

BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S THEATRE

STUDY GUIDE



THE SNOWY DAY

AND OTHER STORIES BY EZRA JACK KEATS

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY
JEROME HAIRSTON

BASED ON THE BOOKS BY
EZRA JACK KEATS

This classroom guide for BCT's production of "The Snowy Day" is designed for Alabama students in Kindergarten through 2nd grade. The activities can be easily adapted for a wide range of age groups.



THE SNOWY DAY

AND OTHER STORIES BY EZRA JACK KEATS

Adapted for stage by Jerome Hairston
based on the books by Ezra Jack Keats

December 2nd- 16th
Saturdays at 10:00am

In our Wee Folks Theatre
Recommended for ages 4 - 8 years
Approximate Time: 50 minutes

SHOW THEMES

Seasons, Creative Play, Friendship, Cause and Effect, Growing up

SHOW DESCRIPTION

Based on stories by Caldecott Award-winning author Ezra Jack Keats, *The Snowy Day* and other stories by Ezra Jacks Keats celebrates the magic and boundless possibilities of the first snowfall! Follow young Peter and his friends as they explore the world around them. From learning how to whistle to thrilling encounters with treasure, the delightful moments of childhood are perfectly captured in this imaginative musical play

WHY THIS SHOW IS IMPORTANT FOR KIDS TODAY

All children (and the adults who are reading to them) would benefit from more kids like Peter: kids of color as the heroes of utterly quotidian stories. Such children are a paltry fraction of the body of literature for children. Within the genre, the everyman, the default hero, when it's not a talking animal or a sentient toy, is almost always a white child.

Diverse books must be part of a literature that reflects our reality, books in which little black boys push one another on the swings, in which little black girls daydream about working in the zoo, in which kids of every color do what kids of every color do every day: tromp through the woods, obsess about trucks, love their parents, refuse to eat dinner. We need more books in which our kids are simply themselves.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

We invite you to use this guide to prepare for your trip to the theatre. On the following pages are activities that can be integrated into your current classroom curriculum before and after attending the performance at BCT to enrich the education experience for your students.

We would love to hear from you! Please have your students fill out the Post-Show response at the end of this packet and send it back to BCT! Classes who return their post-show responses will be entered into a drawing for free tickets to an upcoming performance.*

Questions? Email at education@bct123.org

*One winner per semester. Up to 30 free tickets for their class to attend an upcoming performance at BCT.

THEATRE INFO



ACCESS

- Ramp to Main Entrance of Theatre
- Wheelchair lift to access Wee Folks & PlaySpace
- Wheelchair accessible seating in Mainstage, Wee Folks & PlaySpace

LOBBY

- Three single stall restrooms (Handicapable, with a changing station)
 - Lower & Upper Lobby have Men's and Women's restrooms, both have multiple stalls
- Mothers Room for nursing needs
- First Aid kits available
- Two water fountains

(One on the upper, lower and hallway of WeeFolks)



BOX OFFICE

- Kulture City bags if needed by any sensory sensitive students
- Masks for both students and adults
- Printouts of our CARES Commitment
- First Aid kits
- Extra clothes if accidents occur

SENSORY ROOMS

- Two Sensory rooms.
 - One downstairs by our Wee Folks/ PlaySpace.
 - (One in the back right corner of the Main Lobby)*



EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

- All of the above resources are available during any of our classes or workshops
- Resources include:
 - Classroom management tactics
 - Diverse learner tools and exercises
 - CASEL - Collaborative for Academic, Social & Emotional Learning
 - Framework guide
 - In Class tools and exercises
 - Examples of Social and Emotional Learning in Theatre Arts Standards

For specific Educational needs email education@bct123.org

ADDITIONAL NEEDS

(upon request)

- Water
- Clothes
- Diapers and Wipes



WWW.BCT123.ORG

**OR CALL US AT
205.458.8181**

Where does "The Snowy Day" fit into my curriculum?

KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten students are naturally creative, imaginative, and inquisitive. They learn most effectively through active learning experiences and multi-sensory stimuli. The kindergarten theatre program, therefore, involves students in acting experiences that incorporate life skills. They will need prompting and support to help develop their artistic voice. Kindergarten content standards focus on artistic play, connecting art to their daily lives, and teaching a world perspective through exploration of cultures. Students gain basic theatre skills through process-oriented instruction. Examples of activities that can be used include creative drama, story drama, and process drama

GRADE 1

Students in Grade 1 are focused on themselves and their own experiences. The effective teacher uses process-oriented instruction to draw on these characteristics to introduce and expand the theatre experience. In Grade 1, the theatre program is closely aligned to reading skills, incorporating stories familiar to students as well as ones they create. Content standards include opportunities to use voice, space, and movement to create emotion; techniques for collaboration within theatre; and demonstration of ways the arts are used in different cultures. Theatre standards in Grade 1 also address multi-sensory stimuli, spatial relationships, and appropriate audience behavior. Examples of activities that can be used include creative drama, story drama, and process drama.

GRADE 2

The second grade theatre program builds on theatre knowledge gained in kindergarten and first grade. Second-grade students display a range of abilities and levels of development. They enjoy dramatic play, demonstrate much-improved manipulative abilities, and are increasingly social. The second-grade classroom, therefore, includes multi-sensory stimuli and simple theatrical activities that continue to develop students' interest and abilities in theatre. As they become more proficient readers, writers, and thinkers, these students develop a growing sense of pride in their achievements in theatre.

In Grade 2, students begin to demonstrate various types of movement and create guided dramatic experiences through process-oriented instruction. At this level, they are introduced to the components of a dramatization and are able to identify the characters and setting in a drama, the emotions evoked by performers, and the common ideas in stories from various cultures and periods. Students also become aware of the contributions the arts make to different cultures.

PLAYWRIGHT: JEROME HAIRSTON

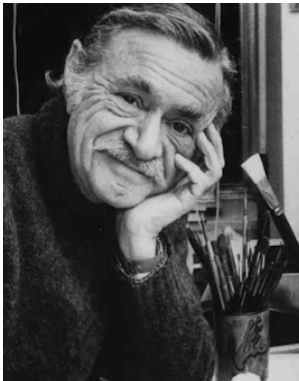
As a playwright Jerome Hairston's work has been developed and produced at theaters across the country.

His plays include: *A.M. SUNDAY* (Humana Festival, 2002, Centerstage Baltimore), *L'ÉBOUEUR SLEEPS TONIGHT, FORTY MINUTE FINISH* (Humana Festival 1999), *METHOD SKIN*, and *KNIFE ON BONE*. He has received commissions from The Kennedy Center, The Public Theatre/NYSF, Centerstage Baltimore, The McCarter Theater, The Children's Theater Company, The Bush Foundation/ Guthrie New Play Program, and the Manhattan Theatre Club. He's been honored with a Heideman Award, an AATE distinguished play award, and the Fellowship of Southern Writers' Bryan Family Foundation Award for Drama.



His plays have been published by Samuel French and featured in American Theatre Magazine. He received his BA in Theatre from James Madison University and is a graduate of Columbia University's MFA playwriting program. As a writer-producer his television credits include: *Law and Order Criminal Intent*, *Smash*, *Deception*, and *Game of Silence*, all for NBC, *Survivors Remorse* on Starz, and Cinemax's *Quarry*. He was most currently a supervising producer on *Snowfall*, on FX, and is co-writing a pilot for Fremantle Media and Amazon with esteemed dramatist, Diana Son.

AUTHOR: EZRA JACK KEATS



Ezra Jack Keats was an American author and illustrator of children's books. Keats was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. on March 11, 1916. He illustrated jackets for adult and juvenile books and provided drawings for almost a dozen children's books. He is the author of *The Snowy Day* (1962), a recipient of the Caldecott Medal and one of the first picture books in which the central character is a minority child. Keats used cut-out and gouache collage to create cityscapes that carry a strong dose of urban reality: grime, graffiti, and a lot of energy. He also wrote for the under-five audience in *Whistle for Willie* (1966), *Peter's Chair* (1967), *Goggles* (1969), and *Apt. 3* (1971), which focus on learning new things — how to whistle, outwit a tougher kid, or cope with emotion. Keats died at the age of 67 on May 6, 1983.

