



CHILDPLAY

RESOURCES



Written by

Thelma Lynne Godin

Illustrated by

Vanessa Brantley-Newton

Adapted by

Gloria Bond Clunie

Music by

Roz White

Directed by

Chanel Bragg





THE TEAM



Cast

Ms. Evelyn.....Savannah Alfred
Jamara.....Deatra D. Branston
Mama.....Brooke Leigh Davis
Kameeka.....Ryan Jenkins
Portia.....Karley Purnell
Miz Adeline.....Lillie Richardson
Swing.....Shonda Royall

Creative Team

Director - Chanel Bragg
Playwright - Gloria Bond Clunie
Music Director - Roz White

Design and Crew

Scenic Designer - Natsu Onoda Power
Costume Designer - Alexis Chaney
Sound Designer - Kevin Alexander
Lighting Designer - John D. Alexander
Stage Manager - Phoenix Jacob
Hula Hoop Instructor - Jessica Packard




ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Vanessa Brantley-Newton was born during the Civil Rights movement, and attended school in Newark, NJ. Being part of a diverse, tight-knit community during such turbulent times, Vanessa learned the importance of acceptance and empowerment in shaping a young person's life.

Growing up in a musical family, each night the family would gather to make music together. Now whenever she illustrates, music fills the air and finds its way into her art. The children she draws can be seen dancing, wiggling, and moving freely across the page in an expression of happiness.



Music is a constant celebration, no matter the occasion, and Vanessa hopes her illustrations bring joy to others, with the same magic of a beautiful melody.

WHAT THE PLAY IS ABOUT

Kameeka wants to be the best at something, but she isn't quite sure what that is. When her friend —or is she a rival? —Jamara declares herself the Hula Hoopin' Queen of 139th Street, Kameeka vows to take her crown. The two agree on a competition the following Saturday, to be refereed by their friend Portia, where they will settle once and for all who the true Hula Hoopin' Queen is.

Unfortunately, Saturday is also the day of Miz Adeline's birthday party, and Kameeka has promised to help her mama with the preparations. Miz Adeline, their beloved neighbor, is turning 80, and Kameeka wants to make sure the party is special. But the hula hooping itch keeps pulling at her...



Miz Adeline reminds Kameeka that being YOUR best is more important than being THE best, but the sound of Jamara bragging keeps playing in her head, and Kameeka can't stop thinking about winning. She is so distracted by thoughts of hula hooping that when Saturday arrives, she accidentally ruins Miz Adeline's birthday cake. There is just enough time to go to the store for more sugar, come straight home, and bake a new cake – but Kameeka doesn't come straight home. Instead, she stops to compete against Jamara. When Miz Adeline's party begins, there is no double-fudge chocolate cake with strawberries and real whipped cream.

At her mama's urging, Kameeka takes responsibility for the missing cake. And as it turns out, Miz Adeline doesn't just love chocolate cake, she also loves something else – hula hooping! After Miz Adeline blows out the candle on her double-fudge chocolate DONUT, the whole neighborhood gathers to swish and wiggle in a celebration of family, community, and the importance of staying young at heart.

DISCOVER IT



Vocabulary

- Harlem - a neighborhood in the borough of Manhattan, New York City.
 - Borough - a town, or a district within a large city, which has its own council, government, or local services.
 - In New York City, there are five distinct boroughs: Queens, Brooklyn, Staten Island, Manhattan, and the Bronx.
-
- Harlem Renaissance - a period of U.S. history, roughly between 1920-1930, marked by a burst of creativity within the African American community in the areas of art, music and literature.
 - Some famous figures from the Harlem Renaissance are: the poet Langston Hughes, the author Zora Neal Hurston, singer/dancer Josephine Baker, and philosopher Alain LeRoy Locke.

Hula Hoopin' History!

A hula hoop is a toy hoop that is twirled around the waist, limbs or neck, or wheeled along the ground like a wheel.

Did you know?

- Hula hooping originates from Native American Hoop Dance, a form of storytelling dance incorporating hoops as props.
 - The name "hula" came from the Hawaiian dance in the 18th century, due to the similar hip movements.
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- Hula Hoops have been used by children and adults since at least 500 BC!
 - Traditional materials used to make hula hoops are grapevines, stiff grasses, and dried willow.
 - Modern materials used are plastic tubes and PVC pipes.



THEMES OF THE SHOW

- Celebration of Community
- Learning Responsibility
- Pursuing Your Passions



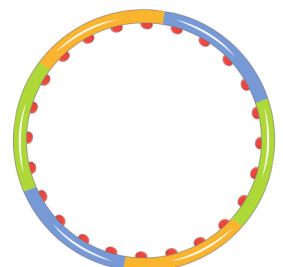
TALK ABOUT IT

Start a conversation before the show:

- ★ The play takes place in Harlem, a neighborhood in New York City. What do you know about Harlem? How do you think they will create a New York City neighborhood on stage in the theatre?
- ★ Kameeka wants to be the Hula Hoopin' Queen of 139th Street. What do you want to become the best at doing?
- ★ What does "community" mean to you?

