

KS1 & KS2 Activities

www.magiccarpettheatre.com

MAGIC CIRCUS

Ideas and Resource Pack



*Magic
Carpet*
Theatre



About Magic Carpet Theatre

Introduction

Magic Carpet Theatre have been delighting children with shows and workshops since 1982.

Magic Carpet Theatre are one of the UK's busiest children's theatre companies, touring to schools, theatres and to Festivals in the UK and abroad.

The Magic Circus is fun, fast, colourful and there's loads of audience participation, in this very funny play where the seemingly inept clown wins over the pompous Ringmaster.

We believe that the interactive experience of professional theatre is a vital part of every child's education and that experience should be enjoyable, appropriate and stimulating.

Founded in 1982

Magic Carpet was founded by Jon Marshall who plays the The Ringmaster. Jon is a Member of The Inner Magic Circle and of course this play features some excellent theatrical magic.

Jon Marshall - The Ringmaster, and Director of

Magic Carpet Theatre, has many year's experience as a performer, Theatre Director and Director of Theatre in Education. Jon trained as a Drama Teacher before working in TIE, devising children's theatre, educational projects, in-service training courses and workshops.

Steven Collison - Bobby, The Apprentice

Originally Steve worked with his family act, touring galas and carnivals and performing as the world's youngest motorcycle stunt rider! Steve is, as well as being an actor, an accomplished juggler and unicycle rider. He has lived most of his life in Buckinghamshire. When he is not touring Steve races Caterham cars on the UK's major circuits.

Jamie Waudby - Stage Manager

Jamie, originally from Hull has toured with Magic Carpet for several years operating sound, props and special effects. He is often called upon to exercise strange skills - operate a giant octopus puppet, animate an invisible cat, fire a pyro flash box, hit a

sound cue and open a secret trapdoor all at the same time! He sometimes feels that he needs three pairs of hands - good job he is an excellent juggler and assists as a workshop leader in Magic Carpet's Circus Workshops.

Do send us comments

This pack contains suggestions for follow-up work and for the presentation of the play. We are always delighted to receive letters and pictures telling us how your pupils reacted to or have followed up our visit. Pupils can email comments and pictures and letters are displayed in the schools on our web site.

Follow-up

Please do complete our on-line evaluation sheet.

For further information:

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Web:-

www.magiccarpettheatre.com



Planning for our visit

We aim to cause as little disruption as possible within the school. The following guidelines will aid the smooth running of the event.

Parking and getting in -

It is very helpful if we can park our long-wheel-base Transit Van as near as possible to the performing area. Skittles, cones or a chair with a notice might be used as a reminder to keep a space if necessary. We like a minimum of 45 minutes to set up if possible.

Refreshments -

The company may have traveled quite a distance to be with you; the offer of a cup of coffee or tea is most welcome! A jug of water is especially welcome between shows if we are presenting two shows in an AM or PM session.

Space-

A completely clearspace at one end or side of your hall is required. We can fit into most spaces but *ideally* we need at least 10m X 6m and a clearance height of 2.5m. If we haven't visited your school before, we can decide the layout when we arrive.

We are very adaptable and have fitted into many different spaces,

from the largest school halls to mobiles and prefabs, nursery units, double-classrooms, gyms, Village Halls and even a working men's club next door to a school!

Ground floor hall please! -

Our scenery and equipment is heavy and large.

Lighting -

We do not bring stage lighting apart from our special effects. If you have theatrical lights that will illuminate the performing area we can use them if it is possible to focus them easily. Normal hall lighting works fine.

Audience Seating -

In most schools the pupils sit on the floor behind a semi-circular line that we mark with tape. A good arrangement for large numbers is to use the floor or mats, with benches and chairs (no more than 3 rows of chairs) to tier the audience. If you have a stage or blocks we may play opposite and they could be used for seating. We prefer to put the scenery and screens up before the audience enters.