DIRECTOR: LASHANNA TRIPP



LaShanna has a 20-plus year event producer, performer and theatre director. She has worked in front of and behind the scenes in shows and films including the soon-to-be released TV series, *5 Lil Penguins*, and directed BCT's *Big Sister, Little Brother*. She currently serves as Production Manager for a number of independent projects and arts/entertainment organizations, including Yogi Dada LLC, LaCon Audio, and the Make It Happen Theatre Company, Inc.

VOCAB SPECIFIC TO THE SHOW / WORDS TO KNOW

Adventures: interesting things that happen when you go exploring.

Snowsuit: a one piece coverall to protect from the cold.

Dragged: pulled along.

Dream: thoughts and pictures you have in your sleep.

Footprints: prints made by feet.

Hood: top part of coat that covers/protects the head & neck.

Pack: pressed or squeezed together.

Firm: hard or solid.

Melt: what happens when snow or ice get warm- they turn to water.

Morning: the first part of the day.

Path: a narrow place where you can walk.

Slid: slipped along smoothly.

Smack: hit in a quick sharp way.

Stick: small tree branch.

Tomorrow: the day after today.

Tracks: marks made in snow or on the ground where someone has walked.

Apartment: a building that multiple families live in.

How this show supports teachers and students through the Alabama Literacy Act:

Reading is one of the most important academic skills that your child will learn in school, and no other skill is as important to our child's success in life. Learning to read will determine your child's academic trajectory at the postsecondary education level, as well. Finally, reading is vital for advancement in almost any career that your child chooses to support themselves after their formal educational career has ended. We are committed to making sure that you have frequent updates on your child's reading progress. It is important for families to have access to information that lets them know whether their children are able to read.

We want you to remain informed so you can engage with us in the process of ensuring that your child is a confident reader. Furthermore, it is important to us that this information is action oriented, by seeing this show and reading the book.

OTHER BOOKS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *The First Day of Winter* by Denise Fleming
- *Snowmen at Night* by Caralyn Buehner
- *Lola Loves Stories* by Anna McQuinn
- *The Trip* by Ezra Jack Keats
- *Snow* by Uri Shulevitz
- *The Little, Little Girl With The Big, Big Voice* by Kristen Balouch

Other Resources (with links):

NCT_SnowyDay_Guide.pdf (nashvillechildrenstheatre.org)
<https://slate.com/culture/2016/08/ezra-jack-keats-the-snowy-day-is-a-model-for-treating-black-characters-in-childrens-books.html>

KINETIC MOVEMENT ACTIVITY

EMOTION BALLS:

With your students, identify all of the emotions in A Letter to Amy (such as excitement, worry, sadness, hope, pain, etc.). With your students, experiment with how we know what someone is feeling by their body language.

Discuss what we look like when we are feeling a certain emotion. Have the students show the emotion with their bodies and faces. After your first example, have your students “transform” into balls on the floor. Name an emotion and on the count of three, have students pop up showing that emotion with their bodies and faces. When you clap, they should transform back into balls on the floor. Repeat.

(Alternate version: Instead of instantly having the students pop up, give them a count between 5-10 seconds to slowly morph into the physical expression of the emotion.)

STEM ACTIVITY

MELTING SNOWMEN:

What you'll need:

Biodegradable/starch-based packing peanuts (available at places such as U-Haul), Black and orange permanent markers, Bowl for each student, and Water.

Directions:

1. Distribute a “snowman” (packing peanut) to each student.
2. Have each student put a face on their snowman using the markers.
3. In their bowls, have students place their snowman on top of the water.
4. Observe what happens to the snowmen – they melt! (Note: The time it takes for the snowmen to melt varies. If it is taking too long, try using warmer water.)

