

Childsplay's
2010-2011
Season Sneak Peek
Resource Guide

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

 U.S. AIRWAYS

WHERE EDUCATION AND IMAGINATION
TAKE FLIGHT

A Year With
**Frog
and
Toad**

Junie 
in
**Jingle Bells,
Batman Smells!**

Go, Dog. Go!

**The
Imaginators**

New Kid


**The
BORROWERS**





About Childsplay:

Childsplay is a non-profit professional theatre company of adult actors, performing for young audiences and families.

Our Mission is to create theatre so strikingly original in form, content or both, that it instills in young people an enduring awe, love and respect for the medium, thus preserving imagination and wonder, the hallmarks of childhood, which are the keys to the future.

What We Do:

In addition to our weekend public performances, we also offer three different theatre experiences for our school audiences: Field Trips, School Tours and Artist-in-Residence Programs. Field trip performances, where students come to the theatre and see a production, can be booked by contacting Beth Olson at 480.921.5757. School Tour Performances, where we come to your school or other location and perform, can be booked by contacting Jaime Fox at 480.921.5751. Artist in Residence Programs, which can be individually designed to meet the needs of your school or can be based on one of our many existing formats (page to stage, creating original work, use of drama to teach curriculum), can be booked by contacting Patricia Black at 480.921.5750



Our Home:

The Sybil B. Harrington Campus of Imagination and Wonder at Mitchell Park (formerly Mitchell School) is where you'll find our administrative offices, costume shop, prop shop, rehearsal spaces, and Academy classrooms. We love to hear from our audiences. Send your letters and reviews to:

Address: 900 S. Mitchell, Tempe, AZ 85281

Phone: 480-921-5700

Email: info@childsplayaz.org **Web:** www.childsplayaz.org

We perform at the Tempe Center for the Arts
700 W. Rio Salado Parkway
Tempe, AZ 85281

Theater Etiquette:

It's helpful to review the rules of theater etiquette before seeing a show, especially since this may be the first live theater experience for some of your students. Please take a moment to discuss the following pointers prior to seeing the performance:

- Use the restroom before seeing the show as we do not have intermission during our school performances.
- Stay seated during the performance.
- Be respectful to the performers and other people in the audience by not talking during the performance. Remember, the actors can see and hear the audience just like the audience can see and hear them.
- Appropriate responses such as applause or laughter are always welcome.
- Food, candy, gum and beverages will not allowed in the theater/during the performance.
- Use of cell phones (including text messaging), cameras or any other recording device is not allowed in the theater/during the performance at any time.
- Following the performance (time permitting) there will be a brief question/answer session where audience members will have an opportunity to ask the actors questions about the production.



A Year With **Frog and Toad**

Music by **Robert Reale**
Book and Lyrics by **Willie Reale**
Based on the Books by **Arnold Lobel**

September 11 to October 16
Tempe Center for the Arts
Appropriate for Grades K and up

The Story: True to the spirit of the well-loved books, this delightful Tony Award-nominated family musical follows the adventures of two great friends, the cheerful Frog and his grouchy friend, Toad through the four seasons of a year. Directed by Childsplay founder and Artistic Director, David Saar, *A Year With Frog and Toad* features some of the ensemble's best loved actors reprising their favorite roles.

Themes/Curriculum Ties:

friendship • seasons • storytelling • letter writing • celebrating differences
frogs and toads • gardening • page to stage • music

Questions to ask before seeing the production:

- 1) What is the difference between seeing a play and a movie? How is a play different than a musical?
- 2) Frog and Toad are best friends and are very different from one another. How are you similar to your friend? Different? Do you always get along with your friend? What do you like the most about your friend?
- 3) There are four seasons in a year. How are they different? What is your favorite season and why?

Questions to ask after seeing the production:

- 1) How many characters can you remember from the play? Which was your favorite and why?
- 2) How was the play similar to the books? How was it different? If you could add stories from the book to the play, which ones would you add and why?
- 3) Turtle and others made fun of Toad in his bathing suit. How did it make him feel? Have you ever had someone make fun of you? What did you do about it?

Classroom Activities Connected to Arizona Education Standards:

5

Minute Activity

A Year With Frog and Toad takes place over the span of one year. How many days are in a year? How many days are there in each month? How many hours are in a year? How many seconds are in a year? If Frog and Toad spend 5 days together, how many hours is that? How many days are there in a leap year?

