

# ENRICHMENT GUIDE

Miss Nelson is  
**MISSING!**

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SCHOOL DATES

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APRIL 28 - JUNE 3, 2011

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# A Note to Teachers and Parents

Dear Teachers and Parents,

Room 207 used to be the school's naughtiest class! They would throw paper airplanes during class, talk out of turn, make silly faces behind their teacher's back, and they were even rude during story time. However, that all changed the day Miss Swamp came to school and Miss Nelson went missing. Join First Stage as we sing and dance our way through the story of MISS NELSON IS MISSING, based on the popular picture book by Harry Allard and James Marshall. Even though the students in room 207 may never find out exactly where Miss Nelson went, their journey will help them discover the errors in their past ways as they make changes to become a more respectful and kinder class of students who are now known as the best behaved class in the school.

Enclosed in this enrichment guide is a range of materials and activities intended to help you discover connections within the play through the curricula. It is our hope that you will use the experience of attending the theater and seeing MISS NELSON IS MISSING with your students as a teaching tool. Use this guide to best serve your children — pick and choose, or adapt, any of these suggestions for discussions or activities. We encourage you to take advantage of the enclosed student worksheets—please feel free to photocopy the sheets for your students, or the entire guide for the benefit of other teachers.

Enjoy the show!

Julia Magnasco  
 Education Director

## First Stage Policies

- The use of recording equipment and cameras are not permitted during the performance.
- Food, drink, candy and gum are not permitted during the performance.
- Electronic devices are not permitted in the theater space.
- Should a student become ill, suffer an injury or have another problem, please escort him or her out of the theater space.
- In the unlikely event of a general emergency, the theater lights will go on and the stage manager will come on stage to inform the audience of the problem. Remain in your seats, visually locate the nearest exit and wait for the stage manager to guide your group from the theater.

Seating for people with disabilities: If you have special seating needs for any student(s) and did not indicate your need when you ordered your tickets, please call our School Sales Specialist at (414) 267-2962. Our knowledge of your needs will enable us to serve you better upon your arrival to the theater.

# Setting the Stage: Synopsis

Miss Nelson's class, Room 207, is the worst class in the entire school. On a day like any other in this class, the children enter, behaving wildly; as Miss Nelson tries to calmly start her lesson. Miss Nelson attempts her math lesson to no avail, so she switches over to Geography. The kids are clearly giving wrong answers to give her a hard time. Paper planes are thrown and the kids are constantly picking on each other. Miss Nelson scolds them in a very sweet way, as she ends the Geography lesson early. She gathers everyone in a circle to begin story time. They are reading *Pinocchio*. Miss Nelson is trying to review the story as the kids continue to be naughty. They ignore her and take pride in being the worst kids in the school. The bell signals the end of the school day and the kids exit.

The next day Principal Blandsworth enters Room 207 to tell the students that Miss Nelson will not be coming to school today. The kids are very excited to find out that they have a sub and agree to "just be terrible" today. The kids celebrate, but their excitement is cut short as a dark shadow approaches the classroom and in steps Viola Swamp, the substitute teacher dressed as a witch. She hisses to them "Not. So. Fast! Pipe Down. In your seats!" The kids stop dead in their tracks. Miss Swamp orders them to take out their math books yet they are too scared to move. She lays down the ground rules to the class – there will be ABSOLUTELY NO MORE misbehaving in this class. The math lesson begins and the students answer quickly and accurately to all of her questions.

Days go by and there is no sign of Miss Nelson. The kids begin to wonder if they will ever get their teacher back. One day, when a student requests story time, Miss Swamp yells at them a tale of a badly behaved class, causing one student to break down in tears-the kids are scared to death. The kids miss their teacher. Miss Swamp continues to load the kids with homework and run the class like a drill sergeant.

A week goes by and there is no sign of Miss Nelson. The kids are growing more and more weary. As they enter class they try to hurriedly finish up their homework. Miss Swamp bursts in and announces that they will be going on a field trip. The kids feel a rush of excitement which is soon squashed when Miss Swamp reveals that they are going to the Museum of Punishment and Crime, not the Zoo as they had thought.



Miss Swamp leads the group into the museum, the kids walking very cautiously. The tour guide, Al Catraz, enters dressed as a prison guard. Al takes them to the first exhibit dedicated to Al Capone. The kids are in awe as they look at the fedora that was once Mr. Capone's. Their excitement is interrupted by Miss Swamp who shares his ultimate fate: a life behind

bars. Al continues to show the kids relics from his life including his first paper airplane. Al carries on with the tour showing them more criminal exhibits, Bonnie and Clyde and Babyface Nelson. Miss Swamp sums it all up: bad children turn into bad adults. The kids are given prison uniforms and handcuffs; they take their mugshot, and get fingerprinted. The kids finally break down, pleading for Miss Nelson's return. After the return from the museum, the kids make a plan to go over to Miss Nelson's house and see when she will return to school.

At Miss Nelson's house, the kids find the shades tightly drawn and no answer to their doorbell rings. The worried kids sit down and talk about the terrible things that may have happened to her. One of the girls suggests they go to the police station. Just as they are leaving, they spot Miss Swamp walking towards Miss Nelson's house, and they quickly run away.