Nursery/Early Years and Reception -

We have a special version for nursery, early years and reception age pupils which starts with an introduction to the cast and the story. If watching with older pupils they will enjoy the show much more if they sit further back. These pupils should not sit on the front row. Year 1 children can sit on the front row.

Special Need's Pupils -

If time permits we can provide a pre-show "touch tour" of the set and props and demonstrate the sound effects for visually impaired pupils. Please notify us in advance for this to be arranged. An Audio CD synopsis of the show is being prepared. A synopsis of the story is included in this pack for hearing impaired pupils and for signing preparation.



check list

- Reserve van parking space as close as possible to performing area**
- Have any gate/door keys available/open**
- Make performing area as clear as possible**
- Two electric sockets required**
- Provide a small waste bin (for "backstage")**
- Check audience seating and start of show arrangements with cast**
- Relax, enjoy the show!**

Planning for our visit 2

KS1/KS2 versions -

Magic Carpet has versions of the show for: - All ages, (Reception & Nursery to Year 6). Nursery/Reception, KS1 and Reception. Ks2.

Changing - Our back stage area is screened off; we do not usually require any other room.

Black out - a perfect blackout is not necessary. But it is a good idea to close any curtains and shut out the outside world. The normal hall lighting should be used.

Electrics 2 x 13amp sockets are required. We can also use a 15 or 16 amp supply. We carry extension cables. We bring our sound equipment and special effects.

Smoke/Heat detectors please inform us if your hall has detectors and what type they are and if it is possible to isolate them during the performance. We use 2 x 1-second bursts from a water-based smoke machine (Jem ZR20).

Health and Safety - Our scenery and masking are fire proofed. If

extension cables are used we will gaffer them to the floor and around doors and fire doors. We use residual current circuit breakers for electrical protection.

Starting the show - Music plays as the audience enter, when everyone is in let the company know, full details of how the show starts will be given to the teacher in charge when we arrive.

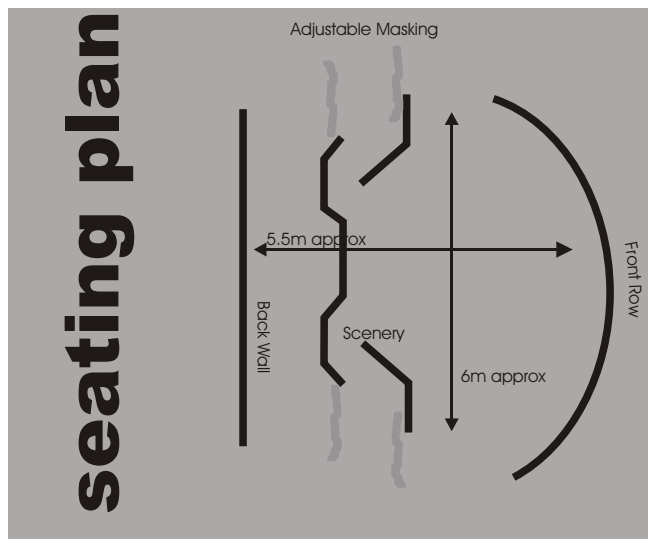
Length of show The show lasts approximately 60 minutes. Nursery and early years pupils can come in 10 minutes before the rest of the audience for their introduction. Special School versions last about 50 minutes. About 15 minutes are needed by us to reset when performing twice in an AM or PM session.

Get out - We need about 30 minutes to clear the Hall. Dinner Ladies can usually start setting tables at one end of a hall as we clear from the other end.

Making the visit more exciting
Do look at the suggestions for decorating the hall and dressing up.

Photographs

Do remember film, batteries, and charge up your digital camera. But no Video please.



Language Ideas

It would be difficult to think of a richer, more exciting, stimulating topic than Circus. The Magic Circus is guaranteed to stimulate your children's imagination and will create many opportunities for literacy and oral work. It has a universal appeal and conjures up colourful images of comedy, excitement, danger and spectacle. It is an exotic, magical world, but one which most children will be familiar with, even if they have only seen it on the T.V.

