

MR. POPPER'S PENGUINS

WRITTEN BY

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MUSIC BY

GEORGE HOWE



STUDY GUIDE

PROVIDED BY



PERFORMANCE DATES & TIMES

SCHOOL PERFORMANCES:

- December 4th-21st

PUBLIC PERFORMANCES:

- December 7th, 14th, and 21st
@ 10am & 12pm



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This classroom guide for Mr. Popper's Penguins is designed for Alabama students ranging from grades K-3. It offers activities to help you integrate classroom activities into English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Music, and Theatre curricula.

All activities in this guide are linked to the Alabama State Department of Education content standards.

<https://www.alsde.edu/sec/sct/Pages/cos-all.aspx?navtext=Standards/COS>

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A NOTE TO FELLOW EDUCATORS

Greetings!

We are excited for you and your students to attend Mr. Popper's Penguins, written by Robert Kauzlaric, with music by George Howe at the Birmingham Children's Theatre. We invite you to use this packet in your classroom to prepare for and reflect on your upcoming visit.

This packet is designed to assist you in introducing the play's plot, characters, settings, language, and themes to your students. We encourage you to use these activities prior to the show to guide your students to a better understanding and enjoyment of what they will see at the theatre, and also after you visit to reinforce the show's themes and tie them into the STEM curriculum.

Thank you for helping to extend the learning process beyond theatre walls and for instilling an appreciation of the arts in the lives of Birmingham children.

See you at the theatre!

Birmingham Children's Theatre

YOUR ROLE AS THE AUDIENCE

Dear Audience Members,

Birmingham Children's Theatre is excited to welcome you as a member of our audience! Theatre is a world of imagination and fun, where the impossible comes to life. The audience is an extremely important part of our storytelling, so before you attend a performance we want to share a few theatre etiquette guidelines with you.

Do:

- Feel free to laugh, gasp, and applaud!
- Participate when asked
- Arrive on time (30 min early is a good goal)
- Turn off and put away ALL electronics
- Sit in your assigned seating (an usher will help you)

Don't:

- Talk, wave, or shout during the performance
- Eat or drink

Thank you for playing your part! We are excited to share our production with you!

Birmingham Children's Theatre

PLOT SUMMARY

With no houses to paint until next spring, Mr. Popper is stuck at home daydreaming of adventure, while Mrs. Popper must scrimp and save just to put beans on the table. But with the unexpected arrival of a spirited penguin named Captain Cook, a new horizon opens before them. Join this offbeat family on an unforgettable musical adventure based on the 1938 classic by Richard and Florence Atwater.



THEATRE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE:

1. Mr. Popper's Penguins is a stage play.

What is a stage play?

- How is a play similar to a TV show or movie?
- How is it different?

2. Who Performs the parts (roles) in a play?

- What kinds of skills do you think performers need to have to perform in plays?
- Who else works on plays?
(Remember: you may not see them on stage!)

DURING THE PERFORMANCE:

1. When you watch a play, you are a member of the audience.

What kinds of things should you do as an audience member?

Examples:

- Pay attention
- Laugh when something funny happens
- Clap if you enjoy something

2. What kinds of things should you not do as an audience member?

Examples:

- Talk to your neighbor
- Use a cellphone during the performance
- Yell at the actors (unless they ask you to!)



THEATRE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONT.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE:

1. What did you think of the play?
 - If you'd read Mr. Popper's Penguins beforehand, how was the book similar to the play?
 - How was it different?
2. Describe the performers in the play.
 - What did they do to make their characters special (different from other characters)?
 - How did they use their bodies to play their characters (using voice, movement, etc.)?
 - Did you see anyone else who worked on the play besides the performers on stage?
3. Describe the characters' costumes.
 - What did each character's costume tell you about that character?
 - Did any of the performers change costumes?
 - If so, why do you think they needed to change costumes?
4. Describe the set of the play.
 - Did it have a lot of locations?
 - Did it look like a place you've been before?
 - How did different lighting change how the set looked for different scenes?
5. Did the play have music in it?
 - If so, was it only in the background, or did it help tell the story?
 - What instruments did you hear in the music?
6. If you were going to direct Mr. Popper's Penguins, how would your production be different than the play you saw by BCT?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

BCT MUST READS

For each of our productions at BCT, we choose a few themes related to the show. Then, we create a list of BCT Must-Reads on those themes. The main themes in Mr. Popper's Penguins are Courage, Family, Adventure, and Dreaming.