Math: K: S2:C1: PO2: ask/answer questions by counting, comparing, interpreting displays of data

15

Minute Activity

Who Started the Motion? is a great way to practice cooperation. Start by standing in a circle. Only bodies and imaginations are used, no voices. Ask one student to stand outside the door as you secretly choose one person in the circle to be the leader. The leader starts the motion and everyone else follows. The guesser is invited back and given three chances to figure out who the leader is. Encourage the leader to use slow, smooth, and simple movements (from the waist up). The goal is to try and work together as a team so it appears there is no leader. Repeat with different guessers and leaders.
Theatre: S2: C1: PO202: Collaborative Process

30

Minute Activity

In the play, Frog tells a scary tale to Toad. When Toad asks "Did this really happen?" Frog says, "Maybe it did and maybe it didn't." Write a scary story based on something that really happened or on something that might have happened. Share the stories with the class. Now, try and guess which stories are real and which are made up!
Writing: G2: S3: C1: PO1: Write a narrative

Interesting Internet Links:

www.webenglishteacher.com/lobel.html, lesson plans and teaching strategies

<http://allaboutfrogs.org>, lots of info on frogs

www.exploritorium.edu, search for frog or toad and many links will come up including frog myths across cultures

Books to Check Out:

By Arnold Lobel: *Days With Frog and Toad*, *Frog and Toad Are Friends*, *Frog and Toad Together*, *Frog and Toad All Year*

Books About Friendship: *Four Friends in Summer* by Tomie DePaola; *Pinky and Rex and the Spelling Bee* by James Howe; *George and Martha Round and Round* by James Marshall



By Dennis Foon

School Tour, October 2010-May 2011

Appropriate for Grades K-8

The Story: Nick and his mother leave Homeland for the U.S. where they must learn many new things: a new language, foods, sports, and customs. While Nick is befriended by one boy, he's bullied by another. Nick picks up enough English to start to get along, but Nick's mother has a harder time. Eventually everyone begins to adjust and Nick learns to maintain his respect for his family's culture and heritage, while embracing his new homeland.

Themes/Curricular Ties:

immigration/emigration • assimilation • different cultures and customs • stereotypes and prejudice • language and communication • bullies and targets • transcending differences • celebrating diversity

Questions to ask before seeing the production:

- 1) What is the difference between immigrant and emigrant?
- 2) What does prejudice mean? What are some examples of prejudice? Have you ever observed prejudice? Do you think that you have any prejudices?
- 3) Have you ever witnessed someone else being bullied? What, if anything, did you do? What can you do if you witness bullying or become a target yourself?

Questions to ask after seeing the production:

- 1) In Nick's early encounters with Mench and Mug, they attempt to communicate in ways that transcend language. What examples of language without words (universal language) can you think of?
- 2) What are the strategies that Nick and Mench devise at the end of the play for dealing with Mug?
- 3) Would your school be an easy place for a student like Nick to get along in? Why or why not?

Classroom Activities Connected to Arizona Education Standards:

5

Minute Activity

Discuss what is considered bullying and what the consequences of bullying are. As a class, take this anti-bullying pledge:

- 1) We will not bully other students.
 - 2) We will help others who are being bullied by speaking out and by getting adult help.
 - 3) We will use extra effort to include all students in activities in our school.
- Social Studies: G2: S3: C4: PO2:** Rights and responsibilities of citizenship in school

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Minute Activity

Talk about the contrast between life in Homeland and in the U.S. Make a list together of the differences between the two cultures.

Social Studies: G3: S1: C7: Emergence of the Modern United States

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Minute Activity

In pairs, improvise a scene in which two people (A and B) are trying to communicate but do not speak the same language. Choose a hobby or sport, and have A teach B about the activity using pantomime to communicate. Now reverse the situation, and have B tell A about a homework assignment or project they must do together.

Theatre: S1: C2: PO204: Communicate through movement

Interesting Internet Links:

www.tolerance.org, great resource and forum for teachers about teaching tolerance

www.bullying.org, dedicated to increasing bullying awareness

www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov, search "anti-bully" and several links will come up

www.census.gov, source for information on population, ethnicities, immigration and lots of other interesting stuff

Books to Check Out:

Hannah's Journal: The Story of an Immigrant Girl by Marissa Moss

The Hundred Dresses by Eleanor Estes

The Recess Queen by Alexis O'Neill

Junie in Jingle Bells, Batman Smells!

