

DUCK

for
President
and Other Story Books

Dear Teacher:

We have created the following study guide to help make your students' theater experience with Theatreworks USA's production of *Duck for President and other Stories* as meaningful as possible. For many, it will be their first time viewing a live theatrical production. We have learned that when teachers discuss the play with their students before and after the production, the experience is more significant and long-lasting.

This performance highlights six favorite children's books. The format is that of a musical revue made up of vignettes created by a variety of talented writers and performed by a cast of five actors. (Note: the actors assume various roles throughout the show through quick costume and character changes—a concept which you may need to review for younger children).

Following is a list of the books used in the performance. You may choose to read some (or all) of the books to your class before or after seeing the performance (perhaps asking students which books from the show they would like to read). Similarly, depending on the grade level of your students and the time you have available, you can utilize the activities either before seeing the show (as pre-performance preparation) or as follow-up activities.

Babymouse: The Musical

Based on the book by Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm.

Summary: Babymouse wants to be the star of the school musical and learns that the show must go on even if everything doesn't go as planned

Theme: Everyone has talents and can make a contribution.

- ✎ Put on a play as a class. Reader's Theater scripts for classes are available for free from <http://www.aaronshp.com/rt/RTE.html> and <http://www.teachingheart.net/readerstheater.htm>
- ✎ Create a Babymouse comic strip.
- ✎ Visit the Babymouse website and make your own Babymouse comic, story adventure or rock star poster plus other activities.
<http://www.randomhouse.com/kids/babymouse/homepage.htm>

Duck for President

Based on the book by Doreen Cronin and Betsy Lewin. Used with permission of Pippin Properties, Inc.

Summary: Duck doesn't like to do chores on the farm so he decides to run for election as head of the farm. When he wins and gets even more work he decides to run for governor and eventually president where he finds increasing responsibility and not the easy life he was hoping for.

Theme: Everybody has responsibilities and shouldn't try to get out of doing work. You can take pride in a job well done.

- ✎ Stage an election for president of the class. Have students write a speech explaining why they would be the best choice.
 - ✎ Make election posters for duck or other animals. Have students create slogans and/or research why their animal would be the best choice. Hang the posters around the class and vote for the best animal.
 - ✎ Research the presidents of the U.S. Have each student prepare a poster about a president including a picture, facts about his life and an important event during his presidency. Students can present them to the class and/or display them in the room.
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Fancy Nancy

Adapted from *Fancy Nancy*, copyright © 2005 by Jane O'Connor.
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Summary: A girl who loves to be fancy convinces her family to be fancy for a special night.

Theme: More is always better when it comes to being fancy.

- ✎ Have a "dress up" day when students dress in fancy clothes and read [Fancy Nancy](#) stories.
- ✎ Plan a party with your class, design invitations. What are the steps needed to organize a big event? Think of ideas for activities, decorations, food, etc. Put students into groups for different tasks. Parents can help too!
- ✎ Go to <http://www.fancynancybooks.com/#/kids/> for Fancy Nancy printables, games and party ideas as well as an interview with the author, Jane O'Connor.
- ✎ Use fancy words. Identify the meaning of Nancy's "fancy" words. Look up some other fancy words. Trade with other students to see if they know the meanings. Use Nancy's words for a dictionary exercise. Have students illustrate their words and meanings and display around the room.

Fancy Words to look up:

Accessories
Bangles
Baubles
Bedazzle
Bling
Bonjour
Elegant
Exquisite

Extraordinary
Fabulous
Frills
Fuchsia
Glamorous
Parfait
Pinnacle
Pizzazz



Sequin
Si vous plait
Stupendous
Tiara
Ultimate
Zenith

I Have to Go!

Based on *I Have to Go!* by Robert Munsch, illustrated by Michael Martchenko, and published by Annick Press Ltd., © 1987.

Summary: A boy named Andrew has bathroom issues. He won't go when asked but always has an emergency at the most inconvenient times.

Theme: Some people take longer than others to settle on a bathroom routine but eventually everybody figures it out.




-  Have students share a special talent with the class i.e. whistling, hula hooping, etc. Put on a talent show featuring their unusual skills.
 -  Let students write a journal entry about an experience they've had when they couldn't do something that everyone else could. Have them explain how they overcame the obstacle.
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Leonardo, the Terrible Monster

Adapted from *Leonardo, the Terrible Monster*. Copyright © 2005 by Mo Willems. Published by Hyperion Books for Children. All rights reserved. Used with permission of the author.

Summary: Leonardo can't manage to scare anybody unlike his other monster friends until he finds the perfect nervous little boy.

Theme: Sometimes being a friend is more important than being like everyone else.

-  Make scary monster masks. Take pictures of students wearing masks and display around the classroom.
-  Create the weirdest monster: Use recyclable materials (old fabric, paper, bottles, etc) to create odd monsters. Have children come up with monster names and display them in the classroom.
-  Explore the idea of fears (like public speaking.) Have students pick their worst fear and illustrate it in a "Would You Rather" poster, i.e.: Would you rather touch a spider or sleep on ice cubes?

Pirates Don't Change Diapers

Based on the book *Pirates Don't Change Diapers*,
written by Melinda Long, illustrated by David Shannon. Used with the permission of the author.

Summary: A pirate crew returns to find the treasure buried in Jeremy Jacob's yard. But before they can dig it up, they must help Jeremy take care of his baby sister.

Theme: Even tough guys have a soft spot when it comes to babies.

- ✎ Have a treasure hunt in the classroom. Create a map and have the students use map skills to find "treasure" in the class. Have students create their own maps of their homes or neighborhoods.
- ✎ Demonstrate how to use a compass. Have students direct their classmates around the room using directional commands such as "10 paces east, 5 paces west."
- ✎ Create a dictionary of pirate words and their meanings. Celebrate "Talk Like a Pirate Day" <http://www.yarr.org.uk/talk/>. Make up stories or sentences using as many pirate terms as possible.
- ✎ Work in groups to make a "How-To" presentation. Students teach the class to perform a task (i.e. How to ride a skateboard, pitch a ball or make jello, etc.) using very detailed instructions. Props can be used for a real demonstration. (how to change a diaper, etc)

Pirate Vocabulary:

Ahoy	to hail a ship or person
Argh	a general pirate term
Aye	yes
Booty	stolen goods
Bucko	friend
Doubloons	gold coins
Gangway	move out of the way
Hornswaggle	to cheat
Jolly Roger	skull & crossbones pirate flag
Lad	young man
Landlubber	person who lives and works on land
Lass	girl or young woman
Matey	friend
Me hearties	my friends
Pieces of eight	silver coins
Scallywag	deceitful person
Shiver me timbers	to be surprised
Sprogs	children
Swab	inexperienced sailor
Walk the plank	to be forced to walk off the side of a ship
Yo-ho-ho	something fun to say