



Preview Guide for Parents and Teachers  
to Childsplay's Production of

**Lost and Foundling**

By Eric R. Pfeffinger

Directed by David Saar

Scenic Design by Holly Windingstad

Costume Design by D. Daniel Hollingshead

Lighting Design by Rick Paulsen

Sound and Projection Design by Anthony Runfola

Stage Manager: Samantha Ries

The Cast

Pryce.....	Yolanda London
Staci.....	Debra K. Stevens
Jesse.....	Jon Gentry
Custodian.....	Dwayne Hartford
The Slasher	} Katie McFadzen and D. Scott Withers
The Demanding Shopper	
Lost and Found	
P.A. Announcer	
Associates	

Tempe Performing Arts Center  
October/November, 2006

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Arizona Commission on the Arts  
Bashas' Markets

City of Tempe/Tempe Municipal Arts Commission

We hope you find this guide helpful in preparing your students for an enjoyable and educational theatrical experience. Included you'll find things to talk about before and after seeing the performance, classroom activities that deal with curriculum connections and education standards, and resource materials.

**The Story:**

"It was a glorious and magical place where every kind of person under the sun came whenever they needed something and always left happy." This was the Mega Price-Mart, the place for one-stop shopping. A baby was discovered in the truck mirrors and oil filters aisle so the associates took her in and moved her to the employee break room. After a few weeks when nobody claimed her, the associates decided she needed a name. It was agreed that her name would be Pryce and she would be raised in the Mega Price-Mart. Lucky. Price-Mart has everything and there was always someone around. Her first word was "affordable" and she taught herself how to read in the books and magazine aisle.

When she discovers that there's a Lost and Found Department at the western edge of the store, she's curious: has anyone come there looking for Pryce? Is she lost or is she found – or both? Pryce sets off on a hero's journey that will take her into strange and scary territory where demanding shoppers and Price Slashers lurk in the aisles. When she finally gets to the Lost and Found, she doesn't find anything tangible. She wasted all that time and went all that way for nothing? She then understands her journey was more about courage, problem-solving, and self-discovery than about finding an answer to her question. The story ends with Pryce making the biggest decision of her life: will she leave the Price-Mart or stay?

**Arizona Academic Standards:**

Your visit to the theater as well as the preparation and follow up activities can involve many content areas from the Arizona Department of Education K-12 Academic Standards. Many of the suggested discussion topics and activities can be tied to standards in several areas. *If you would like help with standard connections for your particular grade we would be happy to assist.* Simply email Katie McFadzen at [kmcfadzen@childsplayaz.org](mailto:kmcfadzen@childsplayaz.org) or call 480-350-8105. Check out the newly updated Arts Standards at [www.ade.az.gov/asd/arts/ArtsStandards.asp](http://www.ade.az.gov/asd/arts/ArtsStandards.asp)

## Things to Talk About and Do Before Seeing the Show

**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:

- ~Stay seated during the performance.
- ~ Be respectful to the performers and other people in the audience by not talking during the performance.
- ~ Appropriate responses such as applause or laughter are always welcome.
- ~Use of cell phones, cameras or any other recording device is *not allowed in the theater at any time!*

**Journey of Self-Discovery:** *Lost and Foundling* is about a little girl who takes a risk when she decides to leave the comfort of her universe in search of the truth about who she is and where she came from. Though she makes no tangible discoveries, Pryce does learn some things about herself. She learns that she is capable of solving problems and overcoming obstacles on her own. Pryce takes a tremendous and brave risk by making her trip across the expansive store. Ask students to share personal experiences about taking risks (good and bad), about solving problems on their own or overcoming obstacles in their lives. Ask students: Did you make any discoveries about yourself?

Did your experience change you in any way? Have students write about their experiences. Think about journeys of self-discovery in literature. There are many stories, myths, fairy and folk tales that focus on a character's journey and the lessons they learn. Can you think of any? Find other examples of similar stories to talk about. Look at characters like Hercules, Telemachus, Percival (from the Arthurian Legends) and even Little Red Riding Hood. What kind of obstacles do the characters have to overcome? What do they discover about themselves? Are the lessons learned important today? Can you relate to any of the characters or situations?

