the Gizmo Guys. Exhibiting incredible teamwork and coordination, the Gizmo Guys wow students with their mastery of patterns, symmetry and fun!

This performance is a child-friendly variety show. The Gizmo Guys move from one hilarious skit to the next, astounding the audience with their talents and humor. They weave in the history of juggling, and talk about how juggling illustrates math and science concepts like gravity, inertia and patterns.

LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Hear about the history of juggling
- See expert teamwork and coordination
- Experience the joy of juggling and humor
- Understand the connections between juggling and math and science concepts
- Be inspired to try juggling at home

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

The earliest known picture of jugglers was found in a tomb from a prince who lived in Egypt about 4,000 years ago! No one knows for sure when juggling started, but there is evidence that juggling has been done all over the world, for thousands of years. In some cultures, juggling has been part of religious rituals, while in other cultures juggling is used for sport, entertainment and fun.

In the Middle Ages, kings had court jesters who were there to entertain the royalty. Many of these jesters told jokes, juggled and did acrobatics.

During the vaudeville era (1880-1930) in America and Europe, juggling became a very popular form of entertainment. Before television and movies, people would go see live performers singing, dancing, acting and juggling. Once television and movies became popular, the vaudeville era ended.

However juggling is still alive and well all over the world. In 1947 the International Jugglers Association was founded—there are thousands of jugglers who juggle for fun and as their profession. The Gizmo Guys have devoted their lives to mastering the art of juggling and to bringing that joy to their audiences.

BEFORE THE PROGRAM

Have a discussion including the following questions:

- Where have you seen juggling in the past?
- Have you ever tried to juggle?
- What objects do you think the Gizmo Guys will juggle?
- Why do you think we're seeing jugglers?
- Could juggling have anything to do with what we learn in school?
- Why do you think they're called The Gizmo Guys?

AFTER THE PROGRAM

Engage students in a discussion about the program. Ask them:

- What they saw that surprised them
- What they learned from the Gizmo Guys
- Make a list of all the objects the Gizmo Guys juggled

Work with your physical education teacher to introduce juggling in the next week. Students can bring in balls or bean bags from home to try out. This can be done by a few students in a corner of your classroom, outside on the playground or in physical education class. After students have had a few chances to practice in school and at home, have a school-wide juggle-a-thon. You can even use it as a fundraiser or a special activity to bring in families and friends.

Research the history of juggling and focus on a particular culture and how they have used juggling in their lives, rituals and celebrations.

Talk about teamwork and cooperation. Brainstorm some other activities that could not be done without teamwork and cooperation. Talk about how teams work best together. You can even generate a list of rules that about teamwork that will help your class be a great team.

VOCABULARY WORDS

Cooperation: working together with other people to achieve a goal, such as building a house or solving a puzzle

Diabolo: is a juggling prop consisting of a spool which is whirled and tossed on a string tied to two sticks held one in each hand.

Gravity: The natural force of attraction exerted by the Earth, upon objects at or near its surface. Gravity pulls the objects towards the Earth's surface.

Inertia: an object in motion tends to stay in motion; an object at rest tends to stay at rest

ARTIST INFORMATION

The Gizmo Guys are Allan Jacobs and Barrett Felker. Allan and Barrett were accomplished entertainers when they met in 1987 and decided to become the Gizmo Guys. They have appeared all over the world combining original routines, comedy and world-class juggling. Both have won individual championships in the International Jugglers Association competitions and have taught at French and Canadian circus schools. Allan was a consultant for Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey's Clown College and Barrett toured with the Harlem Globetrotters. They combine their love of juggling and learning in their show for school audiences.

RESOURCES

<http://juggle.org>

The home of the international Jugglers Association

www.thegizmoquys.com

Home of the the Gizmo Guys themselves

<http://www2.bc.edu/~lewbel/jugweb/history-1.html>

A paper about the history of juggling

http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/curr393.shtml

An article about how juggling can improve student achievement