

SLAPSTICK SCIENCE

Combustion and Kiddie Chem Show Preparation

Introduction

Sometimes a word on good manners for guests is appropriate, but normally not necessary. This is also an opportunity for the PTA to let the children know they arranged for this program (i.e. "This program is sponsored by the PTA. If you wondered where the money from the wrapping paper went, now you know."). Dr. Quark will take over after hearing the end of the introduction which is as follows:

"Today we have a guest Chemist. Let's have a warm _____ School welcome for Dr. Quinton Quark."

Special Considerations

Some smoke will be generated during "Combustion." Although heat sensors will not be bothered, smoke detectors over the stage will probably be activated. It is the school's responsibility to take appropriate precautions:

1. many stages have the smoke detectors on a switch - disable them during the show. WE ARE NOT SUGGESTING DISABLING THE ENTIRE SCHOOL'S SMOKE DETECTION SYSTEM - JUST THE SENSORS OVER THE STAGE We have seen some other methods of isolating the stage from activating the alarm system:

1. some detectors unscrew like light bulbs, and they are removed during the show and replaced afterwards

2. some schools wrap plastic bags around the sensors for the duration of the program

3. some schools say "It's not that sensitive" and cross their fingers - about one third of the time this means a fire drill happens during the show.

2. turn on all ventilators during the show, or somehow create a draft away from the sensors by opening doors and windows

3. a week in advance, and again of the day of the show, advise the fire department that a program which may set off the alarm will be appearing on that day, and invite them to send a representative to watch the show. We always appreciate feedback from fire professionals, and in case a sensor is set off, the local fireman can call the station and cancel the trucks.

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Show Requirements

1. clean and clear stage
2. lined garbage barrel on stage
3. a table on stage
4. if school has a large dolly to lend, that's very helpful
5. 75 to 90 minutes to set up
6. 75 to 90 minutes to tear down

Volunteers

For Kiddie Chem, about a half dozen students will be asked to come on stage; to earn the privilege of joining the stage they must get the right answer to a question about something that was just discussed.

For Combustion, only three student volunteers will get to come on stage, and one of these will be selected primarily based on her/his clothing choice for the day. In Connecticut, one adult with a sense of humor will also be needed on stage for a couple of minutes to comply with CT fire laws.

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Students and teachers with questions, comments, or suggestions for other things you'd like to see can write Dr. Quark at the above address! He loves mail and will try to answer what he gets!