By Allison Gregory
Adapted from the books by Barbara Park

November 20 to December 24, 2010
Tempe Center for the Arts

Appropriate for Grades K-6

The Story: That lovable imp Junie B. Jones takes center stage just in time for the holidays! Based on three of Barbara Park's best-selling books, this show recreates the world of intrigue that is Room One.

Themes/Curricular Ties:

moral dilemma • following directions • cooperation • listening • holidays • friendship • math/money • keeping secrets • journal writing • page to stage • 6 pillars of character

Questions to ask before seeing the production:

- 1) Junie B. has a hard time following the rules. There are times that she does follow the rules even when she doesn't want to. What do you do to make yourself follow rules even when you don't want to?
- 2) Junie B.'s school has a tradition of Secret Santas. What are some other holiday traditions? What's your favorite holiday tradition and why?
- 3) Junie B.'s imagination wanders and takes her into some daydreams. Do you ever daydream? When? Where does your mind go?

Questions to ask after seeing the production:

- 1) At the end of the play, Junie B. has to make a very important choice. What does she decide and why do you think she chose to do what she did?
- 2) At the end of the play, we get the feeling that May and Junie B. might actually get along and be friends. What happened in the story to help us believe this? Do you think they'll become friends or do you think they'll fight again? Why?
- 3) What kinds of school performances have you been in? How did you feel before the performance? After?

Classroom Activities Connected to Arizona Education Standards:

5

Minute Activity

Storytelling usually happens in a linear way (in the order of events as they happen) as opposed to jumping back and forth in time. The play happens in a non-linear way. With a partner, take turns telling a story about what happened to you yesterday but don't tell it in the linear order of events. Tell it according to the most interesting thing that happened to you, followed by the next most interesting thing, and so on.

Writing: G2: S1: C2: PO2, Organize in a logical sequence

15

Minute Activity

Divide into pairs and create a short scene where Junie B. is trying to convince Grandpa Miller to give her five dollars. What are the many ways Junie B. can talk Grandpa Miller into giving her money? Make sure your scene has dialogue as well as a beginning, middle and end. Rehearse it several times and then share with the class.

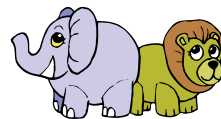
Theatre: Beginning: S1: C2: PO2, Scene Work

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Minute Activity

Junie B. has an imaginary friend in Philip Johnny Bob. He is a stuffed elephant who lives in Junie B.'s room and gives her advice. Using colored pencils or crayons, and a large sheet of paper, create a portrait of your very own imaginary friend complete with name, age, and a description of his/her personality. What kind of advice would your imaginary friend give you? Share with the class.

Visual Art: Intermediate: S1: C4: PO201, Explain purposeful use of themes, symbols and subject matter in artwork



Interesting Internet Links:

www.randomhouse.com/kids/junieB, Junie B.'s official website

www.randomhouse.com/teachers/authors/results.pperl?authorid=23194, an interview with Barbara Park

http://journalbuddies.com/c-Journaling/writing_prompts_for_kids.htm, prompts for journal writing

Books to Check Out:

Junie B., First Grader: Shipwrecked By Barbara Park

Junie B., First Grader: Jingle Bells, Batman Smells! (P.S. So Does May) by Barbara Park

Christopher Columbus (Step-Into-Reading, Step 3) by Stephen Krensky

Know and Follow Rules by Cheri J. Meiners, M.Ed.



Go, Dog. Go!

By Allison Gregory and Steven Dietz
Adapted from the book by P.D. Eastman
Music by Michael Koerner
January 23 - March 6, 2010
Tempe Center for the Arts
Appropriate for ages 3– 9

The Story: The cast of this beloved preschool favorite has gone to the dogs: with rollicking results! There are cars, hats, audience participation, even a wild game of ball as this laugh-a-minute visual spectacle manages to sneak in some important lessons about life between innings. Based on the beloved book by P.D. Eastman, *Go, Dog. Go!* is a musical romp full of surprises. The result is a production full of color, clowning, vaudeville, singing/barking, and of course, six lovable dogs!