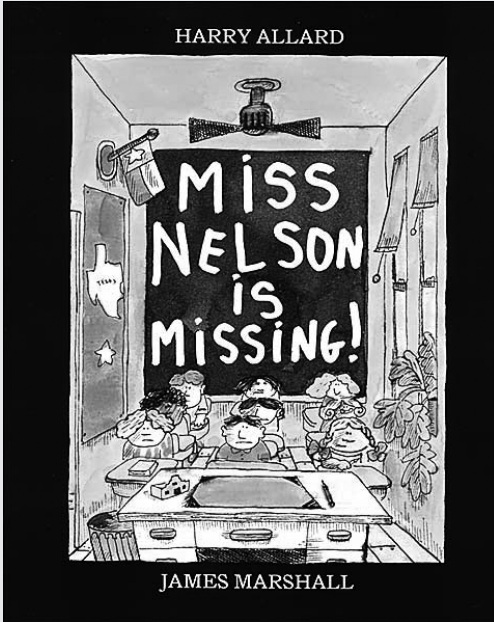
The kids visit Detective McSmogg so that he can help them find Miss Nelson. They are hopeful for his efforts despite his seemingly flakey personality. Later at Miss Nelson's house, the kids write her an apology letter to try to make her come back to class.

Back in school, the kids of Room 207 are becoming more and more dispirited. They are cleaning up the classroom when they heard the sound of someone entering the classroom. They line up like soldiers awaiting Miss Swamp and are surprised when they see Miss Nelson! They are nearly in tears as they celebrate and eagerly welcome her back. She suggests story time and the kids cheer and behave as if they were the best kids in the whole school. When she questions their behavior, they say that it is their little secret. That evening, Miss Nelson relaxes at her house surrounded by Miss Swamp's costume pieces. From that day on, Room 207 is the best behaved kids in the whole school! 🤖



# About the Authors

Taken directly from: <http://www.childrensliteraturenetwork.org/birthbios/brthpage/01jan/1-27allard.html>,  
<http://www.carolhurst.com/products/openbooks.html>



## Harry Allard.....

Harry Allard was born in Evanston, Illinois on January 27th. He grew up in California, Long Island, and Chicago. He graduated from Northwestern College in 1943 and then performed active duty in Korea. He then lived in Paris for several years and became so fluent in the language that he got a master's degree and then a Ph.D. in French from Yale in 1973. He taught French at the college level for many years.

Upon his arrival in Boston, he met James Marshall, whose art and friendship inspired Allard's first book, *The Stupids Step Out*. This successful collaboration paved the way for the publication of other *Stupids* books and the *Miss Nelson* series. *Miss Nelson is Missing* was voted one of the most memorable books of the century. Mr. Allard lives and works in Massachusetts.

## James Marshall.....

James Marshall was born in San Antonio, Texas where his father worked for the railroad and had a dance band. James Marshall studied to play the viola and intended to have a musical career. Then his hand was injured during an airplane flight and his musical career was finished. He met Harry Allard, with whom he later wrote many picture books, when he was a student at Trinity College. James Marshall taught Spanish in a Catholic school near Boston upon graduation from college. His first book, *George and Martha*, was inspired by a famous play, WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOLF in which the main characters were named George and Martha. For many years he divided his time between an apartment in New York City and his home in Mansfield Hollow, Connecticut. James Marshall died in October, 1992.

James Marshall's work is usually gently humorous. He has several books in series: *Miss Nelson*, *George & Martha*, *The Cut-Ups*, *The Stupids* and *The Rats*, for instance. In those books, his characters change very little. His fairy tale renditions are full of sly humor.



# About the Playwright

Taken directly from: [www.joancushing.com/bio.html](http://www.joancushing.com/bio.html)

## Joan Cushing



Joan Cushing, a former elementary school teacher and cabaret performer, is best known for her political satirical revue *Mrs. Foggybottom & Friends*, which opened in 1986 at New Playwrights Theatre, and moved to the Omni-Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., where it ran for 10 hit years, and four years on the road, including performances at Don't Tell Mama and The Triad in NYC. Also in New York, she performed her solo nightclub act *Lady Sings the News!* at the Ballroom, filling in for Blossom Dearie, appeared in Gary Trudeau's *Tanner for President* series on HBO, directed by Robert Altman, and studied musical theatre writing at the BMI Musical Theatre Workshop with Lehman Engel and Maury Yeston.

Her adult musicals include *FLUSH!* (1999 Washington Theatre Festival, H.D. Lewis Award) and *TUSSAUD* (Winner, 2001 Washington Theatre Festival), writing for the annual Hexagon political revue (since 1976), and *THE CRYSTAL PALACE* revue in Aspen, Colorado. Cushing also penned a political satirical column in *ROLL CALL*, the newspaper of Capitol Hill: *THE WORLD ACCORDING TO MRS. FOGGYBOTTOM*, a high society bat she created to skewer the sacred cows of Washington.

More recently, she has adapted 9 popular children's books as musicals, receiving over 300 productions and 2 national tours: *MISS NELSON IS MISSING!*, winner of the 2003 Nat'l Children's Theatre Festival; *JUNIE B. JONES & A LITTLE MONKEY BUSINESS!*; *MISS NELSON HAS A FIELD DAY!*; *PETITE ROUGE: A CAJUN RED RIDING HOOD* (2007 NY Musical Theatre Festival); *HEIDI* (w playwright Martha King De Silva); all commissioned by Imagination Stage, Lawrence, commissioned by Gabrielino High School; and *Brave Irene*, commissioned by Adventure Theatre. Other theatres which have produced her work include Seattle Children's Theatre, Childsplay Theatre, Omaha Theatre Co., Children's Theatre of Charlotte, Dallas Children's Theatre, Orlando Shakespeare Festival, North Shore Music

Theatre, South Coast Repertory, First Stage Milwaukee, Walnut Street Theatre, Stage One Louisville, Nashville Children's Theatre, Oregon Children's Theatre, Manhattan Children's Theatre, and California Theatre Center. According to *TYA Magazine*, she is "the most produced playwright in children's theatre" and *MISS NELSON IS MISSING!* is "the most produced play."