Your pupils will have plenty to talk about after the **Magic Circus** show, here are some literary ideas if you wish to develop the theme.

Tell the story

of the Magic Circus in your own words.

What happened before

What did the Clowns do to annoy "Mr Ringplaster" before the show and make him decide to send the clowns away?

Write a poem

about the Clown in the show or the unicycling or your favorite part.

Write a review

of The Magic Circus, what did you like? What did you dislike? How could it have been improved? Think about the scenery, costumes, acting, effects.

Write to us

The Ringmaster and Bobby would love to know what you thought of the show. Why not write a letter or send a picture, or an email. Send your emails to bobby@magiccarpettheatre.com

Circus of the future

Imagine a Circus Show in the future. Describe the acts and the show

including music and costumes. would there be a tent?

Reading

There is a wealth of literature available with circus themes, suitable for all age groups. Find stories and poems to read to the class or for them to read.

Extravagant Language

The Ringmaster often uses grand descriptions to introduce the acts that have disappeared - "Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the world's greatest, most amazing, sensational.....". Can you think of an act you would like to perform and a suitable introduction.

Uni, Bi, Tri....

Mr Ringmaster said, "Albertina does not ride a bicycle, but a unicycle, he say's, "it is the biggest in the universe, it's unique" What does uni, bi, tri mean? What about quad? Can you think of other words with these prefixes?

Display Ideas

Funny Circus Clowns

A wall display idea with several of the children's clowns cut out and mounted on background paper. Words associated with clowns can be scattered throughout the display. The children can suggest the words:

*cheeky,
exciting
colourful
smiling
jolly faces,
tricks
silly
clumsy
funny
tumble
happy
laughter*

All these words were suggested by pupils at Whinfield Infants, Darlington.

Danger

Make a similar wall display with a tightrope or trapeze image and appropriate words.





Circus Words

Magic

Joey

Big Top

Circus

Performing

Red Nose

Ringmaster

Elephants

Giraffe Unicycle

Moustache

Squirting Flower

Ladder

Top Hat

Trick

**Your own Circus
Words...**

Funny

Whip

Clown

Circus Sign

Applause

Poster

Lion

Drum

Roar

Tightrope

Acrobat

Ring

Balance

Juggler

Bobby

Unicycle

The Great Levito

Trapeze

Parade

Whistle



Drama Ideas

Drama activities can be so useful in the development of language skills, literacy and in promoting self-confidence. The Circus theme suggests many ideas for drama and movement activities.

Drama Warm Ups

Silly Walks

As a warm up exercise ask everyone to walk around the space and to stop when you clap your hands. Then after trying that two or three times to freeze in a funny position. While holding that position ask the class to think of a funny way of moving around the space and to try it out when you clap your hands. Repeat this two or three times.

Let's all be.. in the Circus!

Younger children will enjoy becoming all the different animals in a Circus. A good drama game is "let's all be" with a circus theme. Teacher says "let's all be monkeys", and after everyone has been monkeys, "lets all be tigers", etc. You can also include, tightrope walkers, clowns, jugglers etc. Or circus activities "let's all be putting up the big top", let's all be sweeping the sawdust ring". The children can be encouraged to suggest acts..

Lions

Younger children can be fierce lions, sleepy lions following the commands "Here are the fierce lions" they enter the 'circus ring'. They learn the following commands
dua dua - prowl around low
sua sua kneel up, wave paws
leone leone stretch right up and roar
sonno sonno lions go to sleep
When the lion trainer turns away and says "It has taken me many years to train the lions and now you can see they are sleeping..."
The lions wake up and try and creep up on the lion trainer before the

trainer hears them and stops them with a quick "dua dua".

The Disappearing Acts

During the Magic Circus the acts have left the show. We are not told why. In pairs make up a scene between the Ringmaster and an act of your own choice which leads to the act leaving.

I want my money back

Make up a scene between the box office person and an angry customer.

What happens next?

Two clowns rush towards each other, stop, shake hands, what happens next?