Start a conversation after the show:

- ★ Kameeka enjoys cooking with her mom and hula hooping with Miz Adeline. What is something special that you like to make or do with the grown-ups in your life?
- ★ Do you think the rivalry between Kameeka and Jamara goes too far? Why or why not? What would you have done in that situation?
- ★ Have you ever made a big mistake like Kameeka does when she doesn't bring the sugar home in time to make Miz Adeline's new cake? How did you make it right?



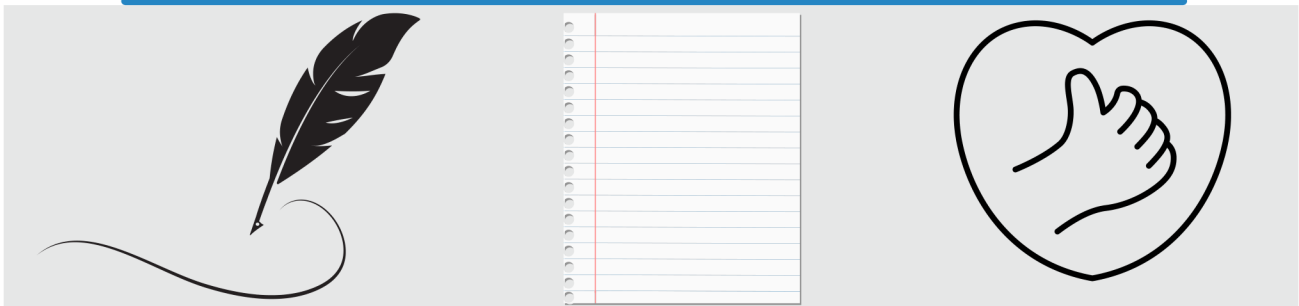
CREATE IT!

I'm Great at what I Do, it's True! Poetry Activity



★ Fill in the blank!

- My name is _____ (first name) and I love to _____ (singular passion: dance, write, draw, sing, play basketball, etc.)
- It makes me feel _____ (singular adjective: strong, smart, fast, cool, special, creative) like I'm a _____ (singular noun: professional athlete, doctor, ballerina, popstar, illustrator, etc.)
- When I get the _____ itch (-ing form of singular passion: dancing, writing, drawing, playing basketball, etc.)
- I just can't quit; I want to be the best there is!
- I like to _____ (singular passion) with _____ (friends, family, classmates, community members) because they _____ me (active verb: challenge, push, inspire, compliment, teach, etc.)
- Just watch! The whole world will see! _____ is what I do (-ing form of singular passion)
- I'm a great _____ it's true! (singular passion in -er form: writer, dancer, singer, basketball player, etc.)



Expand it!

Do you love poetry? If so, continue by writing 6-10 lines about the first time you fell in love with your passion! This is a free verse poem; these lines may or may not rhyme, it is up to you.

End the poem with the same end line above: I'm a great _____ it's true!



Example Poem!

My name is Sean and I love to write

It makes me feel free

Like I'm a star in the night

When I get the writing itch

I just can't quit; I want to be

The best there is!

I like to write with like-minded folks

Because they help me feel

Less alone

Just watch! The whole world will see,

Writing is what I do, I'm a great writer,

It's true!

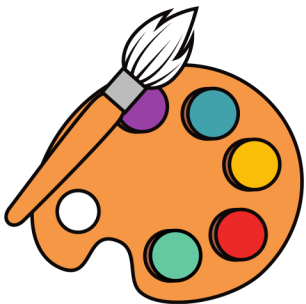


EXPLORE IT!



An illustrator draws the pictures for a book, and illustrators draw inspiration from lots of places. The illustrator of book "The Hula Hoopin' Queen", Vanessa Brantley-Newton, is inspired by music, and you can see it in the neighborhood she created for the book, which is full of bright colors, patterns, and swirling lines. What will music inspire YOU to create?

1. Put on some music, something that makes you feel joyful and sparks your imagination.
2. Gather drawing supplies - paper, crayons or markers or even paint - in lots of bright colors.
3. Think about the neighborhood you live in - which things are moving, growing, or dancing there? Your picture can include the place you live, other people and animals that live nearby, other buildings, parks, even vehicles.
4. Grab a color you love, and start illustrating! Let the music inspire you to capture the joy and energy of your neighborhood and the people who live there.