In 2002 she worked with Young Playwrights Theatre to help turn their play *PIECES OF LIFE*, written by local middle school students, into a

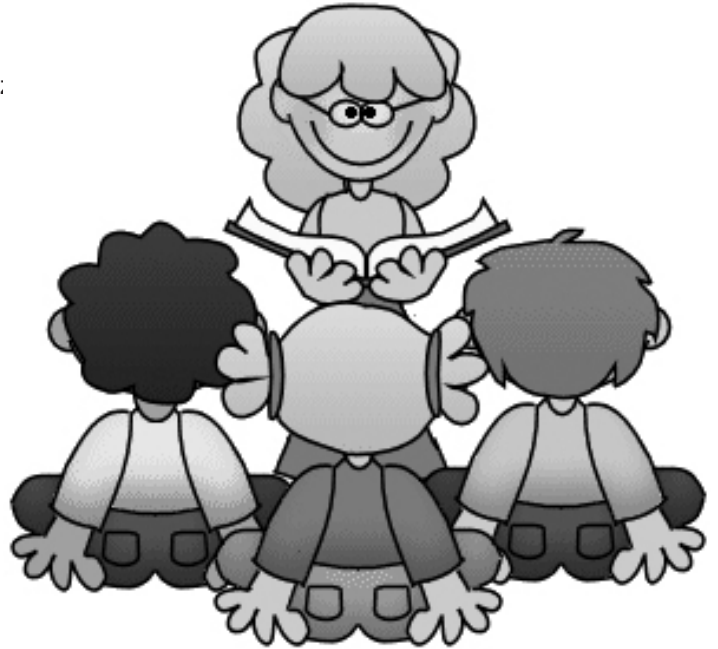
musical, which was performed at the Kennedy Center and toured the D.C. schools. She was also commissioned by Oak Crest High School to write a musical for 100 girls using Broadway songs, *BELLES ARE RINGING!*

Recent works include a brand new script for *TUSSAUD*, based on the deliciously gruesome and dark tale of Madame Tussaud; *THE CHRISTMAS DOLL*, 2007 National Youth Theatre Award for Outstanding Play/Musical, adapted from the book by Elvira Woodruff, world premiere, Children's Theatre of Charlotte; *LIZZIE BRIGHT & THE BUCKMINSTER BOY*, adapted from the book by Gary D. Schmidt, New Play Series, First Stage and *RAMANA'S GARDEN* based on true stories of children in an orphanage in N. India (with Kathy Carroll). Several new commissions are in the works, including Imagination Stage (*GEORGE & MARTHA*, *TONS OF FUN*, adapted from the book by James Marshall) and Oregon Children's Theatre (*DIARY OF A WORM*, *A SPIDER & A FLY*, adapted from the books by Doreen Cronin). Ms. Cushing lives in the Nation's Capital with her husband Paul Buchbinder. When not evacuating for hurricanes, their 19 year old son Ben, a gifted writer and musician in his own right, attends Loyola University in New Orleans. 🐼



# Recommended Reading

- *Miss Nelson Is Back* by Harry G. Allard Jr.
- *Miss Nelson Has a Field Day* by Harry Allard
- *George and Martha* by James Marshall
- *Strega Nona* by Tomie dePaola
- *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka
- *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs* by Judi Barrett
- *The Frog Prince, Continued* by Jon Scieszka



# Pre-Show Questions

1. In this story, Room 207 has a substitute teacher. Has your class ever had a substitute? Did your class behave differently when there is another teacher in the class?
2. Room 207 is a very naughty class. What do you think they do to earn the title "The Worst Class in the Whole School?"
3. The story takes place in many locations: a classroom, a museum, Miss Nelson's house. How do you think the designers will create all of these places on one stage?
4. MISS NELSON IS MISSING was first a book before it was a play. How do you think the story will be similar or different from the book?



# Searching the World for Miss Nelson

## GEOGRAPHY STUDENT WORKSHEET

Adapted from: <http://www.uwlax.edu/theatre/Templates/Imported%20Documents/Teacher%20Study%20Guide%20UW-L.pdf>

Detective McSmogg is determined to find Miss Nelson. He is even willing to search several continents for the missing teacher! On the world map below, locate and label the following continents. Color each continent a different color.

**Africa    Antarctica    Asia    Australia    Europe    North America    South America**



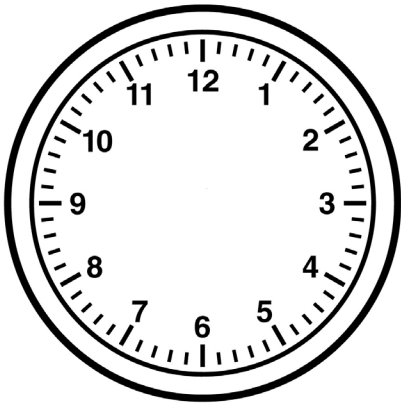
# Telling Time: The Class Schedule

## MATH STUDENT WORKSHEET

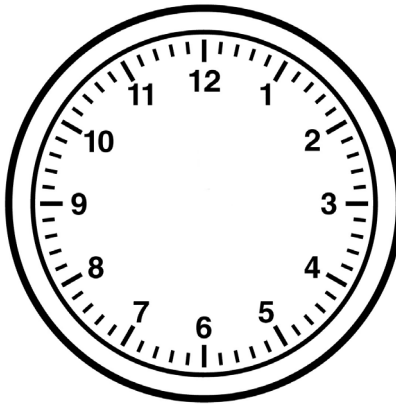
Adapted from: <http://www.uwlax.edu/theatre/Templates/Imported%20Documents/Teacher%20Study%20Guide%20UW-L.pdf>

Miss Swamp insists on Room 207 following a very strict schedule.  
Fill in the clocks below with the correct times.