The packing peanuts used in this experiment are biodegradable, meaning that they can be slowly broken down or destroyed naturally. The packing peanuts are also water-soluble – that is, they can be dissolved in the water. Other packing peanuts are mostly made of Styrofoam, which is difficult to decompose and thus harmful to the environment.



READING/WRITING (ELA) ACTIVITY

Have your students write a letter (or draw a card) just like Peter did for his friend Amy!
Discuss the following with your students:

- Have you ever received a letter? If so, how did it make you feel?
- Have you ever sent a letter? If you got a response back, how did you feel?
- Have you ever expected a letter to arrive? What was it like waiting?

Tell your students that they will have the opportunity to send their very own letter or card!
Use a format for a friendly letter or have your students design a card. Discuss the process.

1. Write the letter or create the card.
2. Address the envelope (and include a return address).
3. Fold the letter and insert it in an envelope of the correct size.
4. Seal the envelope and put a stamp (with proper postage) on the envelope.
5. Put it in the mail by delivering it to a post office, placing it in your mailbox with the red flag up, dropping it in a blue USPS mailbox, etc.

Letter recipient ideas include:

- Birmingham Children's Theatre
- A family member or friend who lives far away
- Some nonprofit organizations collect letters and cards for the elderly, veterans/soldiers, and children with chronic illnesses. Search for a population you and your students are passionate about and spread cheer through your letters and cards!

ART ACTIVITY

SHADOW PUPPET THEATRE

Create a shadow puppet theatre for your classroom! If you would like, create shadow puppets that go along with a theme (such as zoo animals, nursery rhyme characters, etc.)

What you'll need: Card stock paper, Pencils, Scissors, Tape, Craft sticks

Create the Puppet:

- Give students a piece of card stock paper.
- Either give the students a template to trace or have the students draw the character. Explain to your students that with shadow puppets, you don't see details such as color or faces. Thus, the outline of the character is the only critical part.
- Have the students cut out the character.
- Attach the character to a craft stick using tape.

Create the Theatre:

Find a bare wall or place a sheet in front of a wall, table, cubbies, or shelves and use a flashlight or lamp.

- Or you can use a cardboard box. To do so, cut the back of the box. Cut out the shape of a proscenium arch of a theatre (like pictured). On the inside, tape a large piece of tissue paper that covers the open space. Place a lamp behind the screen.



POST-SHOW RESPONSE

Dear (who was your favorite character?) _____

I am (how old are you?) _____ and I am in the _____ grade at (what school do you attend?) _____.

I saw your performance of _____ on (what day?) _____.
I thought the play was (how did the play make you feel and why?) _____ [at least three full lines] _____.

My favorite part of the play was _____.

I really liked (who was your favorite character?) _____ because (what made you like them?) _____.

The music sounded like (what did you hear?) _____.

Something else I loved about the play was _____
_____.

I would really love to see a play about _____
performed next year at Birmingham Children's Theatre.

