

CHILDPLAY RESOURCES

The Big Idea:
Imagination



Written by Dwayne Hartford
Directed by Katie McFadzen

Meet the Team

Cast

Tim Zachary Sciortino
Anne Evening Calabrese
Nina Wyatt Murphy
William Payten McLeod

Creative Team

Director Katie McFadzen
Playwright Dwayne Hartford
Stage Manager Payten McLeod
Scenic Designer Kimb Williamson
Costume Designer Rigo Sandoval
Prop Designer Natalie Ward

Sponsors

Discounted in-school
performance fees are
underwritten by Cheryl
Mandala.



What the Play is About

Siblings Anne and Tim just moved to a new town. Playing in their garage full of moving boxes, Tim escapes into his imagination, pretending to be "Dr. Icicle," a villain freezing the world. Anne, frustrated with his childish behavior, warns him not to act weird if he sees other kids—he's only allowed to say "hello." She's nervous about starting a new school and wants to fit in and not be considered strange by her new classmates.

After Anne goes inside, Tim begins a new game as a space explorer. Suddenly, their neighbor, Nina Frances Elizabeth Vanderhelden, bursts in and immediately joins the game, naming herself "Zeldetha, Queen of the Universe." When Tim follows Anne's instructions and only says "hello," Nina turns it into part of the story, pretending he's under a monster's curse.



Anne returns and tries to redirect Nina towards something "normal," but Nina challenges her—why doesn't Anne play anymore? She declares them a team: The Imaginators, with a mission to help Anne remember how to pretend. Nina creates a fantasy world for their stories called Garagenia and casts them as heroes in this realm.

The game takes a turn when Nina reveals the Mooklecratz, a shy but dangerous child-eating monster, has taken over her brother, William. When William arrives with a strange tail under his shirt, the battle begins. Tim and Nina are "eaten," leaving Anne alone. She remembers what Nina taught her and saves Tim by using a feather duster as magical flowers to get the Mooklecratz to sneeze, then knocks down a wall of boxes so the monster can't hide. Anne and Tim defeat the Mooklecratz and rescue Nina.

In the end, Anne rediscovers the power of play, makes a new friend, strengthens her bond with Tim, and learns it's okay to be herself.

Themes of the Show

- Imagination
- Making New Friends
- Overcoming Fear
- Growing Up



Talk About It!

Start a conversation before the show:

- ☆ What's your favorite way to use your imagination?
- ☆ Being in a new place can be scary and exciting all at once! Have you ever been "the new kid" somewhere? How did you feel?
- ☆ Have you ever felt like you had to hide something about yourself to fit in? Who makes you feel brave enough to be you?

Start a conversation after the show:

- ☆ Why do you think it's important to play? Should grown-ups play too?
- ☆ If you created a make-believe monster, what would it be like? How would you defeat it?
- ☆ Nina has a lot of great ideas for play, but she has a hard time making space for Anne and Tim's ideas. Have you ever had (or been) a bossy friend? How do you balance everyone's ideas when you're playing with friends?
- ☆ Nina, Anne, and Tim have to work together to defeat the Mooklecratz. How does each person help?

Discover It!



Imagine That!

- The famous scientist Albert Einstein once said, "Imagination ... is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world."

(Day)dream On

- Daydreaming is good for your brain! When you daydream, your imagination explores information, ideas, and problems from different angles, helping you come up with creative solutions to current and future problems.
- Scientists at Georgia Tech found that people who daydream frequently have more efficient brain networks. The daydreamers in their study also scored higher on creativity tests and intellectual ability tests.

Tips for Making Friends

- Get out there! Doing things you love is a great way to meet people.
- Be brave - somebody has to say "hi" first!
- Start a conversation! Ask questions and find things you have in common.
- Be the kind of friend you'd like to have.

Creature Corner

- Mythical creatures are beasts that exist in stories but not the real world. They are often a mix of other animals and have magical abilities.
- The Mooklecratz was created for this play, but each of the world's cultures has its own mythical creatures, like unicorns and minotaurs.
- Some creatures, like dragons, appear across different cultures, but their qualities or meaning changes.

Did you know?

- The oldest known mythical beast, the therianthrope, appears in Indonesian cave art from 44,000 years ago!
- "Bestiaries," animal books from the Middle Ages, did not separate mythical beasts from real animals because an animal's meaning was more important than whether it was real.

Create It!