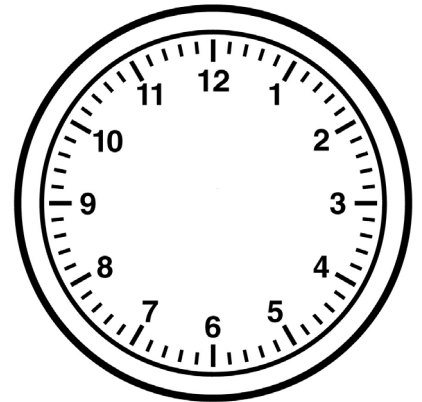
Morning Announcements  
begin at 7:45am.



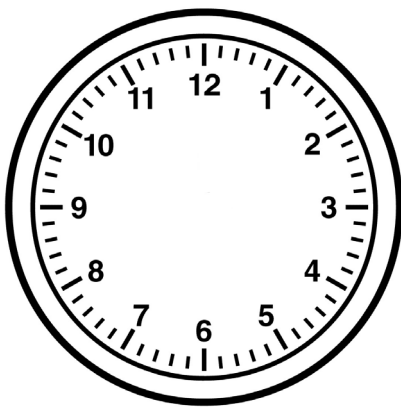
Reading Time ends just  
before lunch, at 11:45 am.



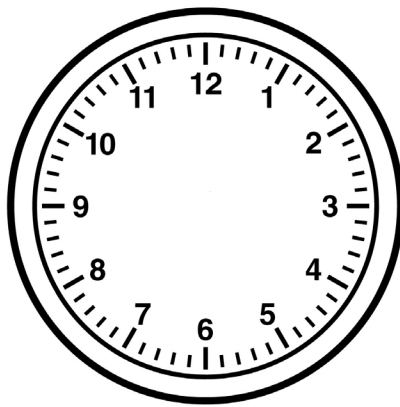
Math Class begins at 1:15 pm.  
Music Class begins at 2:00pm  
but the kids need to leave their  
classroom five minutes earlier  
to walk over to the Music Room.  
Fill in the time the kids leave to  
head over to Music.



Lunch ends at half past noon.



Math Class begins at 1:15 pm.



# Bird Watching 101

## SCIENCE CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken directly from: Utah Museum of Natural History, <http://www.uen.org/Lessonplan/preview.cgi?LPid=11402>

One of Principal Blandsford's many hobbies is bird watching and bird calling. Although the students in Room 207 are not impressed by Mr. Blandsford's bird calls, there is a lot that can be learned from watching and listening to birds—and it can be quite fun, too!



**Attracting Birds:** Besides building birdhouses and making bird feeders, birds can be attracted to a certain location by adding other features. Providing food, water, shelter from predators and weather and sites for safe nesting can be attractive to birds. Consider placing a bird feeder or water dish outside your classroom window. Birds will be skittish of movement in your room at first but will become accustomed to it quickly and make your feeder a regular stop. Your class may then begin to study some of the behaviors of individual birds that they are familiar with!

**Classifying Birds:** Ask students how they would describe themselves so someone else would recognize them. Have students practice by listing special features they have on a piece of paper or list them on the board as a class – freckles, hair color, height, eye color, etc. Knowing a bird's name is not essential. There are many ways to classify and identify birds on a bird watching hike.

- By color: 3 brown birds, 1 blue, 4 black and white, etc.
- By size: 1 crow-sized bird, 2 sparrow-sized, etc.
- By actions: 5 birds flying, 2 sitting on nests, 1 hopping on the ground, etc.
- By habitat: 1 bird on the roadside, 2 on tree branches, 4 under a shrub, etc.

**Listen for birds:** If you hear a bird close by, but can't see it, make a "spishing" noise. This is a noise that many birds will respond to and it is the sound you make when saying "psst" in a friend's ear. Rustling in bushes, shrubs or undergrowth might be the sound of busy birds. Banging or loud tapping noises can indicate a woodpecker nearby. Listen for different songs, calls or other noises and try to decipher their meanings. Notice clues:

**Clues:** Nests are an obvious clue that a bird is nearby or has been at some time during the year. They can be found in all sorts of places from trees to bridges to roadsides. Never remove a nest from the wild. Many birds return to their nests each year and other birds use abandoned nests to lay their eggs.

Finding feathers can alert you to the presence of birds. A few worn out feathers might indicate a bird that is molting, a lot of feathers or bird parts might indicate a bird that has been killed and eaten.

Owl pellets can be seen at the base of a tree or ledge where an owl is nesting. Woodpecker holes are a good way to locate hard-to-find woodpeckers.

Once students have gotten used to looking for birds, and recording their observations, they can start to be more specific in identification.

- Shape: is it plump, slender, etc.
- Body parts: long or short legs, short or skinny beak, crested head, forked tail.
- Markings: bands of color, eyestripes, speckled breast, etc.
- Movement: does it glide, swoop, run, hop, bob its tail, etc.
- Location: habitat and geographical location, etc.

Use an appropriate field guide to identify the birds you have seen. You may want to start a class checklist to keep track of the birds you see.



# Pine Cone Bird Feeder

## SCIENCE CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken directly from: EnchantedLearning.com, <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/birdfeeders/pinecone feeder.shtml>, 2000-2010



## Materials

- A large, open pine cone
- Vegetable shortening, lard or suet
- Oats or corn meal
- Bird seed
- A few feet of string

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## Directions

Tie a few feet of string to a pine cone. Cover the pine cone with the mixture below. Roll the pine cone in birdseed and then suspend it from a tree branch outside.