Themes/Curriculum Ties:

dogs • colors • repetition • page to stage • physical comedy • music • rhythm • daily routines/schedules • celebrations/parties • prepositions/adjectives/verbs

Questions to ask before seeing the production:

- 1) If you could be any kind of dog, what kind of dog would you be? What would your name be?
- 2) How are dogs similar to humans? How are they different?
- 3) How can you make a play out of a book with very few words? What do you think the play will be like? What do you think the songs will be about?

Questions to ask after seeing the production:

- 1) Who were the characters in the story and what were the problems in the story? Where did the story take place?
- 2) How was the play like the book? Different? What part of the play did you like the best? Which character was your favorite and why?
- 3) Share a moment from the play that made you laugh. What other funny bits do you remember?

Classroom Activities Connected to Arizona Education Standards

5

Minute Activity

Using the *Go, Dog. Go!* book as a resource, count the dog pic-

tures! Find totals for: the entire book, each page, pages 6-7; pages 44-45; page 58 (or whichever pages you choose). Compare your answers.

Math: K: S2: C1: PO2: ask/answer questions by counting, comparing, interpreting displays of data

15

Minute Activity

Go, Dog. Go! Has a lot of opposites in the story, big dogs and little dogs, red dogs and blue dogs, dogs up and dogs down. Make your own “Go _____.

Go!” book, by using a different animal. Draw your animals in opposite situations, like *in and out*, and then write a sentence underneath it in the style of P.D. Eastman. Brainstorm opposites as a class and then let each student make a page to add to a class book, or let them each make their own. Go, writers. Go!

Writing: G1: S2: C4: PO 3: Descriptive phrases and short sentences.

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Minute Activity

Hattie wears several unique hats in the play. Create your own crazy hat. Use a real hat as a base or make one out of

fabric or cardboard. Add all sorts of objects to your hat. Use the pictures in the books for inspiration. Wear your hats and have a hat fashion show for an audience and/or play out a scene with Hattie asking “Do you like my hat?” **Visual Arts, S1: C2: PO101.** Identify and experiment with materials, tools, and techniques in his or her own artwork

Interesting Internet Links:

www.americankennelclub.com, find information on many different dog breeds
www.dogquotes.com, a great site with dog quotes, facts, proverbs, etc.
www.kiddyhouse.com/Themes/colors, activities to teach children about color

Books to Check Out:

Kites Sail High: A Book About Verbs by Ruth Heller

Bears on Wheels by Stan and Jan Berenstain

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Martha Speaks, Martha Calling, Martha Blah Blah, Martha Walks the Dog, Martha and Skits and *Perfectly Martha* by Susan Meddaugh



By Dwayne Hartford

School Tours: January-May, 2011

Tempe Center for the Arts, Studio Theatre,
April 9-17, 2011

Appropriate for Grades K-6

In this original Childsplay production, when newcomers Tim and his sister Anne meet their wildly imaginative neighbor Nina, their garage is transformed into a place of mystery and high adventure as they set about defeating a monster called the Mooklecratz. Written by Childsplay ensemble member, Dwayne Hartford, *The Imaginators* explores the power of make believe, as the three friends discover friendship, courage and cooperation.

Themes/Curricular Ties:

imagination • friendship • poetry • courage • sibling relationships • moving to a new neighborhood • overcoming fear • cooperation/teamwork • problem solving

Questions to ask before seeing the production:

- 1) Have you or anyone you know ever moved to a new neighborhood or to a new school? What was good about it? What was not so good about it?
- 2) If you and your friends had to play for a day without anything electronic or anything that required electricity, how would you fill the day?
- 3) If you had super powers, what would you want them to be and how would you use them?

Questions to ask after seeing the production:

- 1) Which character can you identify most with? Why?
- 2) Nina, Tim and Anne play create an imaginary world in the garage. What is your favorite place to play, why do you like it, and what do you do there?
- 3) Look around your classroom. If you could use one object to help defeat the Mooklecratz, what would it be and how would you use it?

Classroom Activities Connected to Arizona Education Standards:

5

Minute Activity

Create a story as a team. Sit in a circle on the floor. One person begins the story by saying one opening word. The next person then adds only one word to the story. Go around the circle multiple times or only once, and see how creative your story can be. Two rules: each word added to the story has to make sense and the story must have a beginning, middle and end. You can choose a theme before you start the story if you like.

Listening and Speaking: LS-F3:

Telling a Story

15

Minute Activity

For this game you'll need several everyday objects like a cardboard box, an umbrella, a Frisbee or a plastic cup.