### The Big Box:

The play takes place in the Mega Price-Mart, a fictional and exaggerated version of a *big box* store. *Big box* is a colloquial term used to describe a style of retail store, and the company behind the store. Typical characteristics include the following:

- \*Floor space several times greater than traditional retailers (generally more than 50,000 square feet and sometimes approaching 200,000 square feet)
- \*Free-standing, windowless, rectangular, single story construction, with a high ceiling
- \*Expansive open air surface parking lots and general orientation to automobile-driving consumers, as opposed to pedestrians.
- \*Location in suburban or rural areas, often in proximity to

freeways, as opposed to downtown shopping districts. This design provides space for a large amount of merchandise and serves as an enormous billboard to attract customers. Opponents criticize *big boxes* especially for being visually overbearing, wasteful of open space, and deleterious to community and small businesses. Proponents point to consumer benefits from greater convenience and lower cost of goods, and the ability of such stores to draw in tax-generating consumers from a wide area. Generally, *big box* stores can be broken down into two categories: general merchandisers, such as Wal-Mart and Target, and so-called category killers, such as Home Depot or Best Buy which specialize in goods within a specific range, such as hardware or electronics. (From answers.com)

### Retail Research Factoids:

- Upon entering a store, most people go to the right
- According to market research, light purple makes customers want to spend money
- Marketers plan campaigns to appeal to the right side of the brain because that is where emotions and the unconscious mind reside. The right side is more susceptible to images and suggestions
- 12% of groceries we buy go to waste
- Men who take jeans into fitting rooms are more likely to buy than females (65 percent vs. 25 percent)

## Things to Talk About and Do After the Performance:

※ All plays have three P's: *People* in a *Place* with a *Problem*. Where does the play take place (setting)? Who are the people (or characters)? What are the problems (conflicts)? What happens at the beginning of the play? The middle? The end?

※ For older students, talk about the five components of story structure. Identify the exposition (character and setting), rising action, climax, falling action and resolution in the play.

※ There are many unanswered questions in the play. What are *your* answers to the following questions? *Where did Pryce come from? Who left her? Why did she stay inside the store all of her life? Why did she make a choice to leave? What did she discover on her way to Lost and Found?*

## Theater/Creative Drama:

※ Pryce gets ready for her trip across the store by packing things she thinks she'll need. What would you bring if you were going on a trip? Sit in a big circle on the floor. Have one person start by saying "I'm going on a trip and I'm going to bring... (ex. my sunglasses)." Each player adds an object and pantomimes it. The next player says the line and adds their object to the list, repeating the last one (my dog, and my sunglasses) and pantomiming both. The third player adds theirs (my iPod, my dog and my sunglasses) and so on. Make sure each player starts

with the sentence and lists the items in order with the accompanying pantomime. Another challenging way to play is by using pantomime only.

※ Collect several items that might end up in lost and found. Take turns choosing one of the objects and making up a story about what it is and how it ended up in the lost and found. Items can be used more than once and have different stories. Encourage students to be creative and spontaneous with their stories.

## Writing:

※ Using the previous lost and found activity, expand the story you created by writing it down. Once you have a first draft, trade with another student, read each other's and offer constructive ways to improve the story. Go back and write a second draft and then read it aloud to the class.

※ If you could stay in your favorite store by yourself or with a friend overnight, what would you do? Write about where you would want to stay, what it would be like to be alone in the store, what you would do, etc. Be as detailed in your descriptions as possible.

※ Pryce doesn't know where she came from. Do you think Pryce is adopted or do you think she was abandoned or lost? Write a letter to Pryce explaining how she ended up in the Price-Mart. Make it as real or fantastical as you wish.

※ At the end of the play, Pryce leaves the store and her

umbrella buoys her away. Based on what you know about what she wants and how she feels, where do you think she goes? What happens to her? Write a short story about what happens to Pryce after she floats away.

※ Everyone in the Price-Mart seems to be afraid of what's outside the store which makes Pryce afraid, too. What are you afraid of? Write about something you are afraid of and ways that you might be able to overcome your fear.

## Reading/Drama:

※ Pryce reads about celebrities and all the crazy things they do. Find a gossip magazine at a store checkout or an article in a newspaper or online and find the most outrageous article you can about a celebrity. Practice reading it aloud (with dramatic effect, of course). Have an outrageous story sharing day in class where you take turns reading your discoveries out loud.

## Visual Art:

※ Think about the layout of a store that you've been to (or make one up). Using colored pencils, draw a map of the store from a bird's eye view making pictures to describe where things like entrances, restrooms, and different departments are located. For example, a football might represent sporting goods and a shoe the shoe department. Write out directions of how to get from one part of the store to another (for example, customer service to sporting goods).