**Food mixture:** Mix 1/2 cup Vegetable shortening, lard or suet with 2 1/2 cups cornmeal or uncooked oats until well blended.

**Optional:** add dried fruit (chopped up), chopped nuts, seeds (especially sunflower and millet), and/or suet, which are high-energy bird foods.



# Starting a Collection

## SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM INFORMATION

Taken from: *Smithsonian Kids Collecting*, 2001-2007 Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies. [http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/students/idealabs/amazing\\_collections.html](http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/students/idealabs/amazing_collections.html)

Principal Blansford has a number of different collections, including his collection of ballpoint pens he share with Miss Nelson's students. Learn how you can start your own collection, and gain important knowledge about history, culture, and community.

## Smithsonian Kids: Why Collect

**Collecting is Creative:** You get to choose what you want to collect and you also get to decide how your collection will be displayed.

**Collections Tell Stories:** There is a story behind nearly every object in a collection. If an object is old, it may tell the stories of the other people who once owned it or used it. If it's new, it can tell you a lot about our own time and place.

**Collecting Teaches Many Things:** Historical objects teach us about important events, great heroes, and everyday life in the past. Plant, animal, rock and mineral specimen teach us about the natural world. Taking care of a collection also teaches many things like how to observe, measure, compare, and keep records.

**Collecting Lets You Share Your Knowledge With Others:** When you show your collection to your family and friends, you teach them new and interesting things.



## Starting Your Collection

Kids have collected everything from bottles and buttons to watches and wind chimes.

**Choose Your Collection:** What interests you? What do you like to do?

- *Sports?* You could collect pennants, autographs, programs, or other memorabilia.
- *Hiking and camping?* You could collect rocks, shells, fossils, or even soil samples.
- *Music?* You could collect instruments, records, sheet music, or posters of your favorite musicians.
- *Travel?* You can collect postcards, maps, thimbles, or even snow globes from everywhere you go.

What is it that you really want for your collection? A complete set of 2001 commemorative stamps? All the Barbie dolls that can fit in your room? Set goals and make a dream list. The more you learn about your collection and the more time you spend collecting, the more likely it is that you will someday have your dream collection.



# The Science of Paper Airplanes

## SCIENCE CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken directly from: <http://www.airplane-and-aircraft.com/aerodynamics-of-paper-airplanes.html>, [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_839\\_make-paper-airplane.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_839_make-paper-airplane.html),  
<http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/Programs/doublex/spring02/paperairplane.html>

**One disrespectful action the students in Miss Nelson's classroom really liked to do was to make paper airplanes and then throw them during class! Although it is rude and against the rules to throw paper airplanes during class, it is the laws of science that actually make it fly through the air.**

## Make a Paper Airplane

.....

1. Find a piece of paper shaped like a rectangle. A sheet of computer printing paper or school notebook paper is a good size and weight.
2. Lay the paper on a table with one of the long edges closest to you.
3. Fold the paper in half lengthwise. When the two edges match up, use your thumbs to make a sharp crease along the fold.
4. Take the upper left corner of the top layer of paper and fold it diagonally down toward the first crease you made. When the edges match up, use your thumbs to make a sharp crease along the new fold, which should create a small triangular flap.
5. Turn the paper over.
6. Take the upper right corner of the top layer of paper and fold it diagonally toward you, until the edge lines up with the first crease you made. When the edges match, make a sharp crease along the new fold. (This is a mirror of what you did in step 4.)
7. Take the newly formed diagonal edge on the right side of the paper, and fold it straight down toward the first crease you made. When the edges match, make another sharp crease.
8. Turn the paper over, and again fold the diagonal edge down toward the first crease you made; make another sharp crease. The paper should now look like a triangle with a 90-degree angle.
9. Form the wings by flipping the airplane over and repeating steps 7 and 8.
10. Hold the paper in one hand along the first crease you made. Let the wings of the plane flare out.
11. At a point 4 or 5 inches from the nose of the plane, make a 1/2-inch rip in the bottom part of the plane; make another rip 1/2 inch behind it. Fold this tab up.
12. Hold the airplane near the tab and toss the plane with an overhand, horizontal forward motion.
13. Test fly the plane and adjust its stability. Keep the nose of the plane from rising (stalling) by adding a small weight to the nose, a paper clip or two does nicely. You can also adjust how much the plane dives or climbs by cutting small slots in the tail of the plane and bending the paper at the cuts up or down. Experiment with putting them up or down and seeing what effect that has on the way the plane flies.



continued on next page



# The Science of Paper Airplanes

(Continued)

**The four main factors which affect the aerodynamics of an airplane are:**

**Thrust** - the forward motion or speed of the aircraft.

For paper airplanes this is provided by your throwing the plane forward. Also if you throw your airplane with differing strength this will also change the airflow as the wings move through the air.

**Drag** - the resistance of the aircraft against the wind.

As paper airplanes do not have any form of continuous motion (ie.: an engine and a propeller), your airplane needs to be built sleek. This will keep the drag to a minimum.

