

# PRIMARY STUDY GUIDE



This is a musical which features the following characters:

**The Flim-Flam Brothers**

*a failing song and dance act*

**Fran**

*the piano accompanist and leader of the group who wants to be a newspaper reporter*

**Stan**

*a singer who wants the group to stay together*

**Slim**

*a singer and musician who just wants food*

**Soapy Smith**

*the "mayor" of a town in Alaska called "Skagway"*

**The "Doctor"**

*a fake doctor*

**Sam Steele**

*a mounted policeman*

**The Rag-time Kid**

*a pianist who plays and teaches "Ragtime" music*

**Arizona Charlie Meadows**

*a performing sharpshooter and owner of "The Palace Grande Theatre"*

**Klondike Kate**

*a dancer who may not be who she says she is*

*Primary students always enjoy the music, magic, humor, dancing, characters, color and spectacle in the Klondike Rag. To maximize the educational value for them, introduce them to new words, the story, and the instruments before the show.*

## New Words and Project Ideas

**Dawson City** - a town located where the Klondike River and the Yukon River meet. This is where gold miners, hotel owners, and performers lived during the Klondike Gold Rush.

**Gold** - A shiny yellow metal that people could use to buy things or exchange for money. If you found a lot of gold, you could become rich very quickly.

**Klondike** - a place where many people found gold and became rich. This is located in the Yukon in Northern Canada.

**Ragtime** - a kind of music that was popular one hundred years ago.

*Note: One hundred years ago, many people were poor, so it's possible to say that it was also time of rags because that's all some people had to wear!*

**Mountie** - a policeman. You'll recognize him in our show, because he's wearing a red jacket. His name is Sam Steele - a famous Mountie.

**Prospector** - Someone who went looking for gold.

**Shtick** - funny stuff, jokes or goofy movement.

*Project Idea: Have students take turns performing their own Shtick*

**Sternwheeler** - a boat that had a large wheel at the back of the boat that paddled through the water. It's also called a paddlewheeler.

**Vaudeville** - a type of variety show or talent show where people showed off their skills. There were singers, musicians, acrobats, comedians, magicians, jugglers, and dancers of all kinds that would put on shows that people paid to come and see.

*Project Idea: Have the students put on a variety show where they choose a talent to demonstrate.*

**Vaudevillians** - People who performed in Vaudeville shows were called vaudevillians. They were always hoping to improve their "act" (or their special talent) so that they could get work.

**Ventriloquist** - A person who pretends to have a puppet that speaks. The puppet doesn't actually talk, just the ventriloquist who speaks without moving lips. But since the puppet's mouth moves and a voice is heard at the same time, it looks like the puppet talks!

*Project Idea: Try talking without moving your own mouth. Move the mouth of a puppet, a paper bag, or even your hand in time with the words. Switch between talking to the puppet and having the puppet talk to you!*

# The Klondike Rag Story

## *The Beginning*

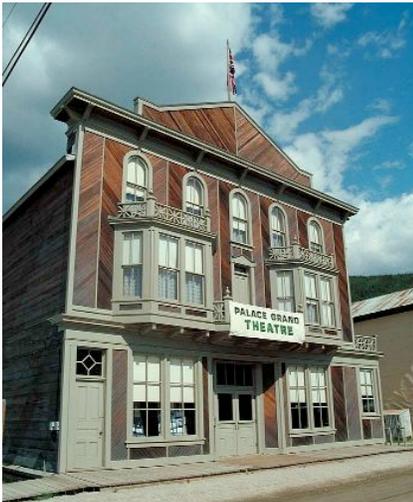
The Klondike Rag begins with the story of vaudeville performers who are so broke they're living on the street. Their song and dance "act" isn't working very well and one of them wants to quit. The others try to convince him to stay by demonstrating "ventriliquism". When they read about the discovery of gold in the "Klondike", they head North.

## *The Journey North*

While on a ship, they sing about what they would do if they were rich. When they land in a place called "Skagway", a bad man named, "Soapy Smith" tries to steal their money by pretending to offer medical examinations. They escape, but they discover they have to climb a very tall mountain at a place called "The Chilkoot Pass". An avalanche happens almost burying them under snow! After being helped by Sam Steele, they travel down the Yukon River on a Sternwheeler with "The Ragtime Kid", who teaches them how to play Ragtime music.

## *Arriving in Dawson City*

When they arrive in Dawson City, they find that the claims are staked, which means that all of the places where people are digging for gold have already been taken. They are poorer than ever! They meet Arizona Charlie Meadows, a vaudeville performer who is building the Palace Grande theatre and looking for vaudeville "acts". He agrees to hire them if they have a girl in the show.



*The Palace Grande Theatre in Dawson City*

# PROGRAM

## RAGTIME

### Song & Dance

The Call of Klondike Gold

SKAGWAY

That ain't a trail!

The Lion of the Yukon

STERNWHEELER RAG

Palace Grande Overture

Sawh Lake

KLONDIKE KATE

Caterpillar Smile

FIVE FINGER RAPIDS

*Songs in the show*

## *The Vaudeville Show*

In this part of the play, students will see a variety of acts: music, magic, singing, dancing, and ventriliquism.

*Note: remember that at the beginning of the play, drinking coffee made the "Flim-Flam" brothers speed up? You'll find out how this comes in handy at the end of the play!*



The musicians with the stand-up bass, the banjo and the mandolin.

## The Instruments in The Klondike Rag

**Piano** - an instrument played on a keyboard. It is played live on stage behind the sign, “Flim-Flam Brothers”.

**Stand up Bass** - a large instrument that looks like a big violin that is as tall as a person. It has four strings that can be plucked or bowed.

**The Mandolin** - a small instrument with eight strings played with a pick.

**The Ukulele** - the smallest instrument in the show that looks like a little guitar. It has four strings and is strummed with fingers.

**The Banjo** - a four or five string instrument with a round “head”. It is usually played with a pick or picks attached to fingertips. The banjo in our show is a four string banjo.

**The Saw** - this is a special kind of saw that can be played with a bow. As it brushes across the saw, the saw will vibrate creating a note!