

PERFORMANCE GUIDE

K-3



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Michael "Badhair" Williams is from the North Carolina Mountains, the heart of Appalachia. He has been telling Appalachian folk tales on stage since 1975. He has performed for audiences from rural Appalachia to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. and across the nation in school libraries and auditoriums.

Michael "Badhair" says about storytelling, "My goals are, first, to educate students, to give them an true picture of Appalachian culture. I try to dispel the stereotype of the 'Beverly Hillbillies' and 'Green Acres.' I hope that through exposure to my stories they may also discover more about their own cultural heritage. My second goal is to entertain the students. I believe these have been the goals of storytellers throughout history.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Please read this to your classroom.

You are going to a show and will hear a man named Badhair tell stories. These stories have been told ,for a long time, where he lives in the Appalachian mountains. Some of these tales or other stories might have been told by some of your ancestors (your grandparents or their grandparents) The stories, music and dances were the main entertainments (what people do for fun) in the past. This was before radio and television. Many times people lived a long way from any town or city and there were no cars. People rode horses or wagons or walked where they wanted to go. Almost everyone farmed for a living. The stories you will hear will be told as they were in the past. Listen for things in the stories you think might be from the past. These stories are not real. They were made up to entertain and sometimes to educate. You will be asked to go to the auditorium/ gym/lunch room and sit. Please listen and enjoy the show. Laugh if it is funny and participate when asked but please do not talk to your classmate while Mr. Badhair is speaking. That would be rude.

PRE or POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

Pre\post-performance questions for the classroom.

Find Appalachia on a map of the United States.

What is the land like (mountains, flat, lakes)?

Are there any big cities?

What kinds of jobs might people do there?

What is the weather like in Appalachia?

What kinds of animals might live there?

What would it have been like to have settled this land?

What kinds of stories might people tell about this land?

Cartoon and television shows often depict a character of a 'mountain man' or hillbilly.'

What is he like?

Do cartoons and TV always show a real version of people or events?

Does television portray people realistically?

Why or why not?

Play the "Gossip Game." Someone start a one sentence story whisper it from one student to another until it has gone full circle. This simulates passing stories from generation to generation as in the oral tradition. Most of the time, the story will change. Go back through the line of students and find the places where the story changed. Why did it change? Sometimes the story doesn't change. Why?

Could this be how stories were passed from person to person over the years?

Read either out loud in class or at home folktales from various cultures.

Do the stories you have read from different cultures show any similarities?

Have you heard any similar stories from your parents, grandparents, friends, or others?

Can you tell any stories you have heard?

