



Once Upon A Time...

5th Grade

Duration

Pre-Visit: 40 minutes

Museum Visit: 60 minutes

Post Visit: 50 minutes

Location

Age of Mammals Hall

Supplies

- Worksheet(s)
- Pencil
- Clipboard (optional)
- Age of Mammals Images (included)

Standards

[CCSS ELA](#)

W.3, W.7, SL.6

[CA State](#)

ELA Writing

1.0, 1.1, 2.1

VAPA

Development of Vocabulary
or Theatre 1.1

Vocabulary

Script · Plot · Exposition ·
Rising Action · Climax ·
Falling Action · Resolution ·
Point of View · Setting ·
Conflict · Protagonist/
Antagonist · Personification
· Monologue · Dialogue

Concepts

- Animal interactions with their environment tell natural stories.
- Narrative stories have a plot, point of view, setting and conflict
- There is a set of vocabulary associated with theatre.

Objectives

- Students will observe ancient animals and their environments.
- Students will write and present a narrative piece that includes a plot, point of view, setting and conflict.
- Students will use theatre vocabulary to describe experiences.

Outline

1. In one classroom session before visiting the Museum, review theater vocabulary and apply it during a discussion about observations of animals and environments presented in the Age of Mammals Hall.
2. During a trip to the Museum explore the Age of Mammals, where students will be assigned to specific environments to continue observing and begin writing their narrative story.
3. Back in the classroom, students will finish their story and write a script that will be presented or performed for the rest of the class.

Pre-Visit

In your classroom, print out and distribute the theater vocabulary list worksheet to students and have them look it over. Then, show the *A Prehistoric Story* images (below) to the class. You may choose to do this as a digital slide show, or printing and passing around images below. Discuss the images using the theatre vocabulary, using the following questions as prompts to help guide the discussion:

- How might we describe the setting in this image?
- What different points of view are present in this image?
- Who are the characters in this environment?
- What might their relationships be?
- Who might the protagonist be? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Who might the antagonist be? What do you see that makes you say that?
- What might be the conflict in this picture?
- If the blank boxes were thought or voice bubbles, what might they read?

If you like, pre-plan designate student groups and assign environments before the Museum visit.

Museum Visit

Distribute the graphic organizer worksheet (Elements of a Story) to students. Gather students in front of the cheetah exhibit (“What is a Mammal” exhibit case) and ask the following questions:

- What characters do you see here?
- What is the setting?
- We are seeing one moment in this story. What might have happened before this moment? What might happen after?

Next, lead the students to the Mezzanine of the Age of Mammals in front of the “Understanding Environments” wall and divide them into groups of four or five. Assign each group a starting point. There are four environments, all of which are located in what is now Southern California:

- La Brea Tar Pits (27 thousand years ago)
- The Mojave Desert (10 million years ago)
- Los Angeles Basin (15 million years ago)
- Ventura County (40 million years ago)

Students should use their graphic organizer (Elements of a Story) to take notes on their assigned environment. Make sure the students are using critical thinking as they collaborate and take notes.

Post-Visit

Have students get together in their groups from the Museum and compare notes. Each group should first complete a story map worksheet (Story Map) based on their observations environment from the Museum. Then, using the story map and notes, the group should compose a short script based on the story map.

As a culminating activity, ask each group to present or perform their story for the other groups. The class should use new vocabulary to describe the theatrical experience. Assess student work using the rubric below.

Variations & Extensions

- Look at Charles Knight paintings of ancient ecosystems on Rotunda Mezzanine for additional inspiration (adjacent to Age of Mammals hall).
- Have students create costumes and/or set pieces to enhance their scenes.

2 Once Upon A Time...

A Prehistoric Story

Ancient Environments in Southern California

Marsh Environment

In Ventura County 40 Million Years Ago...



Marine Environment

In the Los Angeles Basin 15 Million Years Ago...

