

ELEPHANT & PIGGIE

March 8-10, 2017

10 AM & 12 PM





Dear Teachers,

Welcome to another exciting season for the Peace Outreach Program Youth Performance Series!

Every show presented for our 2016 - 2017 season is curriculum-based and designed to be both educational and entertaining. In order to get the most rewarding experience from the performance, it is important to prepare students for the show and reflect on what they learned following the performance. The resources and activities presented in this guide are designed to help you make the most of your visit to the Peace Center. As always, our goal is to help you create the most arts-enriching and educational experience for your students!

If you have any questions regarding your performance or the many educational opportunities available through the Peace Outreach Program, please feel free to contact Jennifer Parnell by email at jparnell@peacecenter.org or by phone at 864.679.9207.

We appreciate your dedication to bringing the very best of opportunities to your students through the arts!

We look forward to seeing you and your students at the Peace Center!

POP Youth Performance Series sponsored by:



ABOUT ELEPHANT AND PIGGIE

Have two more perfect pals than Elephant & Piggie ever existed? We don't think so. Based on the hilarious and ultra-fun children's book by Mo Willems, *We Are in a Play* follows Elephant and Piggie on a ragtime musical adventure. They'll use song and dance as they face new adventures, perilous predicaments, and answer important questions like, "what does one wear to a fancy pool costume party?" "Should you share your ice cream?" "How can two friends play with one toy?"

Elephant & Piggie's *We Are In a Play* is based on the following six books in the Elephant & Piggie series:

- *I Am Invited to a Party!*
- *Listen to My Trumpet!*
- *I Am Going!*
- *Should I Share My Ice Cream?*
- *I Love My New Toy*
- *We Are In a Book!*

ABOUT MO WILLEMS

Mo Willems is a New York Times #1 best-selling author and illustrator who started his career on *Sesame Street*, where he garnered six Emmy Awards for his writing, before changing the face of children's literature with his groundbreaking picture books. Willems has been awarded a Caldecott Honor on three occasions (for *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*; *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale*; and *Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity*), and his acclaimed Elephant & Piggie early-reader series received the Theodor Seuss Geisel Medal in 2008 and 2009.

BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

The contents of this guide are for the purpose of preparing you and your students for your POP! performance. We ask that you share not only the Theatre Etiquette Guidelines with your students, but that you also integrate the following or similar activities into your classroom in anticipation of attending the show.

Theatre Etiquette Guidelines

Greetings future theater-goer!

It would seem a congratulations is in order! You are about to embark on a wondrous journey. Where are you heading? Well, that depends on the show. The theater is capable of teleporting audiences almost anywhere... However, it is a delicate device that only works if all audience members are on board...

Below is a list of things to keep in mind when you enter the theater, so the show can go off without a hitch!

1. Follow the Golden Rule and treat others how you would like to be treated once inside.

BUT WHY?

You're watching your favorite TV show. It's the series finale and you're about to find out why mild mannered Gordon Belksby has been acting so suspicious all season. That's when a couple in front of you starts to talk obnoxiously about their post-show plans, causing you to miss major plot points and taking you out of the story.

When you're seeing a show, keep in mind that everyone around you is seeing it too. Think of how you like to be treated when watching something you love and give your fellow audience members (and the artists) that same respect.

2. Bottled water is okay, but please dispose of any food, drinks or chewing gum before you enter.

BUT WHY?

Picture this, machete in hand, you trudge through the tangled foliage of an exotic jungle towards an ancient, golden relic. As you approach the statuette, the ground begins to shake violently. Is it an earthquake? Did you trigger some sort of trap? Without thought, you reach your hand out to stabilize yourself and... SPLAT. It lands in old chewing gum that someone left on the arm of your chair.

Keeping food out of the theater ensures seats stay clean and audience members can pay attention to what matters. The show.

3. Turn off cellphones, cameras or any other noisy or bright devices before the show starts.

BUT WHY?

Because more often than not, technology can ruin a performance. It's distracting to the artists, those around you, and it doesn't belong in most shows. If Romeo had been able to text Juliet, things wouldn't have ended so unfortunately. Which would have been unfortunate.

ACTIVITY 1 | INTRODUCING ELEPHANT & PIGGIE

Be sure to read selected books from Mo Willems' *Elephant & Piggie* series prior to attending the play!