## Lost and Foundling Booklist

Prepared with the help of Tim Wadham, Youth Services Coordinator for the Maricopa County Library District

### Curriculum Connections:

#### Self-discovery

*Melonhead* by Michael DeGuzman



#### Fantasy

*Gregor the Overlander* by Suzanne Collins

*Arthur Spiderwick's FieldGuide to the Fantascal World Around You* by Tony DiTerlizzi

*Fog Magic* by Julia Sauer

*Fergus Crane* by Paul Stewart

#### Maps and Directions

*The Once Upon a Time Map Book* by B. G. Hennessy

*Around the World in One Hundred Years: From Henry the Navigator to Magellan* by Jean Fritz

*Mapping the World* by Sylvia A. Johnson

*Small World: Maps and Mapmakers* by Karen Romano Young

*The Road to There: Mapmakers and Their Stories* by Val Ross

#### Retail/Stores/Shopping

*Best Foot Forward* by Joan Bauer

*Crusader* by Edward Bloor

*Mama and Papa Have a Store* by Amelia Lau Carling

*General Store* by Rachel Field

*Hobie Hanson: Greatest Hero of the Mall* by Jamie Gilson

*Secrets of the Shopping Mall* by Richard Peck

#### Problem Solving

*The Pepins and their Problems* by Polly Horvath

#### Leaving the Nest

*Terrible Times* by Philip Ardagh

*Leaving Home* by Sneed B. Collard

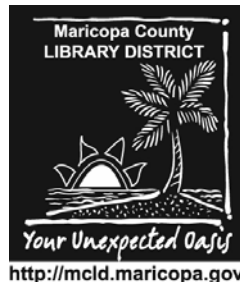
*Someday* by Jackie French Koller

*Words West: Voices of Young Pioneers* by Ginger Wadsworth

#### Overcoming Fear

*Among the Hidden* by Margaret Peterson Haddix

*Some Things are Scary* by Florence Parry Heide



## 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.

We love to hear from our audience members!



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## Want Some Drama in Your Classroom?

If you would like help incorporating drama into your curriculum by having an actor teach in your classroom, Childsplay can help. We offer a variety of artist-in-residence and teacher training experiences. We can also help with pre- and post-show activities related to the production. For more information, contact Debra K. Stevens at [dstevens@childsplayaz.org](mailto:dstevens@childsplayaz.org) or 480-350-8101

## The Outside World

Pryce never leaves the Price-Mart until the end of the play. Imagine if you never went outside of the place you live. Knowing what you know now about the world we live in, what would you miss the most about "outside?" Using crayons, markers and or colored pencils, draw a picture of at least five things you would want Pryce to know about in the outside world. Label each so she can understand what they are. Share with the rest of your class and then hang them around the room!

## LOST AND FOUNDLING FACT SHEET

### Artistic Staff:

Director: David Saar  
Scenic Designer: Holly Windingstad  
Costume Designer: Daniel Hollingshead  
Lighting Designer: Rick Paulsen  
Sound and Projection Designer: Anthony Runfola  
Props Master: Jim Luther  
Stage Manager: Samantha Ries  
Dramaturge: Donna Blumenfeld (Childsplay); Marge Betley (Geva)

Pryce: Yolanda London  
Staci: Debra K. Stevens  
Jesse: Jon Gentry  
Custodian: Dwayne Hartford  
Associates, et. Al: Katie McFadzen  
D. Scott Withers

### Design notes:

Holly chose a subdued, bland color palette of mostly grays for the set, based on research trips to actual big-box stores like Wal-Mart, Target, and Costco. Rick decided to suspend six large fluorescent lights over the stage – nothing says “giant chain store” like fluorescent lighting! The green light is produced using a green gel over a regular stage light.

Two movable shelving units stocked with product on each side and equipped with changeable aisle signs are manipulated by the actors throughout the show. It was decided during production meetings that the text on the aisle signs would not refer to specific products but say generic things like, “On sale now!” and “30% off!”

For the final scene, two large swinging doors with opaque glass windows open to show a digital projection of a loading dock door rising up to reveal a sunset. This effect is achieved by filming Pryce against a “green screen” which is then digitally replaced with the image of the doors and sunset. The technology we use is similar to what you’d see in a television weather report or in many special effects sequences in film. The actual image of the loading dock door is from our shop, and the sunset was a photo of a British sunset taken from the internet.

### Props:

Faced with the gargantuan task of stocking full-size store shelves with generic yet recognizable product packaging, Jim visited the city of Tempe Recycling Center every day and also put out a call for help to the entire company, requesting bottles, boxes and cans for the set. He received hundreds of different containers of all different types to use as the set dressing and props in the play. Many of the containers were painted or covered in paper. Whatever doesn’t get used in the show will go to the recycling center.

## Related concepts:

David says he thinks of this story as a parody of an odyssey or mythic journey. Like *Lost and Foundling*, the purpose of these heroic journey stories is often for the characters to explore their own resources and take control of their worlds.