Once the entire class has finished their neighborhood illustrations, put them all together into a big map. It doesn't matter if everything is in the right place. Take time to notice all the details each illustrator added to their work, and how each piece helps to make up the whole.



SHARE OUT!

• Baking a cake for Miz Adeline's birthday is Kameeka's way of showing how much she cares. Connect to someone in your community by giving them a homemade cake - without all the mess of baking!



- You will need:
- card stock in a variety of colors
 - scissors
 - glue
 - mechanical pencil (or another blunt tool that can scour the paper without cutting it)



Step

Print template #21 (birthday cake box template) from this website:

<https://tallystreasury.com/patterns/>

If you're making multiple boxes, print it on card stock and cut out a few that you can use as tracers.

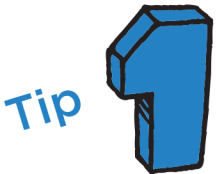


Step

Follow the full tutorial with pictures here:

<https://tallystreasury.com/2014/02/paper-birthday-cake-box/>

It has a lot of steps, but they are fairly simple to execute, and the tips below will help you simplify things a bit.



Tip

The tutorial mentions 3x12 paper - if your paper is 8 1/2 x 11, that's okay - the 3x12 rectangles you are making will be okay as 3x11 rectangles. If you want to be precise, you can always attach two smaller pieces together to get to 3x12.



Tip

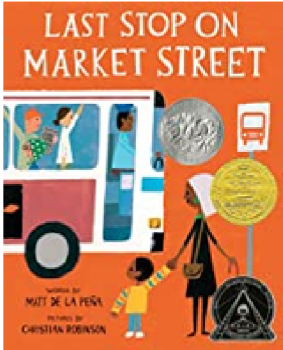
The tutorial recommends using wire to attach the flames to the candles; you can achieve the same effect using very narrow rectangles of card stock or even toothpicks. Just glue the flame to one end of your connector, then unfold your candle and glue the other end of the connector to the center of one of the sides. Put glue all the way down the middle (NOT on the 1/4 inch flaps you cut earlier!) and fold the candle to secure the connector in place.

Once you've completed your cake, all that's left is to figure out who to give it to. Maybe it's a neighbor, or a friend, or a family member. Deliver their cake and make their day!



READ ABOUT IT

Keep the conversation going! Check out this list of books connected to the ideas and themes in *The Hula Hoopin' Queen!*



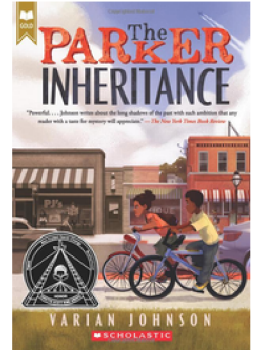
Last Stop on Market Street
By Matt de la Peña
Ages 2-6



The First Rule of Punk
By Celia C. Pérez
Ages 10-12



The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street
By Karina Yan Glaser
Ages 7-11



The Parker Inheritance
By Varian Johnson
Ages 9-12



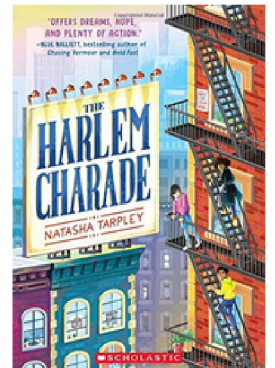
The Year We Learned to Fly
By Jacqueline Woodson
Ages 5-8



The Magnificent Mya Tibbs: Spirit Week Showdown
By Crystal Allen
Ages 8-12



The Hello, Goodbye Window
By Norton Juster
Ages 4-8



The Harlem Charade
By Natasha Tarpley
Ages 8-12



ENGAGE WITH IT

Different things engage different people. Explore what is exciting to you!

- ★ Kids Can Cook - Basic Vanilla Cake (a simple cake recipe for children to bake with adult support): <https://picklebums.com/kids-can-cook-basic-vanilla-cake/>
- ★ Hula Hooping Tutorial (kid-friendly): <https://youtu.be/qP1eP5tMHFM>
- ★ Oprah Winfrey reads "The Hula Hoopin' Queen" for Storyline Online: <https://youtu.be/op9Bc7GWCuw>
- ★ Harlem Renaissance - Britannica Kids: <https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Harlem-Renaissance/353232#:~:text=A%20time%20of%20intense%20creativity,pride%20in%20being%20African%20American>

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#HulaHoopinQueen

EXTEND THE EXPERIENCE!

Bring a professional Teaching Artist to your classroom
to lead an arts-based, standards-driven lesson
connected to the play. Email us at:

CPEducation@childsplayaz.org

ABOUT CHILDSPLAY

Childsplay is a nonprofit professional theatre
company of adult actors who perform 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, those hallmarks of childhood that are the
keys to the future.

For more information:

www.childsplayaz.org