Start with one object and say "*this is not a box*" (or whatever the object is). Then, ask for a volunteer to come up and make the object become something else by doing something with it (for example, sit on the box so we know it's a chair). See how many different ways you can use the object and then take turns with the other objects.

Theatre: S1: C2: PO204: Communicate through movement

30

Minute Activity

Nina uses her imagination to create the Mooklecratz. Design your own horrible monster. Draw it out in

full color and give details about how it moves, what it breathes, what it eats, where it lives, and who are its enemies and friends. Share with the rest of the class and then create a bulletin board with all of the creatures in some kind of environment (the sea, outer space, the rainforest, etc.).

Visual Art: Intermediate: S1:

C4: PO101, Use subject matter in artwork

Interesting Internet Links:

www.poetry4kids.com, wonderful source for kids and teachers on all things poetry

www.pbs.org/kratts, interactive site dedicated to the critters and creatures of this world

www.gigglepoetry.com, another poetry site

Books to Check Out:

There's a Monster in My Closet by Mercer Mayer

Sam, Bangs and Moonshine by Eveline Ness

Mud is Cake by Pam Muñoz Ryan

The BORROWERS

By Mary Norton

Adapted for the stage by Charles Way

May 1 - 23, 2011, Tempe Center for the Arts

Appropriate for Grades 2-8

The Story: The Clock family, possibly the last of the Borrowers, live under the floorboards, and survive by "borrowing" what they need from the "human beans" who live above them. Driven by loneliness and curiosity, young Arrietty ventures upstairs looking for a friend, and discovers a whole new world filled with wonder and fraught with danger. This enchanting production is directed by Childsplay's own renaissance man, Dwayne Hartford, who directed the previous Childsplay hits *Miss Nelson is Missing*, *Seussical*, *Honus and Me*, and *Busytown*

Themes/Curricular Ties:

page to stage • home • courage • tolerance • overcoming pretensions • stuff (what's important to you and why) • found objects/transformations • fear • perspective/scale • nature/environments • survival skills • coming of age/growing up • historical periods • journaling/writing in a diary • literacy/reading • following rules • conflict resolution

Questions to ask before seeing the production:

- 1) What is the difference between borrowing and stealing?
- 2) What makes a place a home?
- 3) If you had to leave your home quickly what would you take with you?
- 4) When you see the play, how do you think they will show the differences in size between humans and borrowers?

Questions to ask after seeing the production:

- 1) How do the Borrowers make decisions about what to borrow?
- 2) Homily says that "you never, ever borrow from another borrower, it isn't ethical." Do you think borrowing from a human is different than borrowing from a borrower? Which character challenged Homily's statement?
- 3) Arrietty disobeyed her father in making friends with the boy. Was she right in making that choice? Why or why not?

Classroom Activities Connected to Arizona Education Standards:

5

Minute Activity

The Borrowers have a lot of rules about how to be safe in a world where everything

is much bigger than they are. Create a list of five or more rules that are important for you to live safely in your world.

Social Studies, G2: S3: C4:

PO1: Discuss examples of responsible citizenship in school and in stories.

15

Minute Activity

Bring in a box full of household objects, trinkets, and tools and have each student pick one item. Imagine that you

are the size of the Borrowers, what could this item be used for? How many different useful things could this be? Create a wanted ad for an item you would like in your house under the floorboards.

Writing: G3: S3: C3: PO1: Write a variety of functional texts

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Minute Activity

In groups of 3 or 4, rewrite the words to a nursery rhyme or song that has something to do with a scene or situation from *The Borrowers*.

Develop a scene to be pantomimed while one or two group members read, sing, rap, or chant their creation. Share with the class!

Writing: G4: S3: C1: PO2: Write in a variety of expressive forms

Theatre: S1: C2: PO204: Communicate through movement

Interesting Internet Links:

http://litplans.com/authors/Mary_Norton.html, links to lessons and activities related to Mary Norton books

www.storyofstuff.com, documentary about the life cycle of material goods

www.equipped.com/kidprimr.htm, a source about survival skills for kids

Books to Check Out:

The Borrowers, *The Borrowers Afield*, *The Borrowers Afloat*, *The Borrowers Aloft*, *Poor Stainless*, *The Borrowers Avenged* by Mary Norton