Build a Beast

The Mooklecratz has red eyes and a tail and...how do you imagine the rest? Use the templates on the next two pages to create your own unique version of this imaginary beast.

You will need: ★ printable template (we've provided two to choose from!)

- ★ coloring tools
- ★ your imagination!

1

Use markers, crayons, or colored pencils to color the Mooklecratz's tail.

2

Draw the rest of its body however you imagine it! Be sure to include the glowing red eyes.

3

No two creatures are exactly alike, even if they're both Mooklecratzes. Give yours a name and some special strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes.

Level Up!

Embody your creature. In your own space, experiment with how it moves. Are its movements fast or slow? Smooth or sharp? Heavy or light? Make some big choices and then share with the class. You can even add sound - does your beast roar? Growl? Whisper? Squeak? If it uses words to communicate, decide what its voice sounds like and share that too!



Build a Beast!

Name: _____

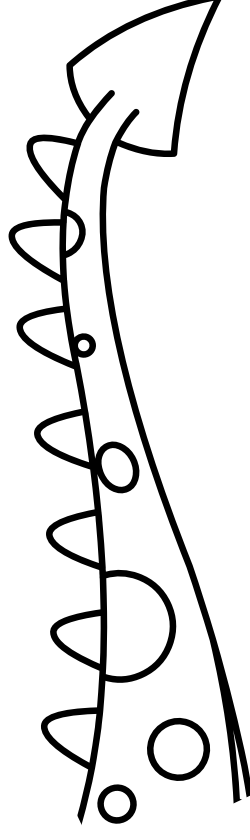
Creature's Name: _____

Likes: _____

Strength: _____

Dislikes: _____

Weakness: _____





Build a Beast!

Name: _____

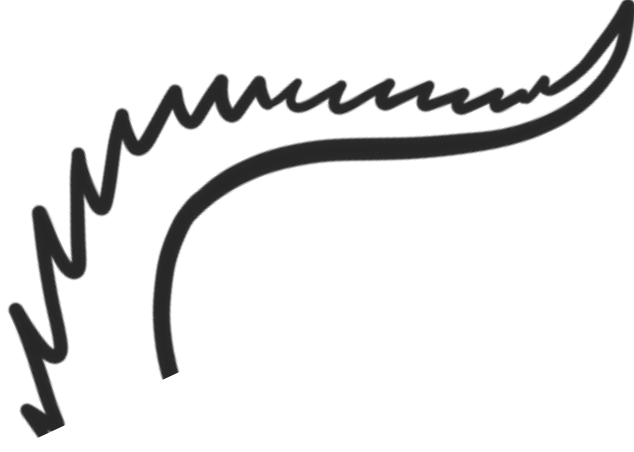
Creature's Name: _____

Likes: _____

Strength: _____

Dislikes: _____

Weakness: _____



Imagine It!



Scan the QR code to play through this activity with Childsplay teaching artist Kate!



This Is Not A...

When you use your imagination, everyday items can become something special! Use this activity to transform the objects around you and create extraordinary stories around ordinary things.

1

Gather an assortment of safe, not breakable, ordinary objects. Think paper towel tubes, pencils, yarn - whatever you have available.

2

Take turns choosing an object and using it as something else. Hold up the object and say "This is not a _____, it's a _____." Demonstrate how you would use the object if it were the thing you are imagining it to be. Add sound effects or a line of dialogue to make it clear, like making vroom vroom sounds and yelling "Get out of my lane!" while using a piece of paper as a steering wheel.

3

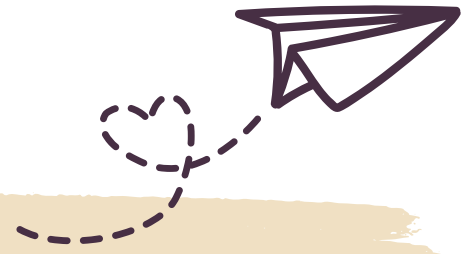
The other players try to guess what you turned your object into.

Extend It!

One Object, Five Lives: Choose an object and come up with FIVE things it can become. Share them as a series i.e. "This is not a piece of paper, it's a steering wheel, and a paint palette, and a rain hat, and a napkin, and a telescope!"

To take it even further, create a character and a short story in which they use your object in each of its five transformations. Who are they? How old are they? Where do they live? What do they do for work or fun? Figure out how your character moves and talks, then tell your story as your character!

Share It!



Fantasyland Map

Create your own version of Garagenia! What magical places will your fantasyland contain?