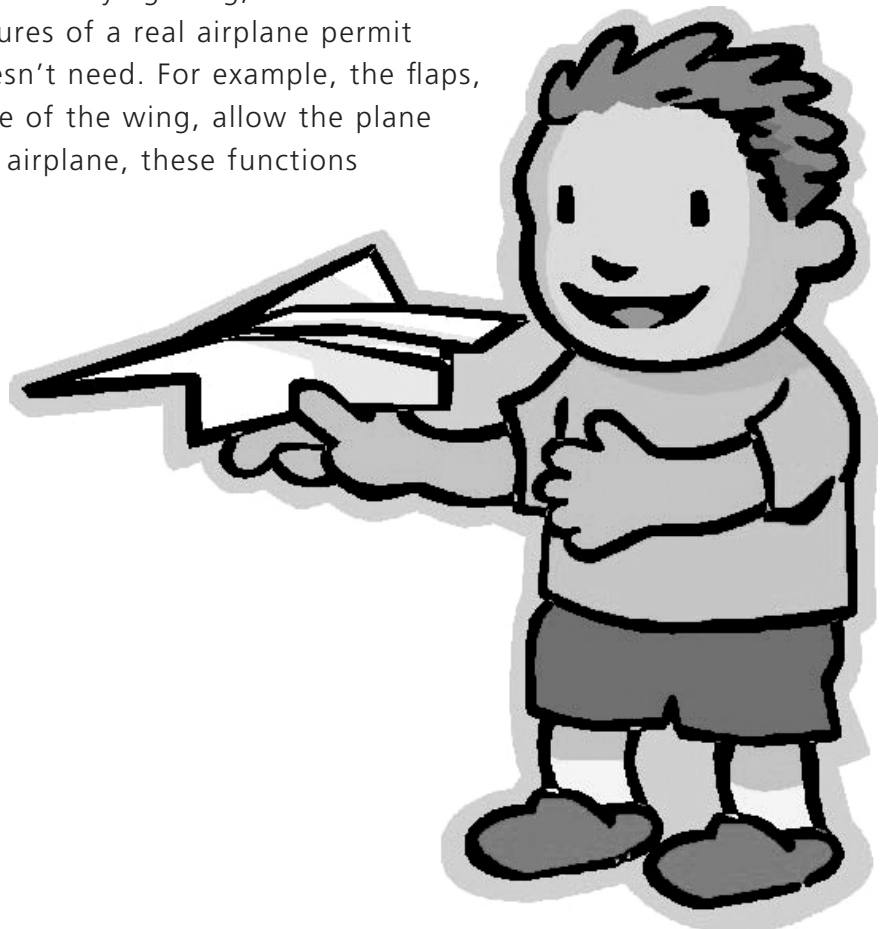
**Gravity** - the force that keeps all things on the earth.

To alleviate this force an object needs to become light in weight.

**Lift** - where the push of the wind under the wing is greater than the push on the top of the wing. This upward pushing makes the aircraft lighter.

**Why doesn't my paper airplane look like a real airplane?**

Most full size planes have wings, a tail, and a fuselage (body) that holds the pilot and passengers. Most paper airplanes have just a wing and fold of paper on the bottom that you hold when you throw the plane. The main reason why paper airplanes look different than real planes is to allow the paper airplane constructor to make a plane as easily and quickly as possible. The simplest airplane is the flying wing, and that's what most paper airplanes are. Also, many features of a real airplane permit functions that a paper airplane simply doesn't need. For example, the flaps, which are the control surfaces on the edge of the wing, allow the plane to take off and land slower. With a paper airplane, these functions are obviously not needed!



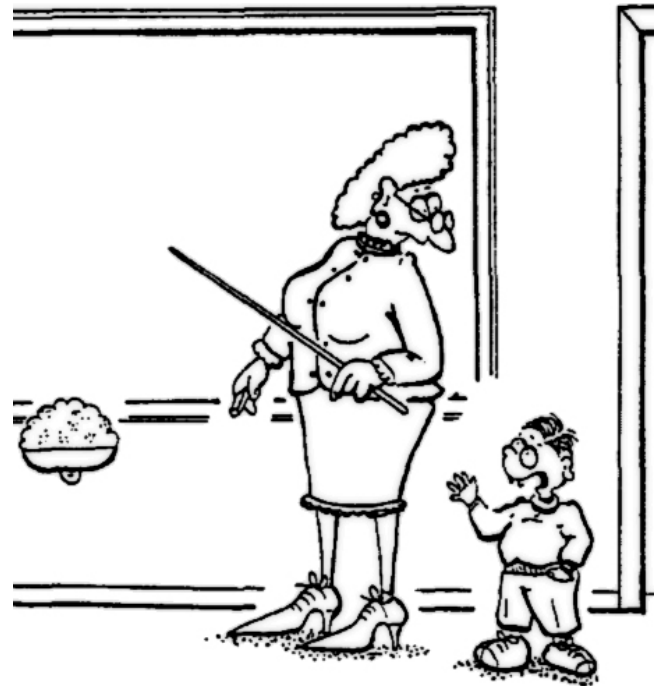
# Rules to Live By

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken from: <http://www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit96/lesson1.html>

### Activity.....

1. Introduce *Miss Nelson Is Missing*. Before reading, tell your students that this story is about a class who's teacher goes missing and the students decide to look for her.
  - a. Set the listening purpose: to determine why Miss Nelson left her classroom.
2. After reading the story, discuss with the students:
  - a. Why did Miss Nelson go missing?
  - b. What happened to Miss Viola Swamp once Miss Nelson returned?
  - c. Why did Miss Nelson pretend to be Miss Viola Swamp?
  - d. \*Help the students to conclude that Miss Nelson didn't like the way her students were behaving.
3. Discuss with students why it would bother a teacher if her class behaved like Miss Nelson's class. (Miss Nelson didn't feel her students were learning.)
4. Continue by asking students who else was affected by the students' in Room 207's behavior? How were they affected? (The students in the class were affected because they weren't able to learn.)
5. Ask students what Miss Nelson's class needs in order to provide a better place for learning and a happier place for everyone to be. (Classroom rules would be an answer to the problem.)
6. Explain to students that rules are needed for the common good. This means that the students in Miss Nelson's class need to work together for the benefit of all.
7. Divide the class into groups of four or five. Ask each group to brainstorm some class rules that would benefit everyone in Miss Nelson's class, rules that are for the common good (the benefit of everyone in the class).
8. After three to five minutes, ask each group to share one of their rules. Use their examples to make a master list on a chart. As you ask each student for an example of a rule, ask him or her to explain how that rule is for the common good.
9. For homework that evening, have students ask their families to share rules they remember from school. Record these rules so they can share them with the class and add to their list the next day.



