



Sensory Friendly Performances

What is a Sensory Friendly Performance

According to the Kennedy Center,

“Sensory-friendly performances are designed to create a welcoming and comfortable arts experience for people with autism, sensory sensitivities, or other social, learning or cognitive disabilities.”

This means that certain measures will be taken to ensure inclusiveness and accessibility for all. There are many differences to a standard theatrical performance

What Designers Need to Know

In terms of design differences, there will be:

- A reduction or elimination of any bright lights, strobe effects, or haze
- House lights will be dimmed, not off
- Lowering of loud sounds that will not affect the actors performances (i.e sound effects such as thunder or non musical elements)
- Being able to provide sensory aids such as noise muffling headphones

Other aspects to consider will be:

- Guests will be allowed to speak, get up, leave and move around if needed
- Possibly having experts around who know how to accommodate to families' needs

What Actors Need to Know

Actors will need to be made aware that a sensory friendly performance is happening so they can adjust properly. For a musical, music cannot be lowered as they are essential to actor's cues. They will need to know that there will be noise or movement from the audience and house lights are not fully down.

Possible Strategies or Needs

Ideally, it would be nice to collaborate or have experts available for this performance so we can create the best possible environment.

- Having a designated quiet area
- Possibly allowing the use of electronic devices ONLY for nonverbal audience members
- A small blurb explaining the plot to follow along to
- The use of a sensory bag of items that relate to the plot

Sensory Friendly Bags

This summer, the Black Hills Playhouse had a sensory friendly performance of *The Little Mermaid*, which used sensory friendly bags. Sensory friendly bags are a small bag full of items that relate to the plot with instructions on what to do with them.



Sensory Friendly Bags



List of Interactive Activities

When Scuttle flies down toward the shore,
brush your arm with a feather.

As fish and other sea creatures take the
stage, eat some Goldfish crackers.

When you see Ariel's mersisters, touch the
scales on your sequin stocking.

Wave your scarf at Flotsam and Jetsam,
Ursula's two loyal eels.

Take orders for Chef Louis by writing or
scribbling on your mermaid tail notepad.

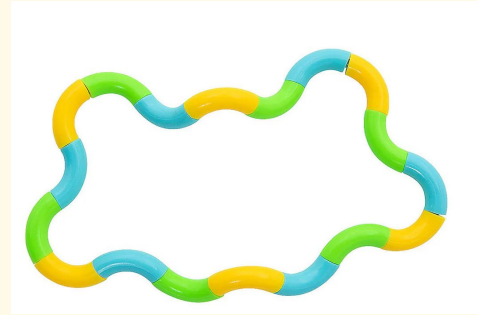
Blow bubbles during "Under the Sea".

Allow a Hershey's kiss to slowly melt in your
mouth during "Kiss the Girl".

Just need to fidget? Feel free to use your
pop fidget anytime!

Possible Ideas for *The Lightning Thief* sensory bag

- During “Another Terrible Day”, write (or draw) what a good day is like)
- If they go to Camp Half Blood, eat a mini marshmallow
- When Medusa appears, play with your snake twist
- When you hear the ocean, wave a blue scarf
- If Percy, Annabeth, and Grover are traveling, spin the wheels on your car toy



Snake twist