



PRESCHOOL TEACHER'S GUIDE

The Arts Start program is supported by



If You Give a Mouse a Cookie & Other Story Books

Monday, November 5, 2012

10:00 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

SANGAMON AUDITORIUM 

The text 'SANGAMON AUDITORIUM' is written in a large, black, serif font. A light gray, brushstroke-like underline is drawn beneath the text. To the right of the text is the logo for the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS), which features a black silhouette of a dome above the letters 'UIS' in a black, serif font.



Welcome!

This guide was created for use by teachers in the Springfield Urban League Head Start program, but it will also be sent to other teachers attending the performance who indicate they teach preschool students. Another Teacher's Guide, with content for older students, is available on the Sangamon Auditorium website at www.SangamonAuditorium.org/classacts. We hope the information and activity ideas included in this guide will help your students better understand the performance they see.

We look forward to seeing you!



Youth programming in the *Class Acts* series and in conjunction with other Sangamon Auditorium events is supported in part by the Helen Hamilton Performing Arts Endowment for Youth Fund, gifts from Elizabeth and Robert Staley, and a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.



The Arts Start program is an initiative of **University of Illinois Springfield's Sangamon Auditorium** and the **Springfield Urban League Head Start**, funded by **PNC's Grow Up Great**® initiative. Through this arts education program, Head Start students, their teachers, and their families will become involved in live performances, enhancing the students' educational opportunities and school readiness.



Write to Us

We would love to hear from you and your students! If your students write about the performance they saw or create artwork related to it, you are welcome to send it to us via email to azepp2@uis.edu or through the mail to

Class Acts
Sangamon Auditorium, UIS
One University Plaza, MS PAC 397
Springfield, IL 62703-5407

We love sharing student work with our *Class Acts* sponsors, so they can see the impact of their donations.



Attending a Live Performance

Please use the information below to help prepare your young students for attending a live theatrical performance. For many, this will be their first experience with live theater.

Going to a live theatrical performance is different than watching a movie or TV show – the members of the audience are very important, and the way they behave will affect the performance. That’s why theaters have their own special rules about behavior.

- Tell your students that when they arrive in the parking lot, there will be a lot of other buses there too. They will need to follow the instructions of their teachers and walk in a straight line (or maybe in a buddy-system line) to come into the building. Once inside, they need to stay in line because of all the other students who will be there.
- Ask your students how they think an audience should behave at a live performance. What are some of the things they should do and not do? If it is not covered by the student answers, make sure you talk about:
 - **Listen** to the performance (this ties into “don’t talk,” but it can be helpful to keep all the discussion points phrased in the positive and not in the “don’t-do-this” mode); use a “cupped ear” gesture to emphasize listening when it is mentioned
 - **Watch** the performance; point at both sides of your face near your eyes with your index fingers to emphasize watching when it is mentioned
 - **Clap** at the end of songs and at the end of the performance when the performers take their bows. Take the time to practice clapping with the students. Call one student forward who will pretend to take a bow at the end of a performance and the rest of the room will practice clapping for this student.

Repeat the gestures for the three points above and have the students do it with you.

- Let your students know that like in a movie theater, the area where the audience sits for the performance will be rather dark, but there will be lights on the stage and some small lights will remain on in the aisles. If they need to use the bathroom in the middle of the show, they can come to the end of the row and an usher will use a flashlight to make sure they can find their way to the correct bathroom.



Activities

The activities can be used together in any combination that works for the teacher. It would be best to do some activities before the performance, to help students understand the plot of the story, and some activities after the performance, to reinforce what they have seen.

A note about this show:

If You Give a Mouse a Cookie and Other Story Books is a collection of seven story books in one show.

- *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*
- *Amazing Grace*
- *Borreguita and the Coyote*
- *Imogene's Antlers*
- *Master Man*
- *Math Curse*
- *Owen*

The activities in this guide are all based on the story *Owen*.

Pre-show Discussion Questions

Discuss the different types of performing arts (music, dance, theater) to help students understand that they are going to see people perform on a stage, and help them understand the difference between the roles of the performer and the audience. Ask if they have ever experienced a live theater performance before. What did they see? What was it like?

How is live theater different than movies and TV?

- There are real people on the stage.
- The performance will never be exactly the same again.

Familiarize your students with the following words – theater, play, actor, stage, costume, usher

Literacy and Writing

The story of *Owen* by Kevin Henkes has detailed illustrations that can greatly enhance the story for your students. After reading the story to your class one time, read the story a second time and take time to pay careful attention to the illustrations. For example, ask your students to find Owen's yellow blanket in every picture. Or have your students "read" the story to you by describing what is happening in each picture.

Vocabulary – Be sure your students are familiar with the following words from the story:

- fuzzy
- plunger
- invisible
- essential
- twist
- handkerchief

Fine Arts



Theatre – Students can use a blanket or piece of fabric, like Owen's blanket named Fuzzy, to help them express emotions. For example, if you're happy you can wave your blanket over your head, if you're scared you hide under your blanket, or if you're sad you hug your blanket. Give each student a blanket or piece of fabric and then name different emotions for them to show you.

Visual Art – In the illustrations for the story, Owen has drawn many pictures of himself with his blanket. Have students draw pictures of themselves with a favorite special object they have. Maybe they have a blanket, like Owen, or maybe a doll or stuffed animal. Owen's blanket is called "Fuzzy." Ask students if their special object has a name so you can label each student's picture with his or her name and the object's name.





Dance/Movement – Like Owen, students can dance with a blanket or a piece of fabric. Look at the illustrations inside the book’s cover for ideas. The teacher can play different types of music and give for how to move, such as “wave your blanket back and forth high over your head” or “wave your blanket back and forth low to the ground.” This can help reinforce learning about directions, such as high and low.

Music – Have students do the Hokey Pokey with their blankets or pieces of fabric. Sing the song with your class, and you can change the words to things such as:

You put your blanket in

You put your blanket out

You put your blanket in

And you shake it all about

You do the hokey pokey

And you turn yourself around

That’s what it’s all about *clap* *clap*



You can also do all of the regular verses of the hokey pokey to help your students learn the difference between right and left. (right hand, left hand, right foot, left foot, head, back side, whole self)

Other Activities

Take home activity – Kevin Henkes, the author of *Owen*, has written many books with mice characters. Before or after the performance send home the coloring sheet found on the following page that features Wemberly from the story *Wemberly Worried*.

Science – In the story, Owen’s parents dip one corner of his blanket in vinegar to make it smell bad, hoping that if it smells bad Owen will not want Fuzzy anymore. Have students smell some vinegar so they understand how bad it smells. This can be related to other lessons about the five senses. Bring in other things for students to smell, such as spices. Ask them if the different things they smell are better or worse than the vinegar. Would they like to have a blanket that smelled like the different things?

Snack – Near the beginning of the story, Owen says that his favorite foods (and Fuzzy’s favorites, too) are orange juice, grape juice, chocolate milk, ice cream, peanut butter, and applesauce cake. Any combination of these foods at snack time would help students connect to the story.

Post-show Discussion Questions

After attending the performance, it is very important to talk to your students about their experience, memory, and reaction to the live performance. These are some possible questions:

- Tell me about what you saw on the field trip.
- Tell me about what you heard on the field trip.
- What will you remember about the performance?
- What surprised you about our field trip?
- What was the most exciting part of our field trip for you?

Wemberly Worried

by Kevin Henkes