# Miss Nelson Come Back! Persuasive Letters

## LANGUAGE ARTS STUDENT WORKSHEET

Adapted from: [http://www.teachervision.fen.com/tv/printables/scottforesman/read\\_2\\_U6\\_WP.pdf](http://www.teachervision.fen.com/tv/printables/scottforesman/read_2_U6_WP.pdf)

The students in Room 207 missed Miss Nelson and wanted her back! They wrote letters begging Miss Nelson to come back, they went out searching for Miss Nelson throughout the neighborhood, they even got a detective involved in the search for Miss Nelson!

Pretend you are a student in Room 207. Below, use the Persuasive Writing Organizer to clearly identify you class's problem, as well as potential solutions to the problem at hand. Then, write Miss Nelson a letter convincing her to return to her students in Room 207.

## Persuasive Writing Organizer

What is the problem?

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Why are changes needed?

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How can we fix the problem?

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**Other things to think about:**

- Do I give supporting details?
- Have I used persuasive words and phrases?
- Have I used the correct letter form?



# Readers Theater

## LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken from: *What Is Readers Theater?* by Linda Cornwell <http://www.scholastic.com/librarians/programs/whatistr.htm>, [http://www.timrasinski.com/presentations/readers\\_theater\\_1-4.pdf](http://www.timrasinski.com/presentations/readers_theater_1-4.pdf)

Readers Theater requires no sets, costumes, props, or memorized lines. Instead of acting out literature as in a play, the performer's goal is to read a script aloud effectively, enabling the audience to visualize the action. Performers bring the text alive by using voice, facial expressions, and some gestures

### Readers Theater helps to....

- develop fluency through repeated exposure to text.
- increase comprehension.
- integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening in an authentic context.
- engage students.
- provide a real purpose for reading.
- provide opportunities for cooperative learning.

Use the Miss Nelson is Missing Readers Theater script below with your class. Place students into small groups, so each child gets to read a part in the scene. Allow students time to rehearse their reading and then perform these different readings in front of the class!

## Miss Nelson is Missing

By Harry Allard

Designed by Holly Maxwell

### CHARACTERS

**Narrator.** . . . . . Kid 1  
**Miss Nelson** . . . . . Kid 2  
**Miss Viola Swamp** . . . . . Kid 3  
Kid 4

.....  
**Narrator:** The kids in room 207 were misbehaving again for Miss Nelson. They were the worst behaved class in the school.

**Miss Nelson:** Umm, class, now settle down.

**Narrator:** But they would NOT behave.

**Kid 1:** Whisper, whisper, whisper!

**Kid 2:** Ha, ha, giggle, giggle!

**Kid 3:** Hey, look at this funny face!

**Kid 4:** Ha, Ha! Look, I can touch my tongue to my nose!

**Miss Nelson:** Once upon a time there were...

**Kid 3:** Do we have to do work?

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# Readers Theater

(Continued)

**Kid 4:** I don't want to!

**Miss Nelson:** Well, I think something will have to be done about this.

**Narrator:** The next morning Miss Nelson did not come to school.

**Kid 1:** Wow! Now we can really act up!

**Kid 2:** Yeah! Let's be just terrible!

**Miss Viola Swamp:** NOT SO FAST!

**Narrator:** A woman in an ugly black dress stood before them.

**Miss V. Swamp:** I am your new teacher, MISS VIOLA SWAMP!

**Kid 3:** Where is Miss Nelson?

**Miss V. Swamp:** Never mind that! Open those books!!

**Narrator:** Miss Nelson's kids did as they were told. Miss Viola Swamp was a real witch. She meant business. She put them to work and gave them lots of homework.

**Miss V. Swamp:** We'll have no story hour today! Keep your mouths shut and be perfectly still. And if you misbehave you'll be sorry!

**Narrator:** Days went by and there was no sign of Miss Nelson. The kids were really missing her! After all, she was pretty nice!

**All kids:** I miss Miss Nelson!

**Narrator:** The kids tried to figure out what happened to her. They thought they would be stuck with Miss Viola Swamp forever! Then one day...

**Miss Nelson:** Hello children. Did you miss me?

**Kid 1 and 2:** We certainly did!

**Kid 4:** Where were you?

**Miss Nelson:** That's my little secret. How about story time?

**All kids:** Oh, yes!

**Narrator:** Miss Nelson noticed that no one was rude or silly during story time.

**Miss Nelson:** What brought about this lovely change?

**All kids:** That's our little secret.

**Narrator:** Back at home Miss Nelson hung up her coat in the closet right next to an ugly black dress. She sang a little song.