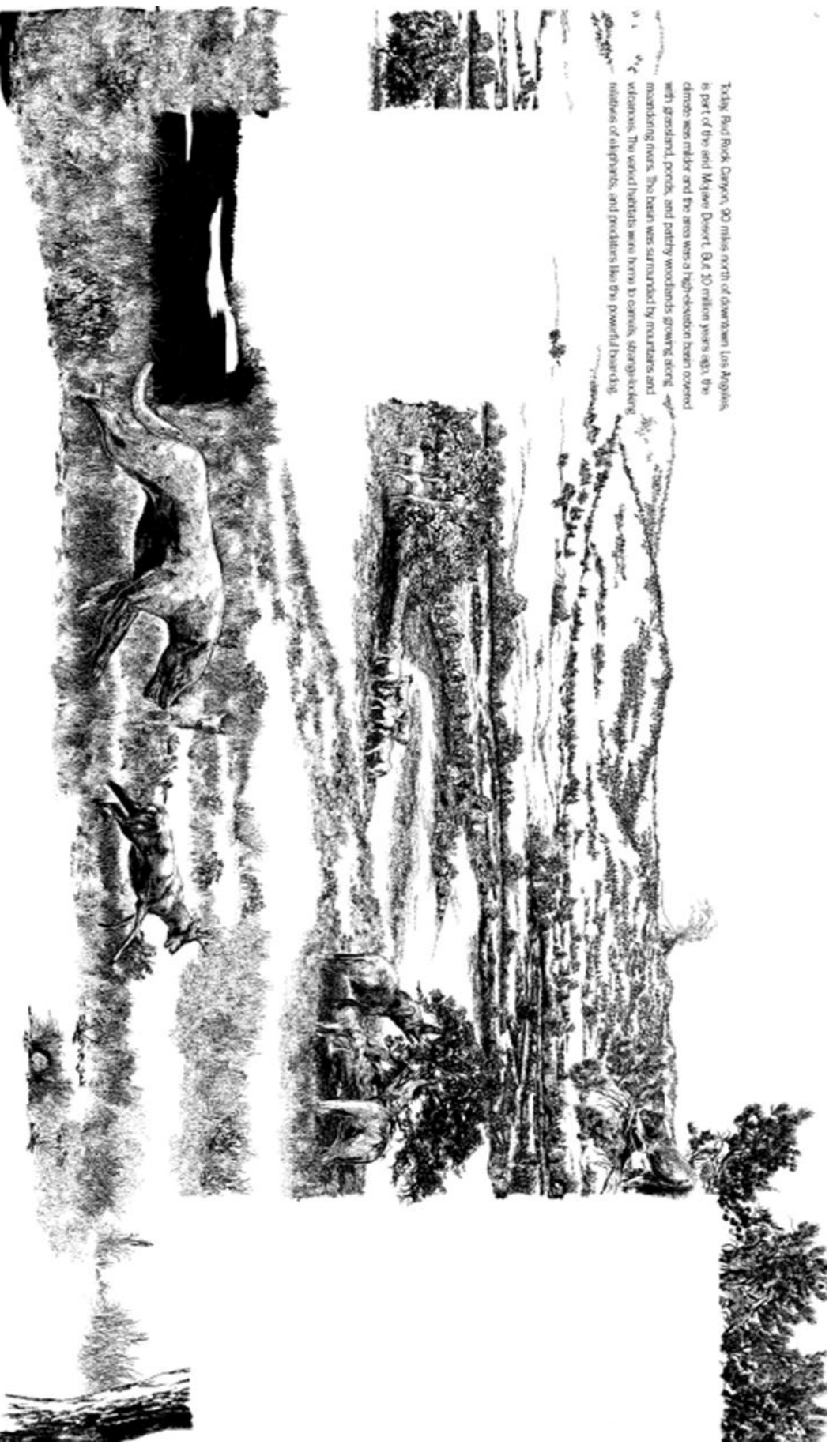
Fifteen million years ago, the area we know as the Los Angeles Basin lay under the sea hundreds of miles south of here. Since then, the sea has receded and movements of the Earth's crust have shifted the area northward to its present location. The fossils of marine life include early relatives of species that live in subtropical waters today, indicating that the ocean waters were warmer then.