In the book *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1949), Joseph Campbell drew on the works of Freud and Jung to compare the mythical journeys of heroes from different cultures and outline the structures and elements common to most heroic adventures. Campbell's theories have long been incorporated in psychoanalytic practice and in education. "The Hero's Journey" is a set of sequential steps that apply both to mythological stories and personal growth. The hero is called to adventure and embarks, eagerly or reluctantly, into unknown territory. Her friends may try to hold her back. She is assisted by supernatural forces and overcomes obstacles in her path (usually in threes) to be initiated into a new stage of being, either by gaining new knowledge or uncovering powers she didn't know she had. In accomplishing her quest, the hero leaves part of her old self behind. Many heroes return home and become great leaders.

A link about Joseph Campbell:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Hero\\_With\\_a\\_Thousand\\_Faces](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hero_With_a_Thousand_Faces)

A visual representation of the steps of the Hero's Journey:

<http://ias.berkeley.edu/orias/hero/>

An interactive version of the Hero's Journey from South Mountain Community College's Storytelling Institute:

<http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/smc/journey/>

"What the myths say, is that you have to be the hero of your own life. So, it's-- you're the one who has to take charge of who you are, you're the one who has to take control. And also, you're the one who can bring something to the community." – author Jeanette Winterston

Margaret Atwood says, "[Myths] only remain relevant because people keep retelling them. If nobody ever told them again in any other way, their meaning would become obsolete."

The Wikipedia entry on parody says: 'In contemporary usage, a **parody** is a work that imitates another work in order to ridicule, ironically comment on, or poke affectionate fun at the work itself, the subject of the work, the author or fictional voice of the parody, or another subject. As literary theorist Linda Hutcheon puts it, "parody...is imitation with a critical difference, not always at the expense of the parodied text."

## Questions for students:

1. Pryce's trip across the store is a journey of self discovery. What did she learn about herself by the end of her journey?
2. Pryce's friends were afraid of the Slasher and the Demanding Shopper and warned Pryce about them. How did Pryce overcome her fears and solve her problems when she met each character?
3. How is Pryce a hero?
4. Can you think of other stories where the main character takes a journey like Pryce's?

5. A parody uses imitation to poke fun at the thing being imitated. How is *Lost and Foundling* a parody? What is the play making fun of (not Wal-Mart)?
6. Why do her friends try to keep Pryce from leaving?
7. Lost and Found teach Pryce about lost items. What else does she learn from them?
8. Does Pryce have a family even though she was abandoned? Who is her family? What do other families look like today?
9. Can you think of any other stories and myths in which children are abandoned by their parents or are left on their own and have to take care of themselves? (examples: The Jungle Book, The Secret Garden, Lemony Snicket, Finding Nemo, Alice in Wonderland, Hansel and Gretel, Moses, Romulus and Remus) How do the characters in these stories get help from their friends?

### **Shopping facts**

Paco Underhill is the best-selling author of two books (*Why We Shop* and *The Call of the Mall*) and self-styled "shopping anthropologist." His firm, Envirosell, uses market research, anthropological techniques, and videotaping to research the shopping habits of consumers.

Paco Underhill's shopping surveillance findings include:

- 65 per cent of men who try on jeans buy them - 25 per cent of women do
- 86 per cent of women check price tags while shopping - 72 per cent of men do
- two-thirds of supermarket purchases are unplanned
- men are more likely to cave in to kids' pleas for impulse items

### **What shoppers love**

- Touch: most unplanned purchases follow touching, tasting, smelling or hearing something in the store
- Mirrors: women and men
- Discovery: too many signs take the adventure out of shopping

### **What shoppers hate**

- Lineups
- Out of stock merchandise
- Too many mirrors
- Hard to find price tags
- Intimidating service

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The above list was culled from *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping* by Paco Underhill. You can find more information at [www.envirosell.com](http://www.envirosell.com).

# How big is the Mega Price-Mart?

Look at the picture below to help get a better idea...

“Main street” stores tend to be anywhere from 1,000 to 10,000 square feet. Then there are free-standing drugstores that range in size from 11,000 to 15,000 square feet. Grocery stores tend to be anywhere from 20,000 to 40,000 square feet while home improvement stores range between 60,000 to 140,000 square feet. The biggest of them all are the retail super centers, like Mega Price-Mart, which are anywhere from 180,000 square feet to 250,000 square feet, or between 4.1 and 5.7 acres. Did you know that the parking lot surrounding a retail super center is often several times larger than the store itself? That’s a lot of space!

