

ENRICHMENT GUIDE



# THE TALE OF LA LLORONA

AS TOLD BY CONSUELO CHAVEZ

Sponsored by  
 **Children's  
Wisconsin**  
Kids deserve the best.

 **FIRST  
STAGE**  
TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH THEATER

PROUD CORNERSTONE MEMBER  
 **UPF**  
UNITED PERFORMING ARTS FUND

## DEAR EDUCATORS AND PARENTS,

Disappointed that a thunderstorm has stopped them from their traditional trick or treating, six middle-schoolers huddle together in a basement on what might be the last time they are together to celebrate All Hallow's Eve. To pass the time, they share some of their favorite ghost stories...but are they just stories?

Enclosed in this enrichment guide is a range of materials and activities intended to help you discover connections within the play through the curricula. It is our hope that you will use the experience of attending the theater and seeing THE TALE OF LA LLORONA with your students as a teaching tool. Use this guide to best serve your children — pick and choose, or adapt, any of these suggestions for discussions or activities. We encourage you to take advantage of the enclosed student worksheets — please feel free to photocopy the sheets for your students, or the entire guide for the benefit of other teachers.

Enjoy the show!



Julia Magnasco  
Education Director  
(414) 267-2971  
Julia@firststage.org

# THE ORIGINS OF LA LLORONA

From [www.historytoday.com](http://www.historytoday.com)



From: [www.brycehedstrom.com](http://www.brycehedstrom.com)

La Llorona is a legendary figure with various incarnations. Usually translated into English as 'the wailing woman', she is often presented as a banshee-type: an apparition of a woman dressed in white, often found by lakes or rivers, sometimes at crossroads, who cries into the night for her lost children, whom she has killed. She is often described as a lost soul, doomed to wander the earth forever. To some she is a bogeywoman, used by parents to scare children into good behaviour.

This folk story has been represented artistically in various guises: in film, animation, art, poetry, theatre and in literature aimed at both adults and children alike. The legend is deeply ingrained in Mexican culture and among the Chicano Mexican population of the United States.

The origins of the legend are uncertain, but it has been presented as having pre-Hispanic roots. La Llorona [is a] fairly modern myth that has evolved over time and has been used since the late 19th century to reflect and comment upon the socio-political situation of Mexico. By presenting La Llorona during the Day of the Dead celebrations, both of which have disputed origins but are thought to be 'quintessentially Mexican', it can be used to present to the world a new version of Mexico's history and an official representation of Mexican identity.



# HOST YOUR OWN SPOOKY STORY CIRCLE

## ACTIVITY

In La Llorona, a group of friends are trying to enjoy their last Halloween together by trying to spook each other. Storytelling is a way we all can connect to our culture, our past and share common truths. In this Halloween story circle, the friends bond over their shared fear and skepticism on whether to believe or not believe Consuelo's haunting tale.

In this activity, create your own haunted tales and prepare to get spooked!

### STEP 1 – CREATE THE STORY

1. Share with students that we are going to create our very own scary story. Ask them what details exemplify the ghost/scary story genre. Ideas may include:
  - a. Ghosts or ghostly circumstances
  - b. Intrusion of the dead into the realm of the living
  - c. Suspense/tense moments
  - d. Unexplained happenings
  - e. Magic
6. Place students into small groups of 3 or 4. They will be responsible for writing the first paragraph to their ghost story- this will be the exposition. They must incorporate at least two elements of their assigned genre in their story. They must also create a sound track or sound effects that accompany their story.
7. Before beginning, review the criterion for the exposition and brainstorm some ideas as a group. What details will you include to incite fear and tension?
8. If needed, give all students the story starter line, It was a dark and stormy night...
9. When groups present these stories to the class, one or two students can read the story and the other students creating the sound track/effects.
10. Tips for storytelling- In order to act out the beginning of their story in a suspenseful way, they must consider their text the way an actor does- how they will use their voice, what pauses they will take, and what sounds they will make to convey a suspenseful mood.

# HOST YOUR OWN SPOOKY STORY CIRCLE

## ACTIVITY

---

### STEP TWO – SET THE STAGE

1. Create the mood for the story sharing. Ask students: How can we illicit a mood and feeling of suspense and fear? Ideas may include: dimming/changing the lights, putting on some eerie music, creating a stage space.
2. Have groups rehearse the stories with these environmental elements in mind.
3. Allow groups time to complete their story starter and rehearse their execution. Assist groups as needed.
4. After practicing with the exposition, you can either stop and share the exposition or continue writing the rest of their stories in this same matter.

### STEP THREE – BREAK A LEG!

1. Gather 'round and let the scaring begin!
2. Afterwards, discuss: How did the actors intentionally create a feeling of tension and curiosity in their audience?



# WHO SAID IT?

---

1. "Mexican sweet bread. The best bread. The take me to heaven bread."
2. "We're growing up. That's what's happening. That doesn't mean we'll drift apart."
3. "We are each other's stories. And those stories are just beginning, not ending."
4. "So, for better or worse, you people are stuck with me. And I am stuck with you."
5. "This was supposed to be our last Halloween night together?"
6. "You can't go begging for candy when you're a freshman."
7. "Six souls not knowing where they are heading... but, knowing where they belong."

ANSWER KEY: 1. Chuy 2. Consuelo 3. Consuelo  
4. Lisa 5. Michael 6. Michael 7. Narrator