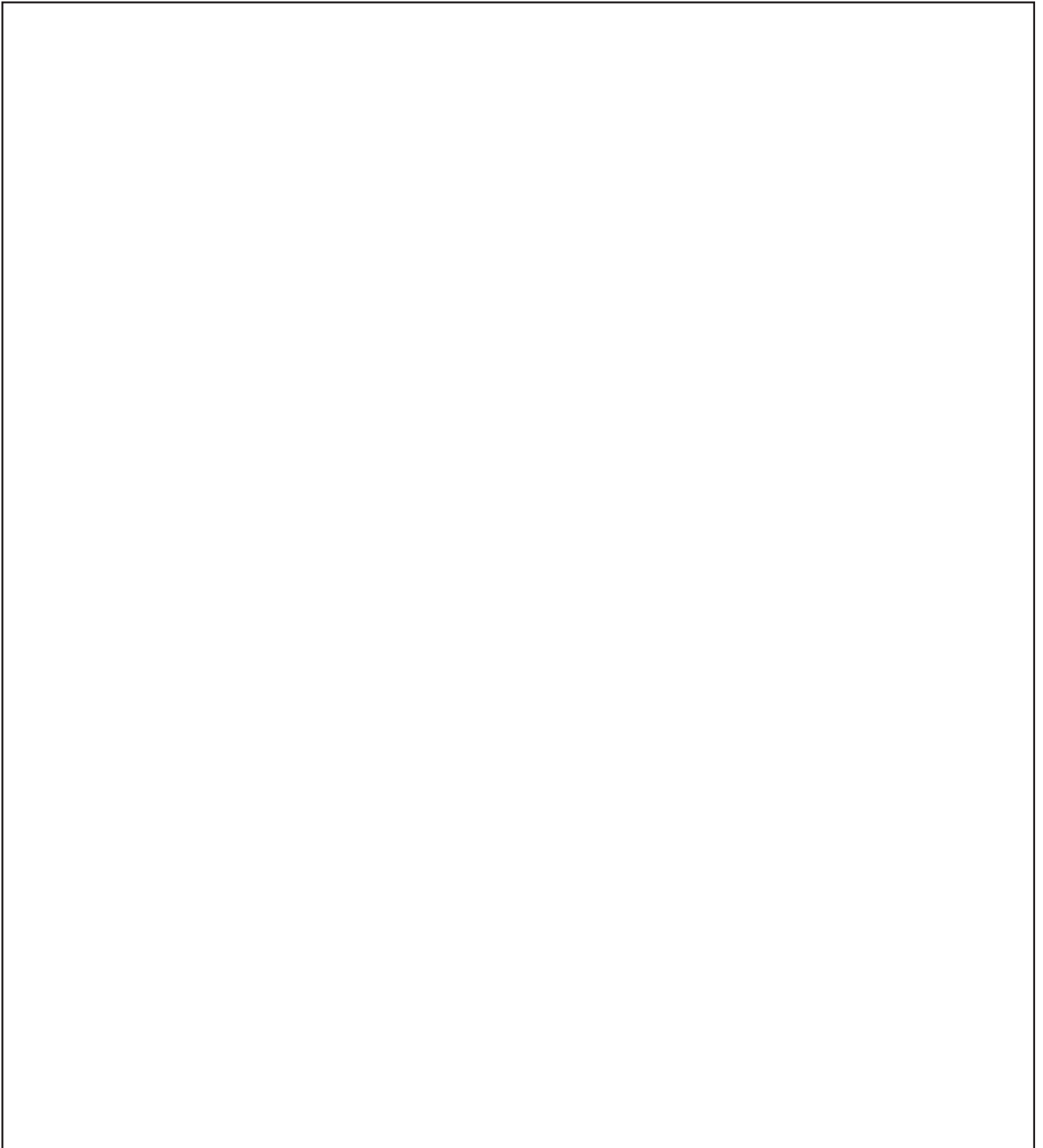
Love,

Please send us your responses! You can email education@bct123.org or mail them to:

Birmingham Children's Theatre
P.O. Box 1362 | Birmingham, Alabama 35222

ART/DRAWING SPACE

Draw your favorite character or moment from the show!



CORE STANDARDS

Attending a theatrical production and completing the accompanying activities will satisfy the Core Standards listed below:

NCES-TheaArts.(K-3).TA.A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances. NCES-TheaArts.(K-3).

TA.A.1.1: Recall the basic parts of a story, such as characters, setting, and events.

NCES-TheaArts.(K-3).TA.CU.2: Understand the traditions, roles, and conventions of theatre as an art form.

NCES-TheaArts.3.TA.CU.2.1: Illustrate theatre etiquette appropriate to the performance situation.

NCES-TheaArts.K.TA.C.2.2: Use dramatic play to re-enact stories from texts read aloud.

NCES-TheaArts.1.TA.C.1.1: Use non-verbal expression to communicate movement elements, including size, weight, and rate.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.(K-3).2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

NCES-TheaArts.(K-3).TA.C.2: Use performance to communicate ideas and feelings.

NCES-PhysEd.PE.(K-3).PR.4: Use behavioral strategies that are responsible and enhance respect of self and others and value activity.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.3: Write narratives to develop real and imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.