Themes are the main ideas behind a book or other literary work.

- The Most Magnificent Thing, written and illustrated by Ashley Spires
- Flight School, written and illustrated by Lita
- Judge How to Catch a Star, written and illustrated by Oliver Jeffers
- Colorful Dreamer: The Story of Artist Henri Matisse by Marjorie Blain Parker, illustrated by Holly Berry
- Brave Irene by William Steig
- She Persisted by Chelsea Clinton
- One Word from Sophia by Jim Averback, illustrated by Yasmeen Ismail
- Peter Powers and His Not-So-Super Powers! by Kent Clark and Brandon T. Snider, illustrated by Dave Bardin



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

BCT MUST READS CONT.

Read them as a class or let students choose two or more to read.
Then use these questions for discussion or book reports:

THEME:

How did the different themes show in each book? Explain.

SETTING:

Describe the settings of each book.

- What details can you remember?
- Were the settings similar to a place you know or a place you've visited?
- How were the settings similar to each other? How were they different?

CHARACTERS:

1. Who were the main characters of each book?
2. Did any characters show up in more than one book?
3. Were the characters of one book similar another book's characters in any other ways?
4. How were the characters related to the theme? Explain.

PLOT:

1. What did the main characters of the books want most?
2. Did anyone or anything stand between the main characters and their goals?
3. Did the main characters get what they wanted? How?
4. How were the plots of the books similar? How were they different?



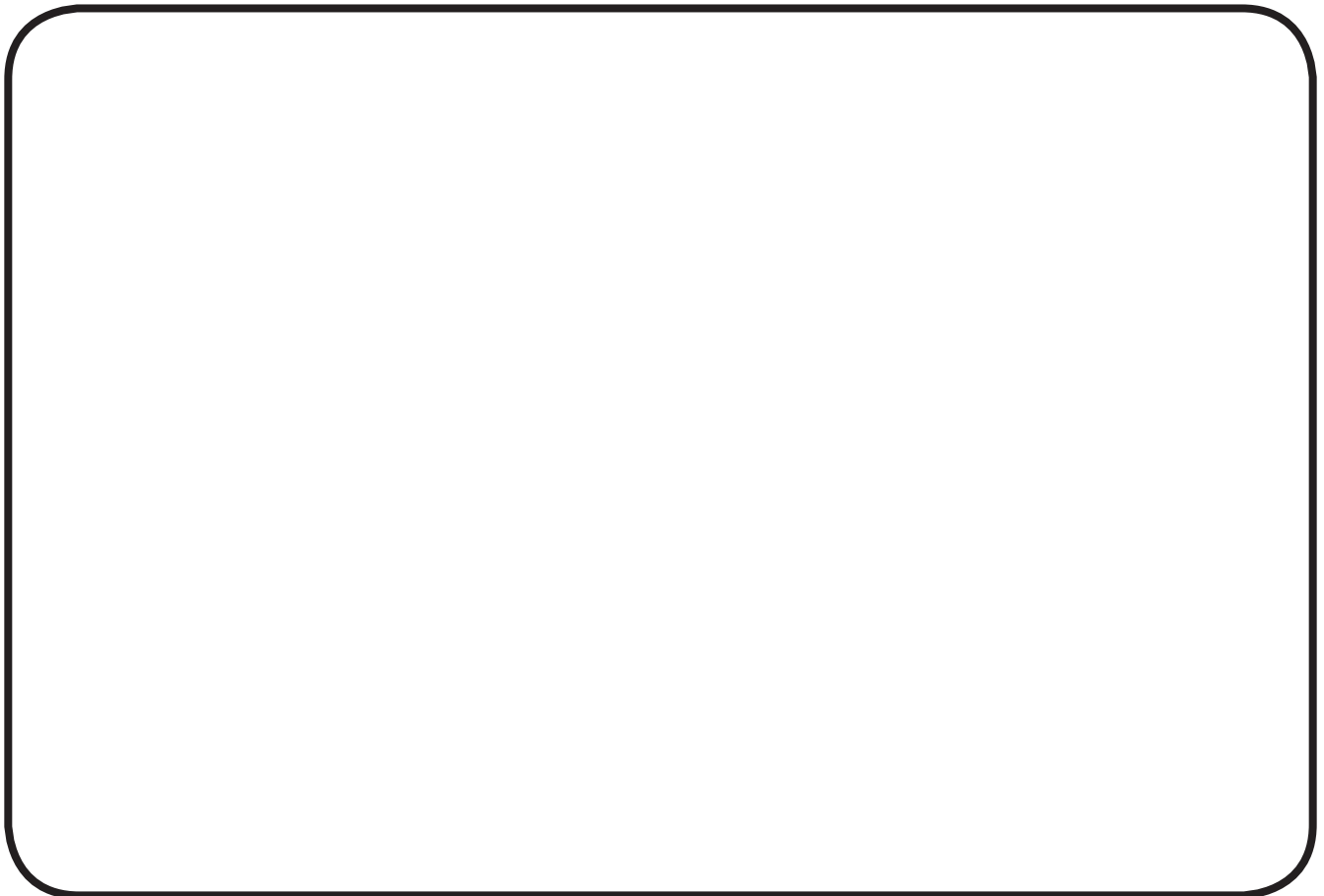
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