1

As a class, choose a name for your imaginary land and brainstorm a list of places that would be in it. Where do people live, work, and have fun? Include ordinary places like houses, shops, and libraries, as well as magical places like a pegasus petting zoo or a car wash for spaceships.

2

Divide up the locations you've chosen and give each person a piece of paper (or half sheet) on which to draw their location. The more color and detail, the better!



3

Just as Nina describes Garagenia in rhyme, create couplets describing your fantasyland. Have each person write one rhyming couplet about their location - or work with a partner to create their couplets together.

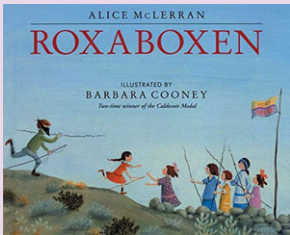
4

Put the pieces together into a single map. You can add features like rivers, mountains, and roads or trails connecting the different locations. Display it in the classroom and imagine all of the incredible stories that might take place there!



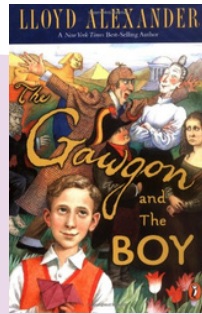
Read About It!

Keep the conversation going! Check out this list of books connected to the ideas and themes in 'The Imaginators'!



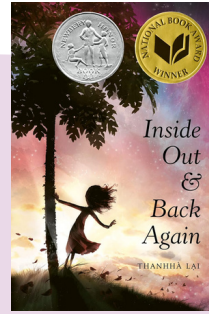
Roxaboxen

By Alice McLerran
Ages 4-8



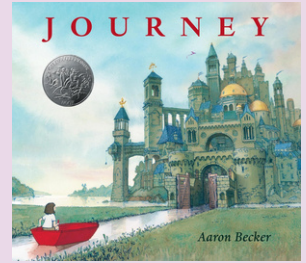
The Gawgon and the Boy

By Lloyd Alexander
Ages 10-12



Inside Out & Back Again

By Thanhha Lai
Ages 9-12



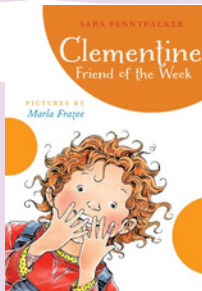
Journey

By Aaron Becker
Ages 4-8



The Book of Mythical Beasts & Magical Creatures

By Stephen Krensky
Ages 7-9



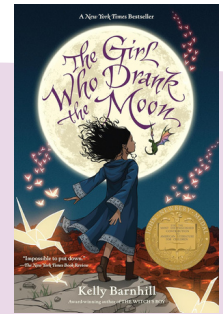
Clementine Friend of the Week

By Sara Pennypacker
Ages 7-10



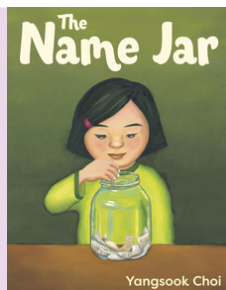
The Fort

By Laura Perdue
Ages 4-8



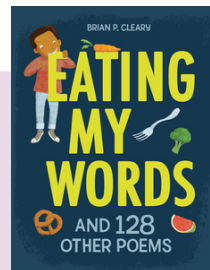
The Girl Who Drank the Moon

By Kelly Barnhill
Ages 10-14



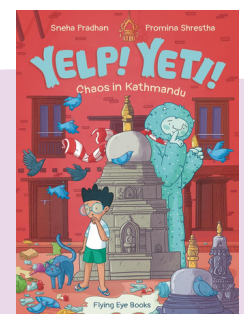
The Name Jar

By Yangsook Choi
Ages 5-8



Eating My Words and 128 Other Poems

By Brian P. Cleary
Ages 9-14



Yelp! Yeti! Chaos in Kathmandu

By Sneha Pradhan
Ages 5-9

Extend It!

The play is just the beginning - there's always more to learn. Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to dig deeper into what interests you!

- ★ Explore the Museum of Play!
- ★ Learn more about poetry!
- ★ Watch a short film about an incredible cardboard arcade!



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

#SHAREWITHUS

Follow us on social media and share your comments & photos!

#ChildsplayAZ

#Imaginators

We also love getting mail!

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About Childsplay

Our mission is to ignite imagination, wonder and joy by creating strikingly original theatre and learning experiences that inspire young minds to explore and soar.

For more information:

childsplayaz.org



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