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS | Language Arts, Literacy, Social Development, Character Education

TIME | 20 minutes

YOU WILL NEED

- Copies of Elephant & Piggie books of your choosing
1. Read a book/s from the Elephant & Piggie series as a class. Following the reading, lead your students in meaningful discussion about the story and characters. Who is Piggie? Who is Gerald? How do they behave toward one another?
 2. As a class, discuss the concept of friendship. Friendship is one of the major themes highlighted in the Elephant & Piggie series. Initiate a discussion with students about this topic by asking the following:
 - What makes a good friend?
 - What kinds of things do friends do for each other?
 - When possible, encourage students to use examples. Make a list of the traits on the board.
 3. Using the list of traits created, match the characteristics the students suggested with Gerald or Piggie from the Elephant & Piggie series.

EXTENSION The following provides sample activities for the Elephant & Piggie books listed on page 3 that are featured in Elephant & Piggie's *We Are In a Play!*

At the end of *I Am Going!*, Piggie reveals that she is going... to have lunch! But where are some of the other places Elephant and Piggie could go? Distribute blank pieces of paper and crayons to each of your students, asking them to draw one fun new place where Elephant and Piggie could go together. Then have the class share all of their exciting locations!

Read *I Am Invited to a Party!* out loud using props. Store the props in a box or sack. As you pull out each of the props, have your students put them on. Props could include Gerald's top hat, a bow tie, cane, giant gloves, earrings, flippers, water wings, goggles, a cowboy hat, a bandanna, etc.

ACTIVITY 2 | EXPRESSIVE ANIMALS

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS | Language Arts, Theatre, Dance/Movement

TIME | 20 minutes

YOU WILL NEED

- Free space in classroom for movement
 - Whiteboard or SMART board for recording class discussion
1. Ask students to move through the room as a dog without prompts of how the animal moves or of how they should portray it (most students will most likely move around on all fours). Lead students to adjust their movements, instructing them to try to convey the movements of a dog while not moving on all fours.
 2. Instruct students to move around the room as a lion, again telling them to remain upright. After some movement, reflect with the class. How did movements differ from moving like a dog? What behaviors or feelings changed?
 3. Discuss with students the ways in which actors work to embody their characters. In the next phase of the activity, present the idea of acting as Gerald and Piggie from the Elephant & Piggie series, as they are animals who portray human characteristics.

4. Brainstorm with students the ways in which they might move while representing an elephant. As with other animals portrayed, they must remain upright. Write these ideas on the board as students move through the space. In contrast, how might students move like Gerald?
5. Guide students as they generate ideas on how to move as Gerald and write their ideas on the board. What characteristics, such as his worrisome nature, might inform how he moves? After brainstorming, have students move through the room while incorporating the characteristics.
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 for Piggie. Be sure to emphasize not only physical characteristics through movement but also the behavioral traits of the characters.
7. Guide the class as they self-reflect and draw a picture of themselves acting out the characters of Gerald and Piggie.

ACTIVITY 3 | BEFORE AND AFTER

Picture book illustrations provide images of key moments in a story. Have your students infer the development of an Elephant & Piggie story through this drama activity!

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS | Language Arts, Theatre/Drama, Visual Art/Illustrations

TIME | 30 minutes

YOU WILL NEED

- Free space in classroom for movement
1. Divide the class into pairs. Distribute a copy of an illustration from an Elephant & Piggie book to each group. Have the group study the picture and discuss what they think happened immediately before and immediately after the moment shown in the image.
 2. After giving students time to plan, have groups improvise a scene that would “bookend” the action in the illustration. Have students consider what happened in the story that led up to the moment shown and consider what happens immediately following this image. Next, have each group “freeze” in the middle of their scene imitating the action in the image.
 3. After each group “performs” their scene, read an Elephant & Piggie book of your choosing and have students explore the importance of illustrations. How would the story be different without the pictures? In what ways do the illustrations enhance the story?

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

After the performance at the Peace Center, students feel a new level of excitement and are open to greater response to the content of the show. Take advantage of this enthusiasm and receptiveness to learning by reflecting on the performance back in the classroom!

ACTIVITY 1 | BE A THEATRE CRITIC!

A reviewer’s job is to see a play and write about what they liked and what they did not like. Give your students the opportunity to review Elephant & Piggie’s We Are in a Play!