WRITE AND ILLUSTRATE YOUR OWN STORY

In Mr. Popper's Penguins, Admiral Drake gives Mr. Popper a gift that changes his life. As a class, write a story about a character who either gives or receives a life changing gift. Have everyone draw one picture from the story you create. When you are done, put the pictures together to make your very own book.

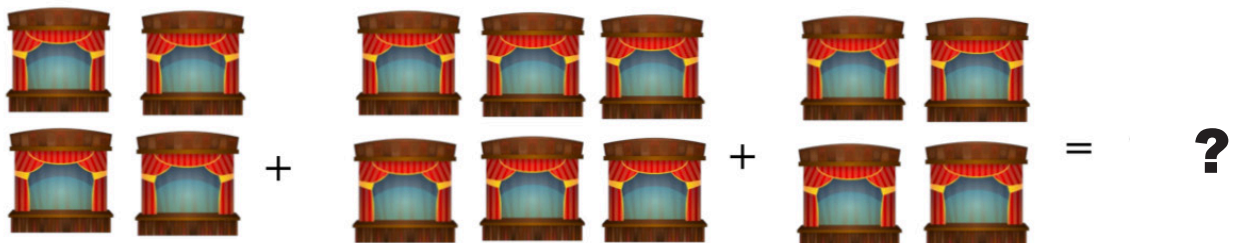
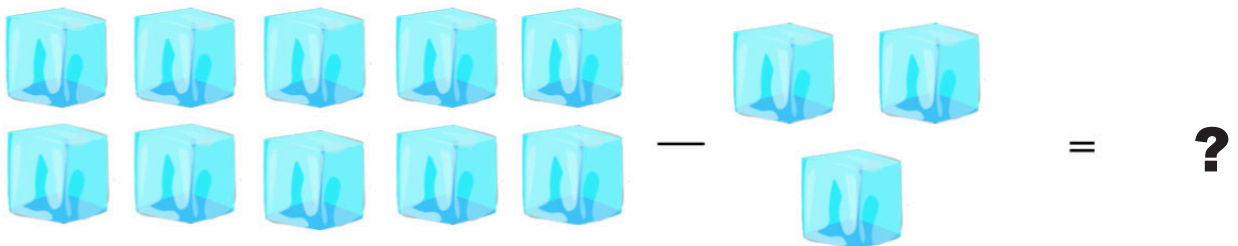
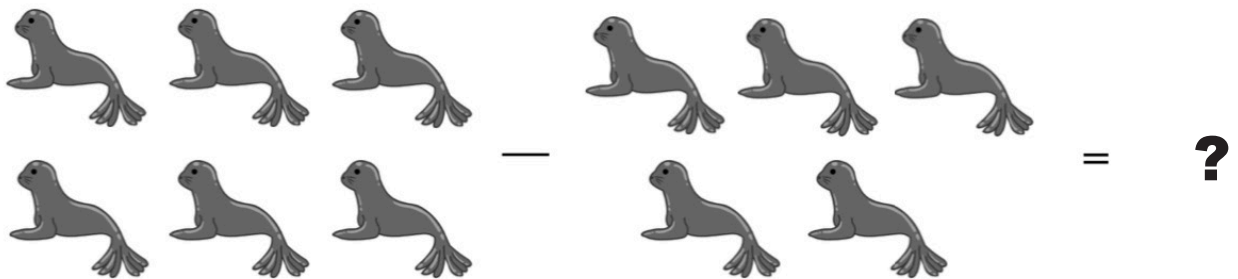
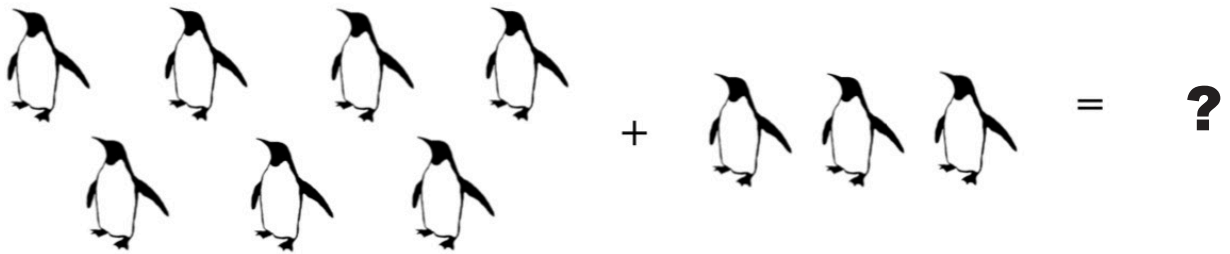
Answer these questions as you write your story:

- Who is your main character?
- Who are your other characters (if any)?
- What does your main character want?
- What is keeping your main character from what he or she wants?
- How does your main character tackle the problem?
- How does your story end?
- Did your main character learn anything?



MATH

PICTURE PROBLEMS



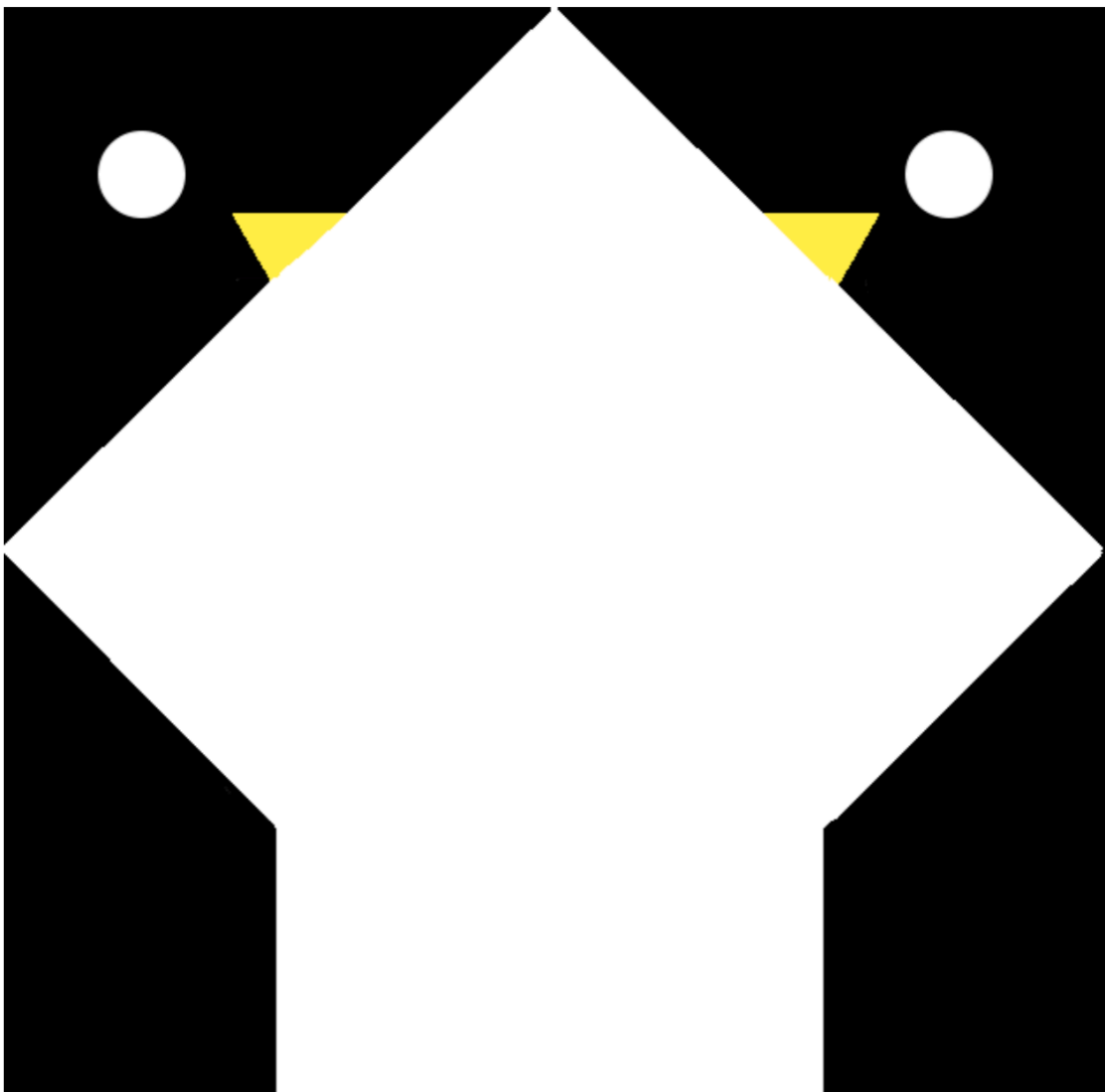
ART

PENGUIN PUPPET

In Mr. Popper's Penguins, Mr. Popper is gifted a penguin by Admiral Drake. Today, you get the chance to make your very own penguin! Print out the following image, follow the below instructions, and feel free to name your penguin after a famous explorer!

Making the Penguin

1. Fold the paper in half and then unfold it. Repeat this, folding it the other way and unfolding.
2. Fold the edges in so that the side with the picture on it is facing up!
3. Once all edges are folded in, flip the paper to the new blank side and fold in the edges again.
4. Fold the paper into a rectangle, put your fingers in the openings, and push until the beak of the penguin comes together. Then you have your penguin puppet!



SCIENCE

DOES THE OCEAN FREEZE?

In Mr. Popper's Penguins, characters discuss the best environment for a penguin several times. Several species of penguins typically live near the South Pole, but penguins in general are considered marine birds, meaning they live most of their lives in the water. As a class, complete the following experiment to learn more about the ocean - penguins' natural habitat.

Materials

- 8 cups of water
- 2 tablespoons of salt
- 2 large plastic bowls
- Freezer
- Spoon
- Dry-erase marker

Procedure

1. Label the bowls "Bowl 1" and "Bowl 2"
2. Measure out 4 cups of water for each bowl.
3. Add 2 tablespoons of salt to Bowl 2 a little at a time, stirring until the salt is completely dissolved.
4. Leave both bowls in a freezer overnight.
5. The following day, check to see if the bowls have frozen over.
6. Record your results.

Follow-Up Questions

1. Why do you think one bowl froze and the other didn't?
2. Bodies of water located farther inland tend to freeze, while oceans don't. Why do you think that is?
3. What do you think might happen if you added more salt to the bowl? Less salt?
4. Why is it important to penguins for the ocean to not freeze?



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T H E A T R E

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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