Funny Faces

Which parts of the face convey expression? Is it the nose, eyeball, ears, mouth, cheek, chin? Look in a mirror, try smiling, look sad, cross, surprised. What happens to your mouth when you smile, your eyebrows when you are surprised?

Sitting opposite a partner cover the lower and upper parts of the face with your hands so that only your eyes and eyebrows are showing, partner A looks alternately surprised, happy, sad, cross, puzzled etc while partner B tries to guess what the expression is. Experiment with different types of faces without masking the face. What do we do to make these expressions, how many can we make, guess?

All clowns try to have different make-up but what is make-up for? How would Clown Makeup assist to emphasise those parts of the face. What are other reasons that clowns wear make up?

Perform your own Circus

It can be as simple as an improvised

mimed performance using gym apparatus, bean bags, hula hoops or a rehearsed presentation for parents. With costumes, make-up and music.

Circus in a Suitcase by Reg Bolton is a most useful book and is available at approx £5 from Sensational from most of the Jugglers supplies shops listed in this pack. (Ring to check availability and cost)

Music ideas

There are many stimulating pieces of music that can be used for creative activities with a circus theme.

Overture Roman carnival - Berlioz
Second Overture, Carnival - Dvorak
'The Acrobats' - The Bartered Bride - Smetana
Circus Polka - Stravinsky
Entry of the Gladiators - Fucik
Clown's Dance - Kabalevsky
Carnival of the Animals - Saint-Saens
Barnum - The Musical
Most tunes by Sousa!

What acts are suggested when listening to some of the above pieces.

Learn a song

try-
The Clown - Apuskidi (Songs for children, A&C Black
The Circus - Jean Gilbert - Child Education Special No 32
The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze.

Circus Workshop

Magic Carpet Theatre can present half day clowning and full day Circus workshops for all ages. These can be an ideal stimulus to developing your own show. There's details on our web site - www.magiccarpettheatre.com

Art Ideas

The Big Top in the classroom

The hall or classroom can be decorated to suggest a big top. Paper streamers or ribbons can be draped from the walls to a centrally hung hula-hoop forming the shape of a big top. Friezes and posters can hang on the walls. Create a box office to "sell" tickets. These can be collected from the audience as they enter. Please bear in mind, if you develop this idea in the hall in which we are performing, that we need 7' 6" of height in the performing area.

Dressing the part

The audience, children and staff, can be encouraged to attend the show dressed as circus acts.

Extend the circus environment

At one school that we visited the corridor and other areas had been decorated with a circus theme. Doors became caravan doors, the MI room became the box office with a half-door effect and a suitable face peering from the pay box window. A little used cloakroom and corridor became the menagerie, the cloakroom housing a gigantic bear and part of an elephant. The Heads office door was the Circus Proprietor's caravan. I'm sure some staff and heads would consider this quite apt!

Design your own Clown faces

Then try painting your friend's face. We suggest using Aqua color by Kryolan or, the British made, Snazzeroo. Both are water-based, non-toxic, have bright colours and are available from suppliers listed in this pack. Don't use too much water, a little goes a long way. Remember the more make-up the less character.

Make a Clown Egg

Transfer your clown face design

onto a blown egg. Add 3D features noses, ears, hair, hat etc. Stand the eggs on a collar - made from a loo roll tube.

Circus Puppets

Make clown, animal and performer puppets. Simple glove puppets are ideal and use them to act out a Circus.

Design a Circus Poster, do this before the visit and use the posters to advertise the show.

Make a model Circus

You can download the plans for an early toy circus from the Theatre Museum Circus guided tour web site. address on our useful links page.

Make a shoe box Circus

The inside end and sides can have the tent and audience painted on. Cut out figures, ring and animals and glue in position. Make a translucent lid (use tracing or greaseproof paper) to let the light in. The Circus is viewed through a small spy hole in one end.

Make a "Heads, Bodies, Legs" Book

A Clown, Ringmaster, Tightrope walker, would be fun to make and view. The characters change as the pages with separate body parts on are turned.