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS | Language Arts, Theatre, Visual Art

TIME | 20 minutes

YOU WILL NEED

- Student paper and writing implements
 - Plain paper and crayons, markers, colored pencils, etc., as available
1. Begin the activity by leading the class in an initial discussion of the production:
 - What events do you remember from the story? (After creating a list of events, you may want to ask students to put them into sequence.)
 - Can they remember all of the characters’ names?
 - What kinds of costumes did the actors wear?

- What props do you remember?
 - Describe the set.
 - What kinds of songs did they sing?
 - What kind of dancing did you see?
 - Did you see any instruments?
 - What else can you remember from the performance?
2. Have your students give the performance a rating of 1 to 5 stars. Then ask your students to write a paragraph in which they write their review of the play and provide specific examples that support their star rating. For each positive star, have students discuss one thing they liked about the performance. For example, for a five-star rating, one would mention at least five things he or she liked about the performance. For each star out of five left off the score, have your students describe one thing they did not enjoy about the performance. For example, a three-star rating would have three positive comments along with two things that needed improvement.
 3. As a part of their review, have students draw a picture depicting their favorite moment from *Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a Play*.

ACTIVITY 2 | MUSICAL MOODS

Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a Play is a musical, meaning that songs and music are interjected into the play to help tell the story. Discover how music affects mood in this drawing activity!

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS | Music, Language Arts, Theatre, Visual Arts

TIME | 30 minutes

YOU WILL NEED

- Two short pieces of music of contrasting musical styles
 - Plain paper and crayons, markers, colored pencils, etc., as available
1. Facilitate a discussion with the class about the music in *Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a Play*. *We Are in a Play* is a musical in which the characters often explain what they are feeling or experiencing through song. Which songs were the students' favorites? How can music add to the mood of a story?
 2. To explore the second question, have students listen to the two pieces of music of varying styles. Play each piece or excerpt one after another, allowing students to offer words or phrases that describe the music: these may refer to the sounds, mood, fast or slow, instruments being played, etc. Further brainstorm the situations in which each musical selection might be played, such as for a lullaby, in an action film, etc., based on your music choices.
 3. Using the paper and drawing implements, instruct students to depict the music through line drawings. Play each selection again. Instruct students to choose one color crayon, pencil, marker, etc., which they feel 'matches' the piece.
 4. To create the line drawing, instruct students to start with their drawing implements at the corners of their papers. While listening to the music, students will draw how the music sounds or makes them feel without breaking contact with the paper. It may be helpful to model this practice for students using one of the pieces of music.
 5. Discuss similarities and differences between student drawings for each piece. As part of the discussion, inform the students of the origins and uses of the piece of music.
 6. Repeat steps 5 and 6 for the other piece of music, using a separate piece of paper and a different color crayon or pencil.

ACTIVITY 3 | FROM PAGE TO STAGE

Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a Play is an adaptation of several Mo Willems books that combine to create an exciting theatre piece! In this activity, discuss with students the many ways to adapt a written story into a play.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS | Language Arts, Theatre

TIME | 40 minutes

YOU WILL NEED

- Free space in classroom for movement
 - Selected scenes from favorite book/Elephant & Piggie book
1. Begin by asking students if they have ever seen a book that has been turned into a movie. Ask what parts were similar, what parts changed, etc.
 2. Using a favorite book or something the class is currently reading, ask students to work in small groups to plan a stage version of a short scene. You may wish to predetermine the segments to be made into scenes.
 3. Have students reflect on their scene and ask them to identify parts that they connect with and start brainstorming how they can most effectively bring those moments to life. Once students are finished brainstorming, have them start planning their scenes. Encourage students to make choices regarding how the characters act, what kind of movements they would like to include, and if they would like to add such elements as music or dance to their scene. As available and appropriate, you may wish to provide props or music selections from which students may choose – allow for as much creativity as possible depending on time and resources!
 4. Once students have had adequate time to plan and rehearse their scenes, allow each group the opportunity to perform their scene for the class. You may wish to select sequential segments from the book so as to have a completed story presented.
 5. Discuss each group's choices following all performances. How did choices made in acting out the scene change from group to group? How did those choices change how the characters looked or acted, etc.?
 6. Discuss the challenges of making this transition from page to stage. Close the lesson by having students explain how books can be used to create plays.



Interested in more enriching educational programming for your students? Be sure to explore the many initiatives of the Peace Outreach Program, from master classes to workshops and more, at www.peacecenter.org!