Cue Sheet

Guides for Teachers

Cirque Mechanics – TILT!

Friday, February 27, 2026
10:15am

Questions to ask students BEFORE the performance

- Do you have any special skills or talents that are different from those of friends and family?
- What skills do you think that Cirque Mechanics' performers need to have?
- What is gravity and what does it mean when it's said that something "defies gravity?"

Questions to ask students AFTER the performance

- What story was the show trying to tell and how did the performers use their actions to tell it, rather than words?
- What visuals in the performance showed that the story was taking place in the past?
- Have you ever been to an amusement park? How were the sets and mechanics used in the show similar or different to what you saw when you visited?

POPEJOY SCHOOLTIME SERIES

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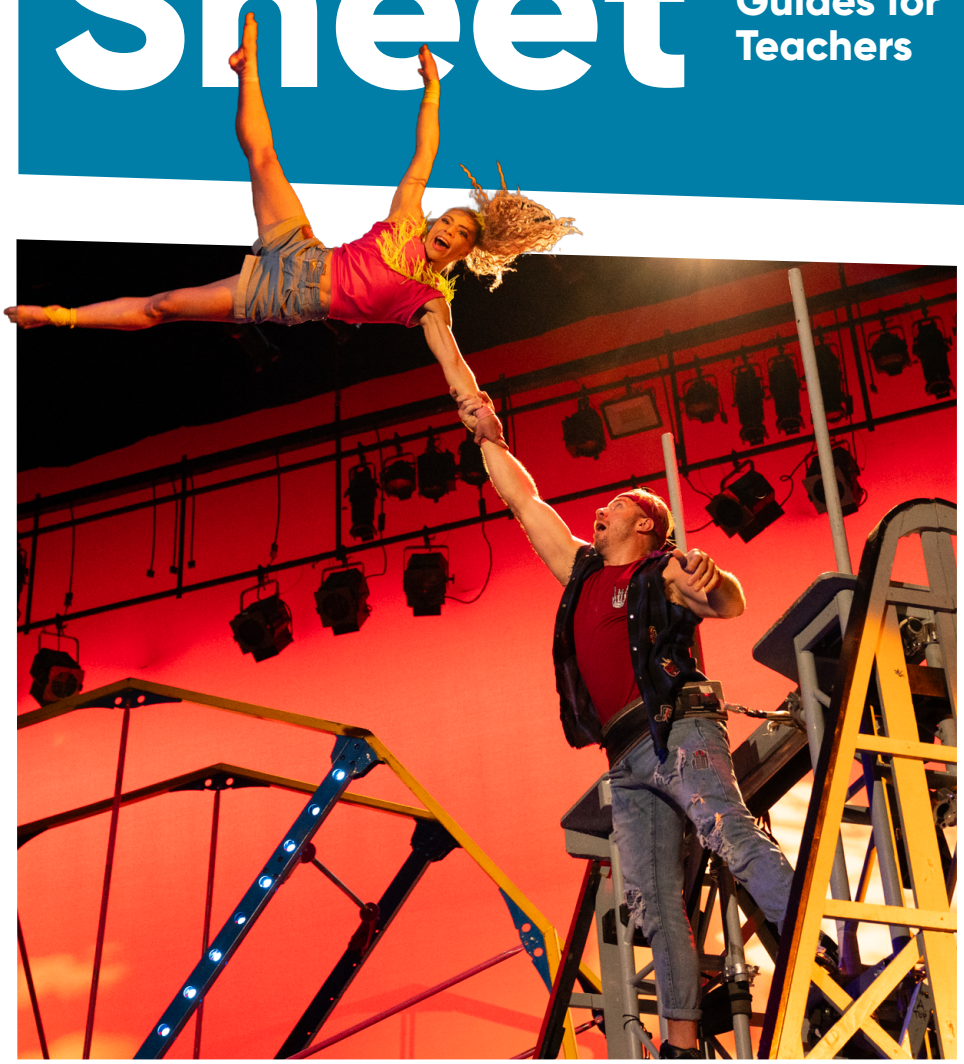

About the Performance

Cirque Mechanics newest show, *Tilt!,* takes audiences back to the past in an engaging experience that centers engineering, acrobatics, and storytelling. The inventive modern circus company designs and constructs its own props and, through their performances, explores the relationship between humans and machines. *Tilt!* is set in the backlot of a vintage amusement park, with iconic rides inspiring the newest mechanical creations. The story follows a weary worker, worn down and disconnected from the joy around him. When he confiscates a guest's boom box, a playful chase leads to a whirlwind of stunts and surprises

Throughout the performance, demonstrations of gravity, momentum, balance, and teamwork unfold, providing meaningful connection to curriculum in physics and creative thinking while also offering students a memorable experience. *This performance runs approximately 60 minutes; it has been shortened for time from the mainstage version.*

Vocabulary

acrobat *(ak-ruh-bat)* - someone who performs gymnastics requiring skillful control of the body

aerial *(air-ee-uhl)* - having to do with the air or performed high above the ground

apparatus *(ap-uh-rat-uhs)* - an instrument or appliance designed for a specific operation

balance *(bal-uhns)* - the ability to stay steady and not fall over

cirque *(surk)* - a type of circus that uses acrobatics, movement, and storytelling

contortionist *(kuhn-tor-shuh-nist)* - an acrobat who twists their bodies into unusual poses

contraption *(kun-trap-shun)* - another name for a machine, device, or gadget

homage *(hom-ij)* - something done to show respect or honor to something from the past

mechanical *(mih-kan-ih-kuhl)* - having to do with machines or moving parts

motion *(moh-shuhn)* - the act of moving or changing position

nostalgia *(nuh-stal-juh)* - a feeling of remembering something from the past

spectacle *(spek-tuh-kuhl)* - something exciting or amazing to watch

stunts *(stuhnts)* - difficult or dangerous actions done for entertainment

Click here!

For another educational resource, download this *Tilt!* performance study guide.

Beyond the Show

These short activities can be used before or after the performance to extend themes and concepts of the production to the classroom.

Human Factory

Ask students to imagine they are parts of one big, connected machine. One student starts a repeated movement, and each new student adds a different motion. Together, the class becomes a "working machine." Afterward, discuss how each part had a role in the machine's function and how this concept helps both machines and people get a job done.

Slow Motion Movement

Ask students to imagine their bodies as machines moving very slowly. Direct them to perform a simple action, such as raising an arm, bending, or turning, in slow motion, controlling every part of their body. Afterwards, discuss how controlling movement helps performers stay precise and safe during stunts.

Circus History

As a group, research and share the history of the circus. Discuss how Cirque Mechanics references circus history, while also being innovative. What makes Cirque Mechanics a "modern" circus? How it is different from the circuses of the past?

Facts about Popejoy Hall

- **Popejoy Hall officially opened on October 1, 1966.**
- **The hall can seat up to 1985 people.**
- **Most walls inside the hall are not parallel or perpendicular to the stage. Curves, angles, and soft or textured surfaces scatter the sound throughout the hall so that audiences can hear performances better.**
- **Popejoy Hall has an orchestra pit which raises and lowers. It is the largest elevator in the building.**
- **The ceiling over the stage is three times the height of the curtain opening. Sets can be lowered into place by pulleys and raised high enough to be stored completely out of sight when not in use.**

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