**Miss Nelson:** I'll never tell!



# WANTED: Compare and Contrast Miss Nelson and Miss Swamp

## LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Adapted from: [http://www.busyteacherscafe.com/literature\\_guides/missnelsonmissing.html](http://www.busyteacherscafe.com/literature_guides/missnelsonmissing.html)

**At first glance, Miss Nelson and Miss Swamp are two entirely different people—they look different, sound different, and definitely act different! However, once you dig deeper it can be plain to see some similarities between these two characters. After reading the story or seeing the production of *MISS NELSON IS MISSING*, explore the two main characters with your class.**

1. Begin talking about these two characters and their traits by drawing a Venn Diagram on the board or overhead, and place the title Miss Nelson over one of the circles and Miss Swamp over the other circle. Explain to students that the circles represent the two characters listed above.
2. As a class, first come up with character traits that correspond to Miss Nelson. Next, identify Miss Swamp's character traits.
3. Then, ask students if there are any traits in these two lists that are similar, or are there new traits we can add to this list that correspond to both characters? Place these traits in the overlapping section of the diagram, so students can clearly distinguish the traits that set these two characters apart and those they both share.
4. After completing the Venn Diagram activity, remind students that when Miss Swamp came to town the students and everyone at the school thought Miss Nelson went missing. Then, when Miss Nelson returned, Miss Swamp suddenly went missing.
5. Provide students with two large sheets of drawing paper. Instruct students to create *Wanted* posters for Miss Nelson and Miss Swamp—on the top half of the paper they must draw a picture of each character, and then they must describe the character in detail on the bottom half.
6. Once complete, hang these *Wanted* posters around the room and allow students to observe the different character traits represented in the posters.

## Post-Show Questions

1. In the beginning of the play, why do you think Room 207 was so disrespectful to Miss Nelson.
3. Why do you think the kids do what Miss Swamp tells them to do but do not listen to Miss Nelson? Do they respect Miss Swamp more than Miss Nelson, or do they just fear her? What is the difference?
5. Miss Nelson changes her identity and becomes Miss Swamp. Have you ever changed your identity or even the way you acted or what you said to either fit in or change people's ideas of you? Would you change who you are to gain someone's acceptance or respect?
6. What changes did the class make after Miss Nelson returned? How do you think these changes will help Miss Nelson and all the kids in Room 207?



# Who Said It?

1. Remember, tomorrow we will be going on a fieldtrip.
2. Does anybody know what it means to be obedient, unselfish, and respectful of others?
3. Ow! Miss Nelson, Gregory pinched me!
4. I think Miss Nelson is too nice. Don't get me wrong. There's nothing wrong with people who are nice, even teachers, but like when you got kids like the ones in 207?
5. But she will be sending in a substitute. And from what I understand, it's someone very special! I expect you to behave yourselves.
6. Hooray! Miss Nelson isn't coming!
7. Whoppee! A substitute! Now we can really act up!
8. She'll never be back. Not after the way we treated her.
9. There'll be no more shenanigans in this class!
10. Well, the days went by and there was no sign of Miss Nelson.
11. Are you kidding? I stayed up all night and all I did was Math.
12. I'm not interested in what Miss Nelson said. I'm the one in charge now. And only good kids get to go to the zoo.
13. You see this hat? It's called a fedora. And it belonged to Al Capone.
14. Ooh, I might be a gangster when I grow up.
15. You think it's glamorous being a gangster? You think it's cool? Well, Al Capone certainly did. And guess where he ended up?
16. And this, my friends, is the very waste paper basket Baby Face Nelson used- bankrobber, safecracker, killer...to put over his head after pulling a prank!
17. Miss Swamp is the meanest substitute in the whole world.
18. I know. Maybe she ate too many lima beans. And had to go to the hospital.
19. I think Miss Nelson is missing! Something will have to be done!
20. And aren't you perfect little angels? I wonder what brought about this lovely change.



# Who Said It? (Answers)

1. Remember, tomorrow we will be going on a fieldtrip. **MISS NELSON**
2. Does anybody know what it means to be obedient, unselfish, and respectful of others? **MISS NELSON**
3. Ow! Miss Nelson, Gregory pinched me! **CHERYL**
4. I think Miss Nelson is too nice. Don't get me wrong. There's nothing wrong with people who are nice, even teachers, but like when you got kids like the ones in 207? **POP HANSON**
5. But she will be sending in a substitute. And from what I understand, it's someone very special! I expect you to behave yourselves. **MR.BLANDSWORTH**
6. Hooray! Miss Nelson isn't coming! **BILLY**
7. Whoppee! A substitute! Now we can really act up! **BECKY**
8. She'll never be back. Not after the way we treated her. **GREGORY**
9. There'll be no more shenanigans in this class! **MISS SWAMP**
10. Well, the days went by and there was no sign of Miss Nelson. **POP HANSON**
11. Are you kidding? I stayed up all night and all I did was Math. **MELVIN**
12. I'm not interested in what Miss Nelson said. I'm the one in charge now. And only good kids get to go to the zoo. **MISS SWAMP**
13. You see this hat? It's called a fedora. And it belonged to Al Capone. **AL CATRAZ**
14. Ooh, I might be a gangster when I grow up. **BILLY**
15. You think it's glamorous being a gangster? You think it's cool? Well, Al Capone certainly did. And guess where he ended up? **MISS SWAMP**
16. And this, my friends, is the very waste paper basket Baby Face Nelson used- bankrobber,safecracker, killer...to put over his head after pulling a prank! **AL CATRAZ**
17. Miss Swamp is the meanest substitute in the whole world. **JENNIFER**
18. I know. Maybe she ate too many lima beans. And had to go to the hospital. **MELVIN**
19. I think Miss Nelson is missing! Something will have to be done! **DETECTIVE MCSMOGG**
20. And aren't you perfect little angels? I wonder what brought about this lovely change. **MISS NELSON**

