The Story

Two children wander into a magical forest ruled by Diana, Queen of the Forest, and her shaggy lion. At first, the children are frightened by the boisterous animals, especially when they come charging out of the woods carrying huge knives, forks and spoons! But Queen Diana makes her animal subjects show the children kindness and respect, gifts that should be given to everyone by all creatures.

The Music

_Carnival of the Animals_ is the title of a piece of classical music written in 1886 by the French composer, Camille Saint Saëns (1835-1921). Saint Saëns was concerned that the piece was too frivolous to be considered as serious music and he only allowed one piece, The Swan, to be performed during his lifetime. He left instructions in his will that the entire piece could not be played until after his death. However, in spite of his success as a composer, the music he is most remembered for is _Carnival of the Animals_.

What is Ballet?

Ballet is a classical form of dance that began over 500 years ago in Italy and France. Today, ballet is enjoyed on stages around the world.

_Enrich your child’s theatrical experience by following this study guide before and after the performance._
The Lion
The lion is the king of beasts,
And husband of the lioness.
Gazelles and things on which he feasts
Address him as your highoness.
There are those that admire that roar of his,
In African jungles and velds,
But, I think that wherever the lion is,
I'd rather be somewhere else.

Cocks and Hens
The rooster is a roistering hoodlum,
His battle cry is cock-a-doodleum.
Hands in pockets, cap over eye,
He whistles at pullets, passing by.

The Elephant
Elephants are useful friends,
Equipped with handles at both ends.
They have a wrinkled moth proof hide,
Their teeth are upside down, outside,
If you think the elephant preposterous,
You've probably never seen a rhinosterous.

Kangaroos
The Kangaroo can jump incredible,
He has to jump because he is edible,
I could not eat a kangaroo,
But many fine Australians do,
Tose with cookbooks as well as boomerangs,
Prefer him in tasty kangaroomeringues.
The Aquarium
Some fish are minnows,
Some are whales,
People like dimples,
Fish like scales,
Some fish are slim,
And some are round,
They don't get cold,
They don't get drowned,
But every fishwife
Fears for her fish,
What we call mermaids
They can merfish.

Mules
In the world of mules
There are no rules.

Birds
Puccini was Latin, and Wagner Teutonic,
And birds are incurable philharmonic,
Suburban yards and rural vistas
Are filled with avian Andrew Sisters.
The skylark sings a roundelay,
The crow sings “The Road To Mandalay”,
The nightingale sings a lullaby,
And the sea gull sings a gullaby.
That’s what shepherds listened to in Arcadia
Before somebody invented the radio.

Try writing a poem about your favorite animal and send it to your favorite New York Theatre Ballet dancer!

Look, Listen, Enjoy
Watch the dancers
Look at the costumes and set designs
Listen to the music
Laugh when the dancers do something funny
Clap when you see a part you especially like

The Seven Movements of Dance
Every step in ballet is based on one of seven dance movements. These are movements which your body makes naturally. The French names are below with their English translation. Try to make-up steps that go with each movement.

Plier...to bend  Glisser...to glide
Tourner...to turn  Entendre...to stretch
Sauter...to jump  Relever...to rise
Elancer...to dart

Do boys study ballet?
Yes! Each year more and more boys study ballet. Ballet is very hard work and boys must develop great coordination, strength and athletic ability. Boys learn to jump high, turn quickly, lift the girls and they need to make it all look easy!
Activities to do with your children after the performance:

Making Masks

1. Make a list of the animals and characters in the ballet.
2. Find your supplies.
   a. Paper plates
   b. Popsicle sticks
   c. Construction paper
   d. Paint
   e. Tissue paper
   f. Yarn
   g. Cotton balls
   h. Buttons
   i. Glue
3. Before you begin, talk together about the characters in the ballet, and then make your masks using all of your supplies!

Charades

Discuss how the dancers conveyed the feelings of the animals in Carnival of the Animals without talking.

Make index cards with drawings of the animal characters.

Without looking, chose a card. Act out the character on your card, and the other players can guess which animal you’re portraying.