Be Your own Tentmaster

Using Art Straws and string experiment with rigging a big top.

Paint your favourite scene
Paint or draw your favourite scene from The Magic Circus, try and remember the colours and the details of the scene.

Clown Cartoon

Draw a strip cartoon of a clown trick, use no more than 6 pictures.

Clown Alley

Mount a Clown portrait gallery - add poems about clowns or clown words.

Giant Clown Display

Make a huge wall display of a clown using colourful scraps of material to form the costume and props.

Amazing Acrobats

The acrobats were not in the Magic Circus show - they had gone on the bus. Can you paint a picture of their act. They do somersaults, they balance on each others heads, six people high!!
Or cut out acrobats using stiff card. Shape their hands and feet in the form of a hook and hang them in the classroom from string like a mobile.



Computer Art by Shauna age 7
Newland Primary School, Hull

Circus Science

There are some important scientific principles involved in many Circus acts, take juggling for instance, this activity involves application of many basic laws of physics, Mass, Center of gravity, Inertia, shapes, Force, gravity, friction, air drag, Motion, projectile motion, centripetal force.....

Try Juggling

Bobby juggled with Rings, beanbags are easier to learn with. School beanbags tend to be too large and oblong shaped. They can be taped up to use. Beanbags can be bought from juggling suppliers or you can make your own.

Make Juggling Beanbags

Sew together two squares of material leave one side open and stuff with rice or pearl barley then sew that side up, make the beanbag a pyramid shape. Look up in a book or on the internet the instructions for 3 object juggling. Or book a Magic Carpet workshop!

Try Plate Spinning

Plastic Spinning Plates can be obtained from Butterfingers or Magic Carpet but the principles can be tested with paper plates.

Fortunately there is no real need for the aspirant juggler to have a complete understanding of the application of Newton's laws. But knowing that for a spinning plate to spin the balancing stick must be exactly at the center of the plate and that with the plate spinning the stick is easier to balance because of the gyroscopic effect is useful.

Paper Plate Spinning

Will the plate balance on a pencil? Where does it balance? Can you find the center?

Stick a polo mint on the center bottom of the plate and spin the plate on a pen or pencil. Plates can be decorated.

Balance

Try to balance a stick on your hand, keeping your eye on the top of the stick. Try different lengths of stick, from a pencil to a broomstick. Which is harder to balance a metre rule or a short ruler? Pepito Alvarez could balance a tea spoon on his nose, flick it up in a 360 degree turn and catch it back on his nose!

Human balance

If two pupils (of a similar height and weight) hold hands while facing each other, toes together and bodies straight, lean back they will not fall over as they are each holding each other up. This becomes more interesting when the children are of different sizes and allowance has to be made for weight and size by one child leaning further back to counterbalance the other. Try this over gym mats.

Tightrope Potato

Use a cork or a potato, make a small groove at its centre of gravity and try to balance it on a taut piece of string. Stick two forks in the balancing object, the tightrope walker, so that they are at an angle and hang below the wire.

Circus Colour

We have seen two excellent wall displays at Whinfield Infants in Darlington dealing with colour.

Do you know your colours?

One had a life size cut out clown from the waist up with 10 large coloured painted cutout balloons correctly labelled and with real ribbons trailing to the clown's hands. Captions read - "Look at Mr Clown's balloons. Do you know your colours? Do you know how to mix the colours?"

Clown mixing colours display

The second display featured 4 clowns standing in painted spotlight beams. The beams were Red, Blue, and Yellow. The red beam and blue

beam were crossed by two yellow beams. Where they crossed the beams were orange and green. Large labels read - Red Blue and Yellow are Primary Colours. What happens when the red spotlight crosses the yellow spotlight? What happens when the blue spotlight crosses the yellow spotlight? What do you think would happen if the red spotlight crossed the blue spotlight?



Maths Ideas

Circus Maths can be fun, here are a few starter ideas.

Money.

Mr Ringmaster has to pay the acts - maybe he didn't and that is why they left. He has to earn money from the tickets and other sales. Turn your home corner into a circus box office and circus café. Make tickets and notices and price lists. Add up the takings.

Graphs bar and pie charts to show favourite Circus acts,, who has and who hasn't been to a Circus.

Shape

Rings, juggler' rings and the circus ring What is and how do you find the diameter, radius, circumference, and center.

Clown mobile -Geometric shapes.

Make up a clown puppet mobile using geometric shapes, circles, triangles, rectangles etc. Make each similar shape the same colour and use plastic bag ties to assemble or string them together and hang the completed figure from a wire coat hanger.

Symmetry work, using clown faces and make up.

Time

How long does an act last, how long does the show last what time does the show start

Distance

Circuses travel great distances, Magic Carpet has travelled for instance from Aberdeen to Margate and from Hull to Aberystwyth. Can you plot a route for a Circus tour and show the distances?

Ideas for Wail Displays

Clowns can do sums

Make four cut out, colourful, life size clowns holding painted cut out

balloons, each balloon has a sum on it but no answer.

Can You add?

A table display - assemble a number of clown objects, pictures, books etc. Questions on cards - How many eyes~ How many legs? How many clowns? How many hats?

Can you count in 5's.

A large life size cut out of a clown with a shower of balls in an arc around his head - from hand to hand, each ball numbered 5, 10, 15, 20 etc.

Circus addition

With Circus animals.

Make large cut out elephants in a Circus ring - make them into a display showing -1 elephant + 1 elephant = 2 elephants.

How many Circus elephants make 5?.

Make a background of a Circus ring divided into two, showing, $1 + 4$, $2 + 3$, 3 and 2 more, $0 + 5$, $4 + 1$ and divided into 3 to show $2 + 1 + 2 = 5$.



Quiz

Name

How many rings did Bobby juggle with?

What did Bobby ride on?

What colour was the Ringmaster's coat?

What did the Elephants leave in?

How many "presents" did Bobby give?

What was the name of Bobby's big flower

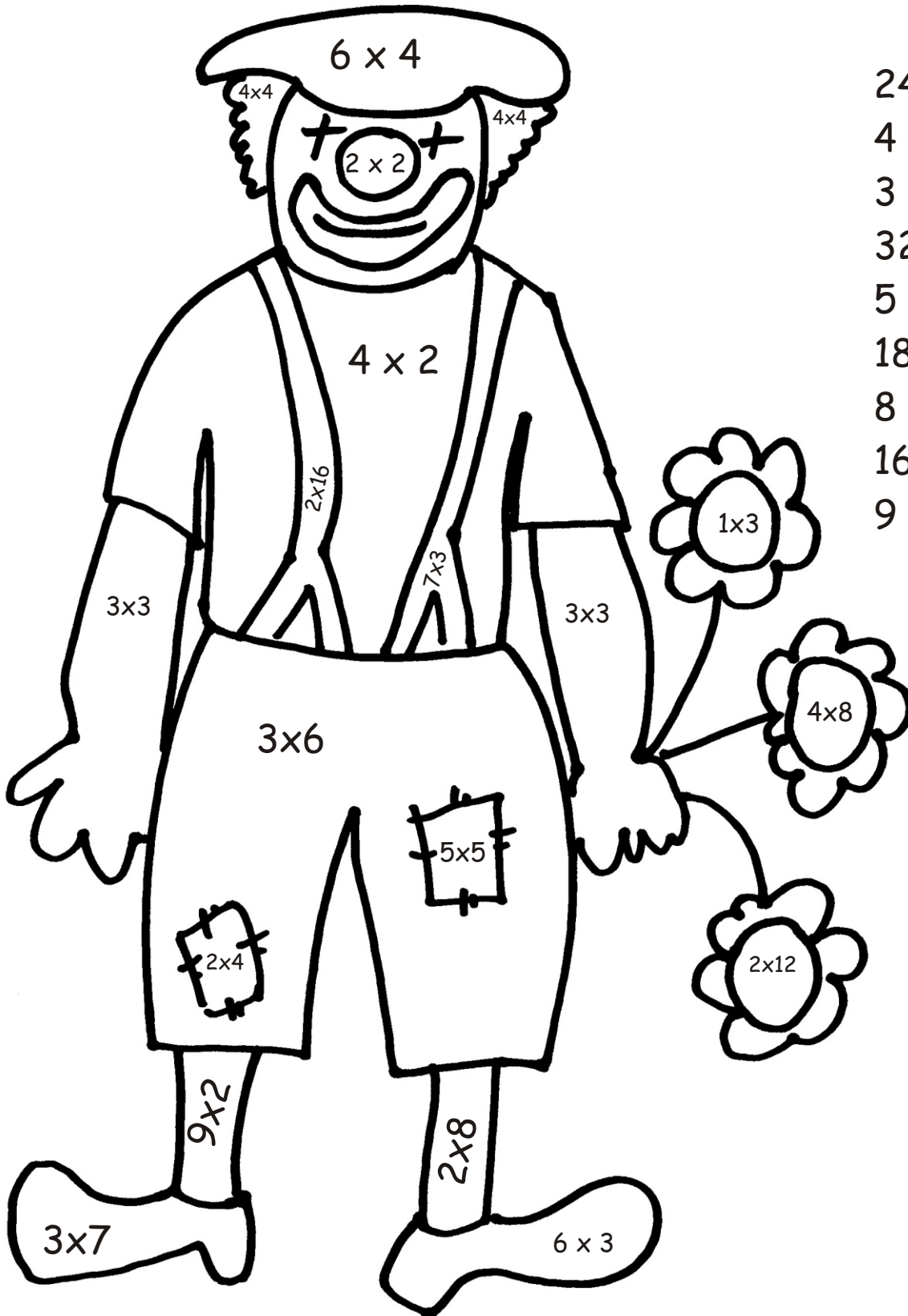
What colour was Bobby's hat?

What is the name of a circus tent?

Write about or draw your favourite part in the show

Help Bobby with his sums!

Name



24 - yellow

4 - red

3 - brown

32 - green

5 - orange

18 - brown

8 - yellow

16 - blue

9 - pink

3 - green

8 - yellow

25 - purple



www.magiccarpettheatre.com

Useful links and addresses



You can book our fantastically popular Circus workshop activity – Circus Avago - for full-day, half day and longer residencies. Suitable for all key stages. These sessions culminate in an exciting performance by the participants. There's more details on our web site.

www.magiccarpettheatre.com

CIRCUS EQUIPMENT

Contact Magic Carpet for Spinning Plates and sticks, Chinese Ribbons, Juggling Scarves, Diabolos, Juggling Bean Bags, Unicycles and more.

circus@magiccarpettheatre.com

Circus Guided Tour

www.peopleplayuk.org.uk/guided_tours/circus_tour
(excellent Theatre Museum guided tour with history, images, activities and quiz).

The University of Sheffield
National Fairground Archive

www.nfa.dept.shef.ac.uk



www.circusfriends.co.uk





Circus Workshop



Exciting, Stimulating, fun with full participation

Ideally complements the Magic Circus performance
Half-day, full day and longer residency workshops are available
for all key stages, ages can be mixed
A workshop performance is presented by those taking part

We'll adapt to meet your aims for booking a Circus Workshop:-

- developing physical and performance skills
- learning to juggle and defying gravity
- a staff and pupils fun day
- developing trust and sharing
- personal development, self-esteem and confidence building....
- It's non-stop action for the whole school, from start to exciting finish. (Classes do not just get a half hour session – all pupils are fully involved all day!)

There's more information on our web site – www.magiccarpettheatre.com
contact Steve or Jamie at
circus@magiccarpettheatre.com or 01482 709939

MAGIC CARPET'S

CIRCUS

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**Magic
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