Grassland Environment

In the Mojave Desert 10 Million Years Ago...

Today, Red Rock Canyon, 90 miles north of downtown Los Angeles, is part of the arid Mojave Desert. But 10 million years ago, the climate was milder and the area was a high-elevation basin covered with grassland, ponds, and patchy woodlands growing along meandering rivers. The basin was surrounded by mountains and volcanoes. The varied habitats were home to canids, strange-looking relatives of elk, pronghorns, and predators like the powerful bear dog.



The La Brea Tar Pits

In the middle of Los Angeles 27,000 years ago...

Just yards from Wilshire Boulevard – one of the busiest streets in Los Angeles – the La Brea Tar Pits are famous for the many fossils of large extinct mammals and birds that were trapped there between 45,000–11,000 years ago. However, the fossils of plants and smaller animals provide us with more detailed information about the environments in which those larger animals lived.



Theatre Vocabulary List

Look over the vocabulary below, and be prepared to use these theater terms!

Vocab	Definition
Script	The written text of the story to be performed.
Plot	The events of the story.
Exposition	Background information that helps inform the story.
Rising Action	Events building up to the climax of the play.
Climax	When the conflict of the plot is resolved; the highpoint of the play.
Falling Action	Events occurring after the climax of the play.
Resolution	When the problem or conflict has been solved. When agreement is made.
Point of View	The way a certain character sees things and its importance (each character has a different point of view).
Setting	Where the story takes place.
Conflict	The problem or difficulty that propels the story and makes it interesting.
Protagonist	The character that propels the action of the play.
Antagonist	The character that creates the conflict in the play.
Personification	The attribution of personal nature or character to an inanimate object or notion.
Monologue	Words/text spoken by a single actor usually alone on stage.
Dialogue	Words/text spoken between two or more actors.
Sense Memory	An acting technique used to deepen or strengthen an actor's portrayal. Example: Remembering the specific smell or pine trees when you are doing a scene in the woods.
Cue	The signal that tells an actor what to do next. Most 'cues' are thought of as lines the other actor says before you say your line. However, a cue can be a line in the play or a light going on or off or a sound. Anything that is the signal for something to happen on stage.



Elements of a Story

Using the image you have been assigned, fill out the graphic organizer below to detail the story elements you see. Feel free to add deeper meaning and creativity to certain aspects, and be specific!

The graphic organizer consists of a central green hexagon with the text "Elements Of My Story". Four lines extend from the corners of the hexagon to the corners of a large rounded rectangle. This large rectangle is divided into three sections: a top section labeled "Setting", a bottom-left section labeled "Characters", and a bottom-right section labeled "Conflict".

Setting

Elements Of My Story

Characters

Conflict



Story Map

Use the space below to outline the plot of your story, this will help you when you write the scrip. Remember, be specific and clear!

<p>Climax</p>	<p>Rising Action</p>	<p>Exposition</p>
<p>Falling Action & Resolution</p>		

Script and Presentation Rubric

Grades are assigned for the entire group.

Student Names:

(*J*+ = Above Average; *J* = Average; *J*- = Below Average, point values to be determined by teacher)

1. Script *J*+ *J* *J*- _____ / _____ pts

2. Costumes/Props *J*+ *J* *J*- _____ / _____ pts

3. Characterization *J*+ *J* *J*- _____ / _____ pts

4. Staging *J*+ *J* *J*- _____ / _____ pts

5. Time on task *J*+ *J* *J*- _____ / _____ pts

TOTAL = _____ / _____ pts

Additional Comments: