

ENRICHMENT GUIDE

mti's
BROADWAY **JUNIOR**[®]
revue

pure imagination





Synopsis

Celebrate 40 years of First Stage with a brand new musical revue featuring our Theater Academy students performing songs from Broadway hits and Disney favorites, alongside stories that showcase the creativity and collaboration at the heart of First Stage since 1987.

Content Advisory

Recommended for families, young people, and First Stage fans of all ages!

Every young person is different and may or may not be ready for certain elements of each production. Read more about this show's age recommendation below.

Audiences will be delighted by this imaginative revue of creativity and collaboration.

The performance is expected to run approximately 60 minutes including a brief intermission – very young audiences may have difficulty staying connected for the full length of the show.

There will be changing lights, and loud music and sounds that may be overwhelming for those with sensory sensitivities. We offer sensory kits for patrons who may need them.

Theater Etiquette



DO

Stay present

Lean in and engage with the story. Observe and listen without distraction to the story being told on stage

Oohs and Aahs

Reacting is encouraged! Please feel free to laugh, cry, clap, or ooh at appropriate moments.

Respect the space

Please sit nicely in the audience chairs, refrain from eating or drinking, and pick up after yourself.

DON'T

Be on your phone

Use of phones is prohibited and is distracting to the actors and audience around you.

Recording any portion of the show is strictly prohibited.

Talk over the story

Please refrain from talking over the play. It is distracting to the actors and other audience members, and you'll miss the story!

Be disrespectful

Practice the Campsite Rule - leave the theater better than you find it!

Pre Show Questions

1. Pure Imagination is a musical revue made up of songs from many different musicals that tell the story of First Stage. If you were to create a revue of your life, what songs would you use?
2. What is your favorite show that you have seen at First Stage? Why?
3. What is your favorite First Stage memory?



Activities Galore!

In the next section, you will find activities to help you explore the shows that are a part of the Pure Imagination Revue. These activities have all been a part of shows that First Stage has done over their past seasons.

Below you will find a table of contents for the activities.

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"We are in a book...box!"

An ELA Activity
from the Elephant and Piggie's We Are In A Play
Enrichment Guide
First Stage's '23-'24 Season

A book box contains key objects from a story. These objects can act as good visual aids for many different types of learners. Boxes should be colorful and should accompany the story.

Follow along with the worksheet on the next page to see how to make your own Book Box!

“WE ARE IN A BOOK... BOX!”

Adapted from: <http://www.franklincollege.edu/pwp/cmahaffey/LitUnit.pdf>

A book box contains key objects from a story. These objects can act as good visual aids for many different types of learners. Boxes should be colorful and should accompany the story.

MATERIALS

- One shoe box (or similar size box with a lid)
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Crayons and markers
- Glue sticks
- Five or more key items from the story (students will collect or make replicas of these items to place in the box)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. This activity should be done after reading Elephant and Piggie stories or attending the performance of ELEPHANT AND PIGGIE’S “WE ARE IN A PLAY”.
2. Discuss the stories of Elephant and Piggie. After doing this, brainstorm a list of items you could use to represent events from these stories. For example: if you choose to explore the play: a party hat could be used to represent the Squirrelles’ party, an envelope could represent a party invitation, a small toy could represent Piggie’s toy, a kazoo could represent Piggie’s trumpet, etc.
3. First, decorate the outside of your box. The outside of the box must include the name of the story, and should be decorated to appropriately represent the story and the main characters of the story.
4. Next, choose five events from the story they want to incorporate in their book box, and select a suitable item to represent each event.
5. Once the boxes are complete, share your box with your family, friends, or classmates!

Designing Elsa's Costumes

A Technical theater Activity from the Frozen Enrichment Guide First Stage's '25-'26 Season

In Frozen we see Elsa in three different costumes or looks; her clothing as a child, her clothing for her coronation, and the clothing she wears when she lets it go. In this activity you will have the opportunity to learn how a costume designer creates different costumes for the same character.

Think about the images you've seen of Elsa. What does she look like in the movie? In the Broadway musical? In First Stage's musical? As a doll? At Disneyworld? How do you know that she is Elsa, even though she looks different and wears a different costume each time? Elsa is usually depicted with her hair in one long braid, and wearing blue. Often there are snowflakes incorporated into her look.

Follow along with the worksheets on the next few pages to create your own Elsa costume!

DESIGNING ELSA'S COSTUMES

A TECHNICAL THEATER ACTIVITY

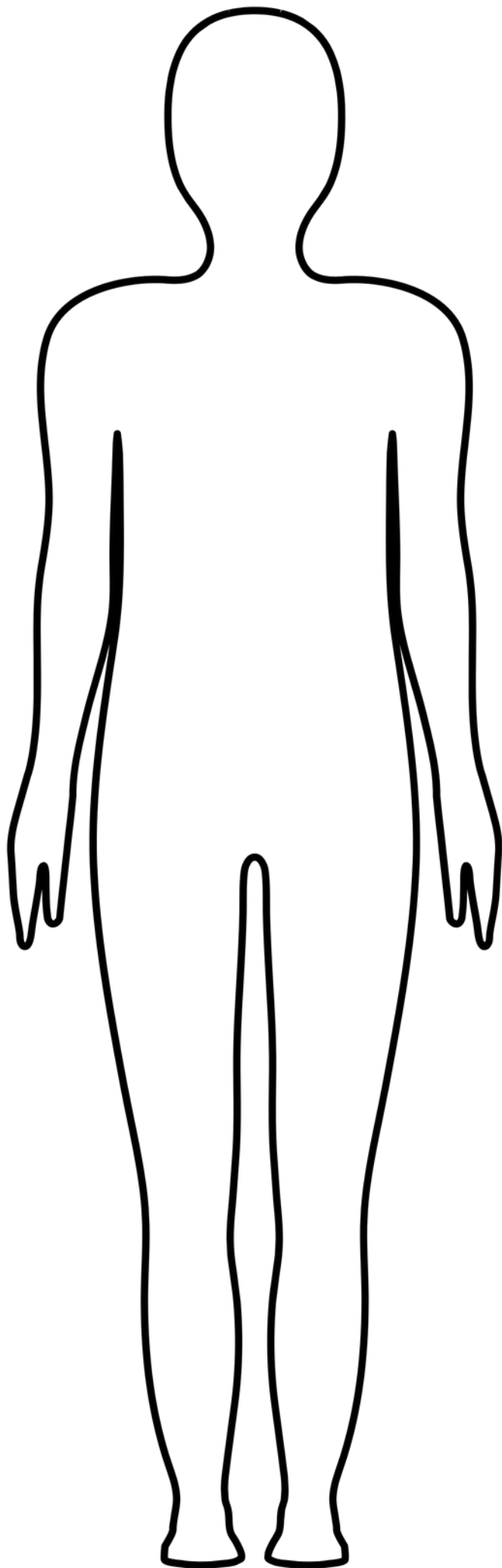
In Frozen we see Elsa in three different costumes or looks; her clothing as a child, her clothing for her coronation, and the clothing she wears when she lets it go. In this activity you will have the opportunity to learn how a costume designer creates different costumes for the same character.

Think about the images you've seen of Elsa. What does she look like in the movie? In the Broadway musical? In First Stage's musical? As a doll? At Disneyworld? How do you know that she is Elsa, even though she looks different and wears a different costume each time? Elsa is usually depicted with her hair in one long braid, and wearing blue. Often there are snowflakes incorporated into her look.

DIRECTIONS

Imagine you are the costume designer for a production of Frozen. Print out the costume design template on pg.15 of this Enrichment Guide, and design three costumes for Elsa: Young Elsa, Coronation Elsa, and Let It Go Elsa.





DESIGNING ELSA'S COSTUMES

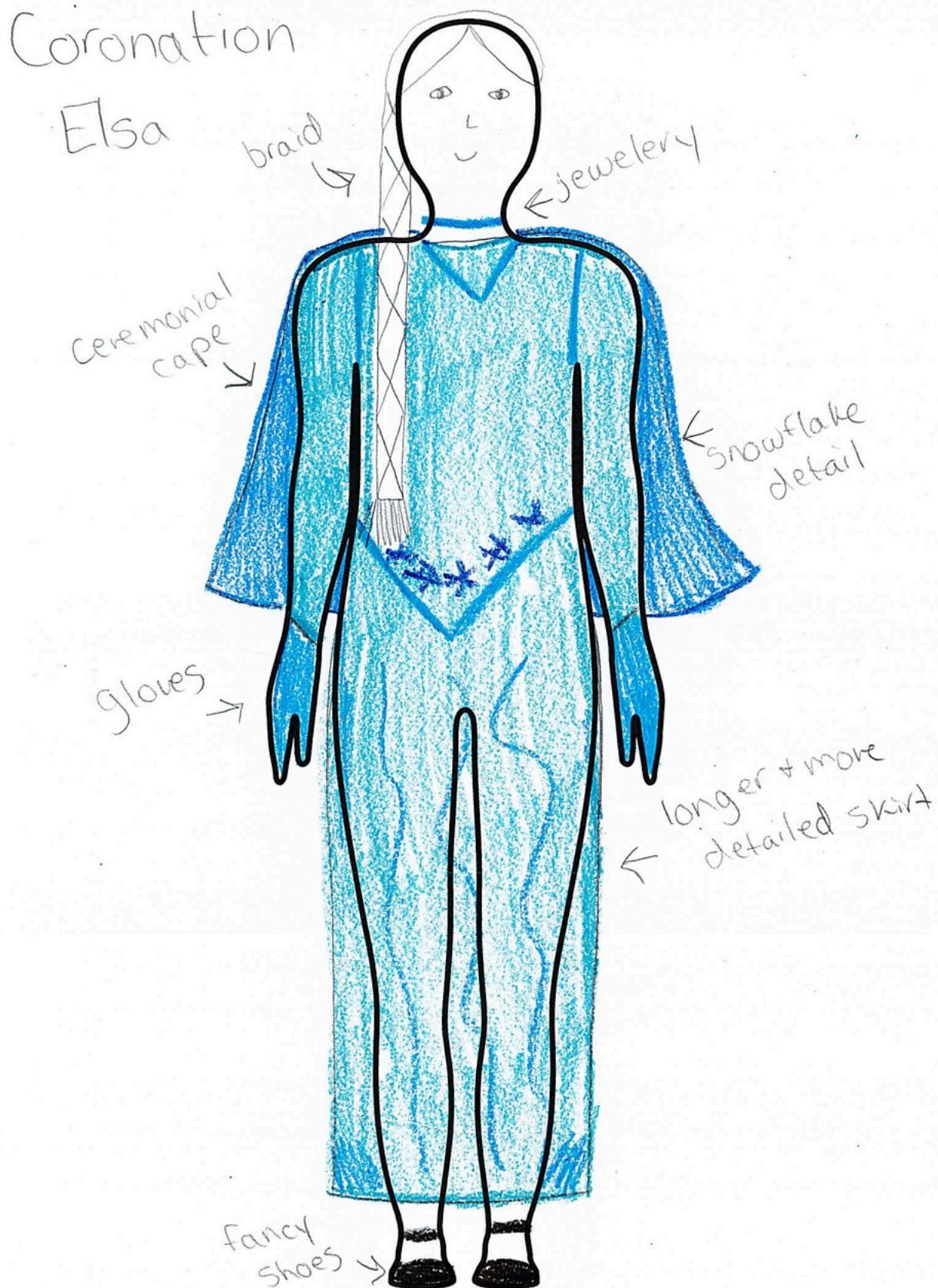
EXAMPLE 1

Let It
Go
Elsa



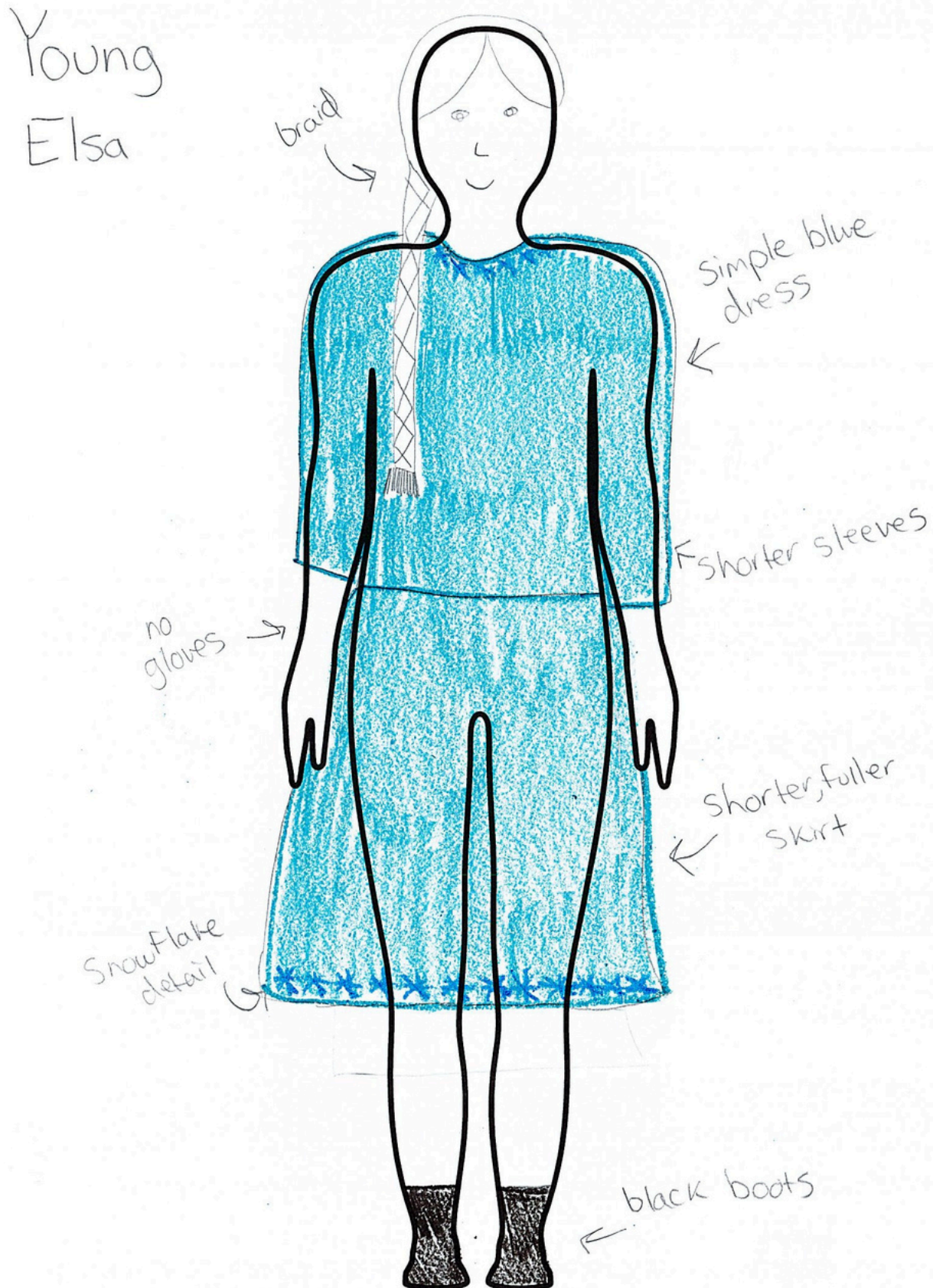
DESIGNING ELSA'S COSTUMES

EXAMPLE 2



DESIGNING ELSA'S COSTUMES

EXAMPLE 3



Splendid Synonyms

An ELA Activity

**from the Matilda the Musical Enrichment Guide
First Stage's '18-'19 Season**

Words that have the SAME or very SIMILAR meanings are called SYNONYMS.

At the beginning of his career as a writer, Roald Dahl collected lists of words in an old school notebook. "When you're describing something or someone," he said, "you can't just choose dull words like beautiful, pretty or nice. You must search for more meaty and imaginative words."

Follow along with the worksheet on the next few pages to create sentences using your original synonyms.

SPLENDID SYNONYMS

Classroom Language Arts Activity

Taken from: <http://www.roalddahl.com/>

Words that have the SAME or very SIMILAR meanings are called SYNONYMS.

At the beginning of his career as a writer, Roald Dahl collected lists of words in an old school notebook .
 “When you’re describing something or someone,” he said, “you can’t just choose dull words like beautiful, pretty or nice . You must search for more meaty and imaginative words .”

Here is a list of words Roald Dahl collected under the heading **BEAUTIFUL**

agreeable	beaming	brilliant	charming	comely	dainty
delicate	dazzling	elegant	engaging	exquisite	glorious
graceful	glowing	handsome	intriguing	lovely	nice
pretty	radiant	shining	sparkling	splendid	superb

Here is a list of words Roald Dahl collected under the heading **ANGRY, RUDE or NASTY**

arrogant	blazing	brutal	choleric	coarse	cruel
devilish	dangerous	disdainful	disgusting	evil	fierce
furious	ghoulish	grim	gruff	harsh	hostile
icy-frosty	inflamed	impudent	infuriated	insinuating	intolerable
irritable	malicious	malignant	menacing	mocking	murderous
nauseating	nettled	noxious	odious	offensive	ominous
piqued	rapacious	repellent	repulsive	revolting	rough
scowling	shrill	smoldering	smug	snapping	snarling
stern	superior	taunting	truculent	tyrannical	vengeful
venomous	vindictive				

Now, make a list of all the words you can think of that mean the same as:

BIG

FUNNY

SPLENDID SYNONYMS (Cont.)

Classroom Language Arts Activity

Taken from: <http://www.roalddahl.com/>

Create three new sentences that incorporate at least one synonym for the words BEAUTIFUL, ANGRY (OR RUDE OR NASTY), BIG and FUNNY in each sentence .

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Angry
Beautiful
Rough
sparkling
funny
lovely
dainty

Mental Math

A STEM Activity

from the Matilda the Musical Enrichment Guide
First Stage's '18-'19 Season

**Matilda amazes her classmates and Ms .
Honey with her amazing mental math
skills . See if you can solve the following
math equations in your head, just like
Matilda!**

Follow along with the worksheet on the
next few pages to test your mental math

MENTAL MATH LEVEL 1

Classroom Math Activity

Taken directly from: <https://www.math-salamanders.com/mental-math-3rd-grade.html>

Matilda amazes her classmates and Ms . Honey with her amazing mental math skills . See if you solve the following math equations in your head, just like Matilda!

Name _____

Date _____

1) $500 + 70 + 4$	
2) half of 30	
3) What is this triangle called?	
4) $30 - 6$	
5) What is the value of the digit 7 in the number 1726	
6) Double 14	
7) 5×6	
8) Write down all the odd numbers from the list below: 42, 37, 21, 26, 38, 63	
9) Round 67 to the nearest 10.	
10) What number comes halfway between 30 and 50?	
11) How many nickels make 30¢?	
12) The time is 4:30pm. What will the time be in half an hour?	
13) How much is 3 dimes and 3 nickels?	
14) What fraction of this shape is shaded?	
15) I am facing north. I turn 2 half turns. Which way am I facing now?	
16) How many inches in 2 feet?	

MENTAL MATH LEVEL 2

Classroom Math Activity

Taken directly from: <https://www.math-salamanders.com/image-files/4th-grade-math-worksheets-mental-math-4th-grade-1.gif>

Name

Date _____

1) Work out $0.7 + 0.8$	
2) Write the Roman numerals XXXVII in figures?	
3) Which of these fractions is equivalent to a half? $\frac{1}{3}$ $\frac{2}{5}$ $\frac{3}{6}$ $\frac{4}{9}$ $\frac{5}{8}$	
4) $42 \div 6$	
5) Write down the number eighteen thousand two hundred seven.	
6) Fill in the missing number $4081 = 4001 + \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$	
7) Write down two numbers with a sum of 9 and a difference of 1.	
8) How many vertices in a triangular pyramid?	
9) Write down all the factors of 15. _____	
10) Add together $6\frac{1}{2}$, 5 and $3\frac{1}{2}$	
11) I have \$10. I spend \$2.70. How much do I have left?	
12) What is the value of the expression $x + 7$ when $x = 3$?	
13) What is $\frac{1}{3}$ of 21?	
14) A plane journey takes $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours. If I set off at 8:40am, what time will I arrive?	pm
15) A pen costs \$4.60. How much will 2 pens cost?	
16) A piece of rope measuring 4m is cut into 8 equal lengths. How long will each piece be?	

MENTAL MATH LEVEL 3

Classroom Math Activity

Taken directly from: <https://www.math-salamanders.com/image-files/5th-grade-mental-math-worksheet-5th-grade-2.gif>

Name _____

Date _____

1) Find $\frac{3}{4}$ of \$32.	
2) $1 - 0.92$	
3) Find the value of $(x - 6)/3$ if $x = 21$	
4) $10 \times 4 = 26 + \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$	
5) Round 6.283 to 1dp	
6) What is the missing number? 7.3 <u> </u> 8.1 8.5 8.9	
7) What 3D shape is this the net for?	
8) How many faces does a triangular prism have?	
9) In a group of children, $\frac{3}{5}$ like to play tennis. If there are 25 children, how many do not like tennis?	
10) Timmy and Tommy are two boys whose ages add up to 23. Timmy is 5 years older than Tommy. How old are they?	
11) How many inches on the ruler?	
12) What is the MEAN of 13, 7, 8, and 4?	
13) Which is the smallest? 0.37 0.194 0.6 0.473 0.29	
14) $3 \frac{2}{5} + 2 \frac{1}{5}$	
15) How much is half of a fourth?	
16) A rectangular swimming pool measures $5 \frac{1}{2}$ meters by $3 \frac{1}{2}$ meters. What is the PERIMETER?	
17) What do angles around a point add up to?	
18) The RATIO of lions to tigers in a zoo is 1:3. If there are 4 lions, how many tigers will there be?	

The Jolly Roger Challenge

A STEM Activity

**from the Peter Pan and Wendy Enrichment Guide
First Stage '25-'26 Season**

In Peter Pan and Wendy Captain Hook, Smee, and the other pirates live on a pirate ship called the Jolly Roger. In this activity you will build your own pirate ship using recycled materials and set sail in a body of water!

Follow along with the instructions on the next few pages to bring your Jolly Roger to life!

THE JOLLY ROGER CHALLENGE

A STEM ACTIVITY

In Peter Pan and Wendy Captain Hook, Smee, and the other pirates live on a pirate ship called the Jolly Roger. In this activity you will build your own pirate ship using recycled materials and set sail in a body of water!

Materials

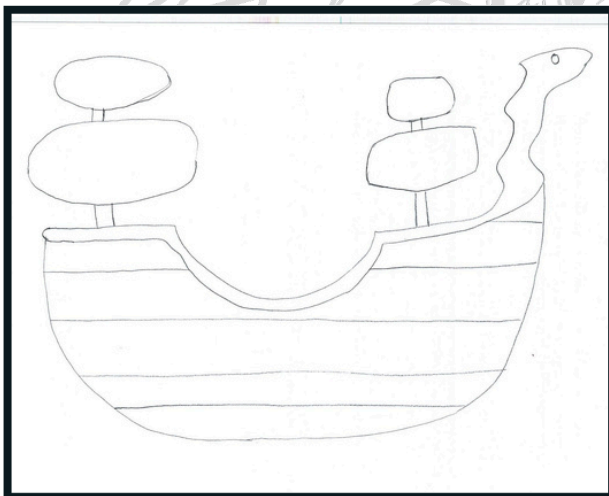
- Cardboard
- Tape
- Crayons
- Pipe cleaners
- Coffee filters
- Any other recycled materials you want to use
- Paper pirate

Directions:

1. Print out the paper pirate.
This pirate will be the captain of your ship. Your goal is to build a ship that can float without sinking, and without the captain getting wet.

2. Color your paper pirate, and cut them out. If you'd like, glue them onto some cardboard so that they can stand up on their own.

3. Sketch your ship.



THE JOLLY ROGER CHALLENGE

A STEM ACTIVITY: CONTINUED

Directions Continued:

4. Build your ship. Make sure you build a place for your captain, and don't forget to decorate it!



5. Sail your ship. Fill a kiddie pool, bathtub, bucket, or even a sink with water. See if your ship can float, and if your captain can stay dry!

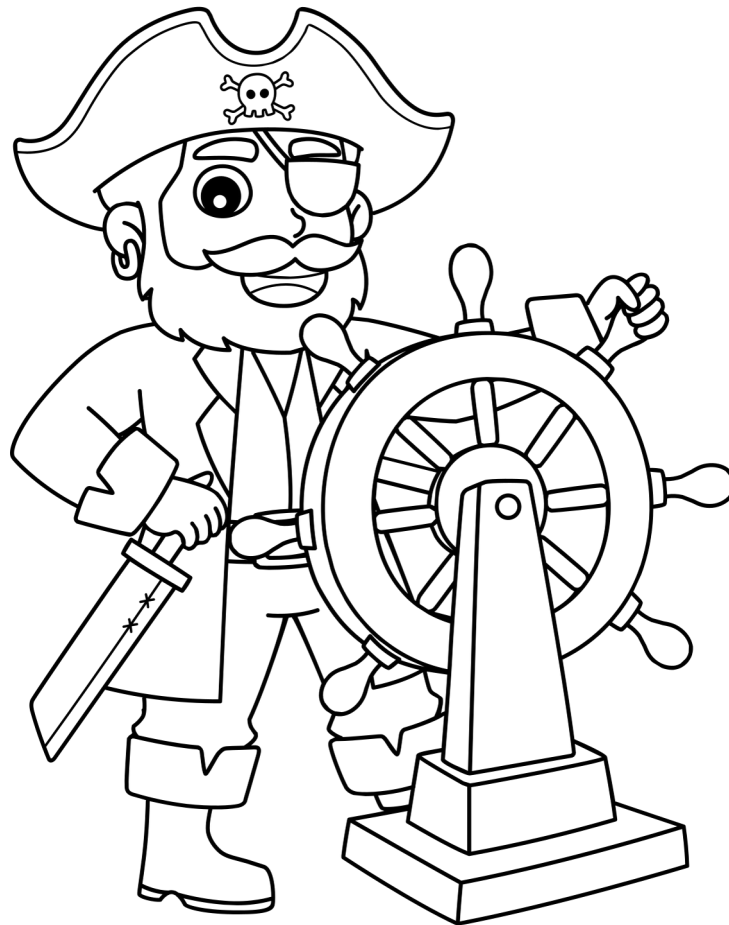
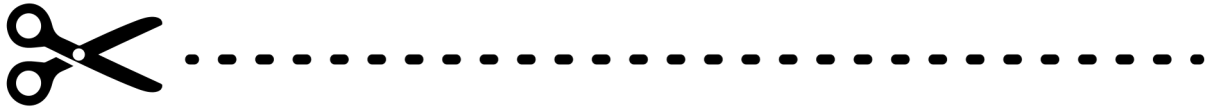


If your ship sinks, or if your captain gets wet, think about what went wrong, and how you can prevent that from happening next time. Try again!

THE JOLLY ROGER CHALLENGE

PRINT THE PIRATE

Print this page and cut out the pirate for your ship!



Let Your Freak Flag Fly!

An SEL Activity

**from the Shrek the Musical Enrichment Guide First
Stage '13-'14 Season**

In Shrek the Musical, the characters discover that “what makes them different, makes them strong.” In this activity, you can make your very own Freak Flag to wave proudly to show off the things that make you unique.

Follow along with the instructions on the next few pages to bring your Freak Flag to life!



SELF PORTRAITS: LET YOUR FREAK FLAG FLY

CHARACTER EDUCATION CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Materials

Camera

Paper

Glue

Magazines and other materials for collage-making

ACTIVITY

1. Ask your students to take out a piece of paper. on this paper, they are to list all the qualities about themselves that they like, or are proud of—these qualities can include physical, mental, and emotional qualities. Furthermore, have students focus on how they demonstrate leadership: how are they responsible, respectful and safe?

a. If students need some inspiration, consider having each student put their name at the top of a blank piece of paper and have them tape their papers to the chalk board. Then, have students fill in one quality they admire for each of their classmates. At the end, each student will have a sheet full of positive qualities about themselves.

2. once your students have their inspiration, share with them information on collage making. A collage is an artistic arrangement of various materials glued to a flat surface. Collages are pictures made by combining words and images in an unusual arrangement to convey emotion.

a. Show students pictures of collage art by artists such as Della Wells or Matisse.

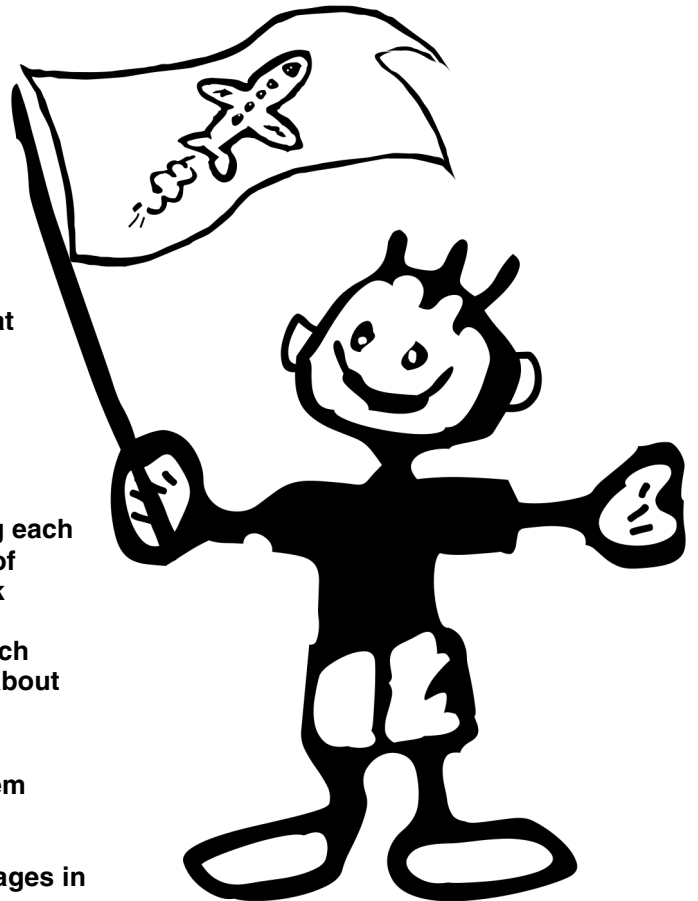
You can find a list of collage artists at: <http://www.collageart.org/links/>.

3. Pass out the Freak Flag template to students. Using magazines, fabric scraps, printed paper, postcards, and other materials, students will be creating a collage representing themselves and what they love about themselves, and what makes them unique and special. Students can collage their bodies, and also the environment around their bodies— where they are and the images and ideas represented in that environment can all be a part of their overall construction of self. There is no “right” or “wrong” with this art project—it is the artists’ interpretation.

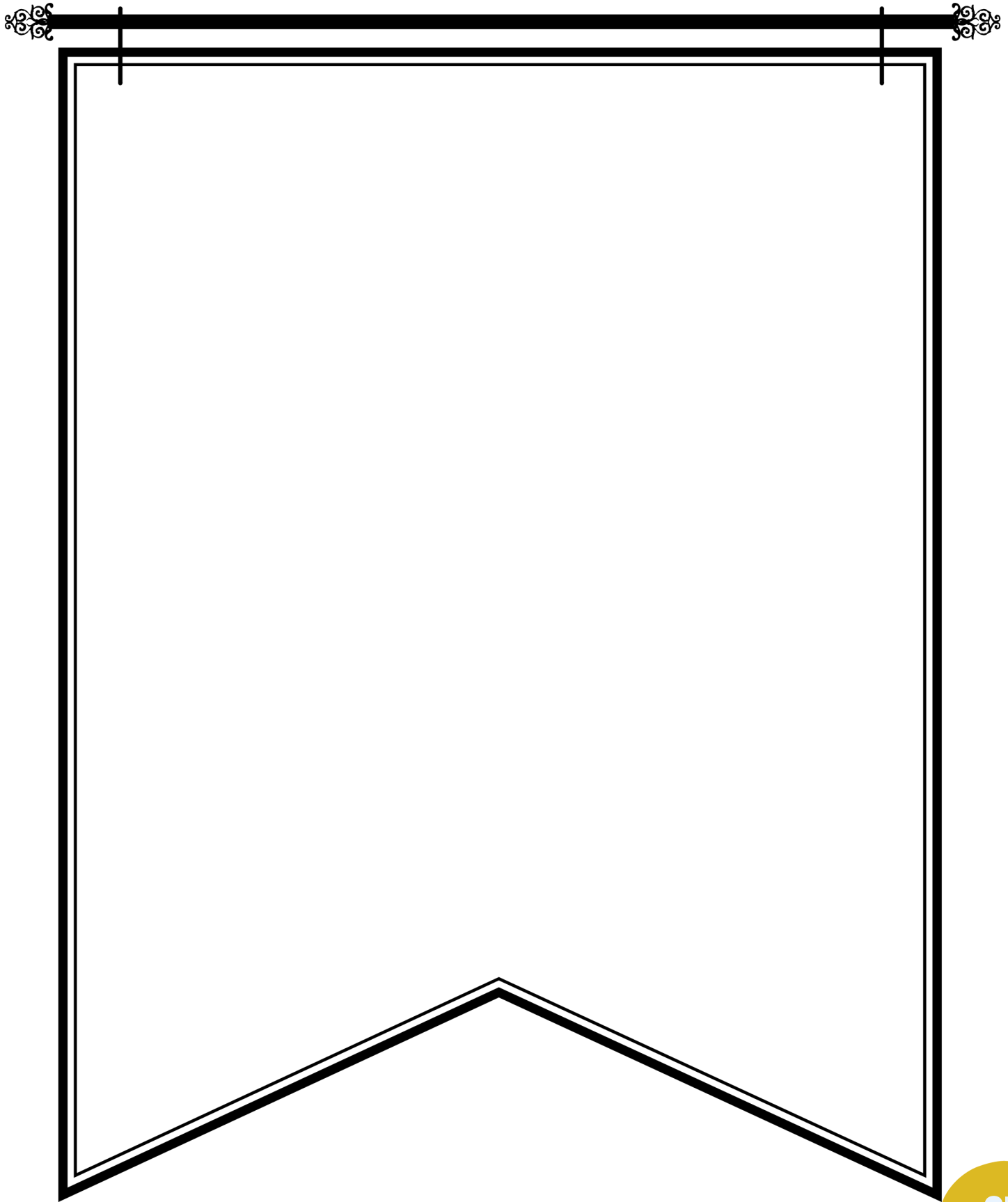
4. once students have completed their collages, hang them around the room for everyone to view.

a. Hold a class discussion about the leadership qualities they see represented in their classmates’ collages? Ask students to try to discover something new about each student in their class through their collages.

5. Bring your students' Freak Flags to the theater, or mail them to the First Stage Education Department prior to the opening of SHREK THE MUSICAL, and we will proudly display these collages in the theater during the run of the show! Mail Freak Flags to: First Stage education; 325 W. Walnut Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212



SELF PORTRAITS: LET YOUR FREAK FLAG FLY
CHARACTER EDUCATION CLASSROOM ACTIVITY





Gingerbread Cookies

A STEM Activity

from the Shrek the Musical Enrichment Guide First
Stage '13-'14 Season

Shrek the Musical features the iconic character, Gingy the Gingerbread Man. In this activity, you can learn a recipe to make your very own gingerbread man!

Follow along with the instructions on
the next page to create your
Gingerbread Man!

GINGERBREAD COOKIES

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Taken from: <http://www.bettycrocker.com/recipes/gingerbread-cookies/92eccbd8-33d2-4f05-a09e-ea6722d67786>

Prep Time 45 min
Total Time 3 hr 15 min
Servings 30

INGREDIENTS

cookies

1 cup packed brown sugar
1/3 cup shortening
1 1/2 cups dark molasses
2/3 cup cold water
7 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground allspice
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon salt

Frosting and decorations

4 cups powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
4 to 5 tablespoons half-and-half
Food colors, if desired
Raisins or chocolate chips, if desired
Assorted candies, if desired



DIRECTIONS

- 1 In large bowl, beat brown sugar, shortening, molasses and water with electric mixer on medium speed, or mix with spoon, until well blended. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cover and refrigerate at least 2 hours.
- 2 Heat oven to 350°F. Grease cookie sheet lightly with shortening or spray with cooking spray. On floured surface, roll dough 1/4 inch thick. Cut with floured gingerbread cutter or other shaped cutter. on cookie sheet, place cutouts about 2 inches apart.
- 3 Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until no indentation remains when touched. Immediately remove from cookie sheet to cooling rack. Cool completely, about 30 minutes.
- 4 In medium bowl, mix powdered sugar, vanilla and half-and-half until frosting is smooth and spreadable. Add food colors as desired. Frost cookies; decorate with raisins, chocolate chips and candies.

EXPERT TIPS

Versatile gingerbread! Did you know that a few crumbled unfrosted gingerbread cookies make an excellent thickener for pot roast gravy?

Rise to the occasion! If using self-rising flour, there is no need to add baking soda and salt.

Frozen's Nordic Influence

**A Social Studies Activity
from the Frozen Enrichment Guide
First Stage's '25-'26 Season**



When designing a show located in a specific area of the world, it's important to recognize the cultural traditions of the location. In Disney's Frozen the North Huldra or the 'Hidden Folk' are based on old Nordic folklore from countries like Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland. Disney was also inspired by these Nordic countries in their designs for the kingdom of Arendelle as well!

Follow along with the worksheet on the next page to test your knowledge of Nordic words!

FROZEN'S NORDIC INFLUENCE

A SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY

When designing a show located in a specific area of the world, it's important to recognize the cultural traditions of the location. In Disney's Frozen the North Huldra or the 'Hidden Folk' are based on old Nordic folklore from countries like Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland. Disney was also inspired by these Nordic countries in their designs for the kingdom of Arendelle as well!

Let's take a closer look at some Nordic folklore and traditions. Let's see if you can match the folklore/tradition to the Nordic phrase!

Huldufólk ____

Hygge ____

Hafgúfa ____

**Nykur or
Nøkken** ____

Trolls ____

Midsommar ____

The Sámi ____

A. An enormous serpent-like sea creature in Icelandic ocean waters.

B. This Swedish tradition serves as a celebration of the summer solstice. This celebration involves raising a maypole which the townspeople decorate with flowers and greenery. The Maypole is used to dance around and celebrate the brightest day of the year. Flower crowns are dawned, and good food is shared amongst the Swedish community

C. Icelandic Elves. These supernatural beings live amongst the beautiful Icelandic nature and look similar to humans. These tricky elves can make themselves visible at will. Icelandic people caution others to not throw stones, or walk on mossy areas as it might accidentally hurt these invisible elves.

D. A horse-like being that can be seen by the ocean water's edge. This creature is mentioned in Icelandic and Norwegian folklore. But don't get too close, this mythical shapeshifting horse has been known to lead folks to a watery grave.

E. Norwegians believe that these creatures live in mountains, forests and caves. It's also believed that when they are exposed to sunlight, they turn to stone.

F. Indigenous people who live alongside reindeer in upper Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. These reindeer herders spend months in the freezing cold and can trace their roots all the way back to the ice age. In their culture, reindeer are considered very sacred animals.

G. A Danish word that translates to the English word, 'cozy'. This cultural tradition involves bringing warmth to the home during cold winter months. This includes, playing games with friends, eating warm food and creating happy memories with family.

Works Cited

Huldufólk - Wikipedia
Frozen Education | NordicInfluences
<https://guidetoiceland.is/history-culture/folklore-in-iceland>
<https://www.hurtigruten.com/en-us/inspiration/culture/legends-of-norway>
<https://visitsweden.com/what-to-do/culture-history-and-art/swedish-traditions/midsummer-tradition/midsummer-sweden-something-another-world/>
<https://www.nathab.com/blog/sami-reindeer-herders>

ANSWER KEY: HULDUFÓLK(C),
HYGGE(G), HAFGÚFA(A), NYKUR
OR NØKKEND(D), TROLLS(E)
MIDSOMMAR(B), THE SÁMI(F)



Post Show Questions



1. Which song in the revue was your favorite? Why?
2. Pure Imagination told the story of 40 years of First Stage. What do you think the next 40 years will look like at First Stage?



Who Said It?

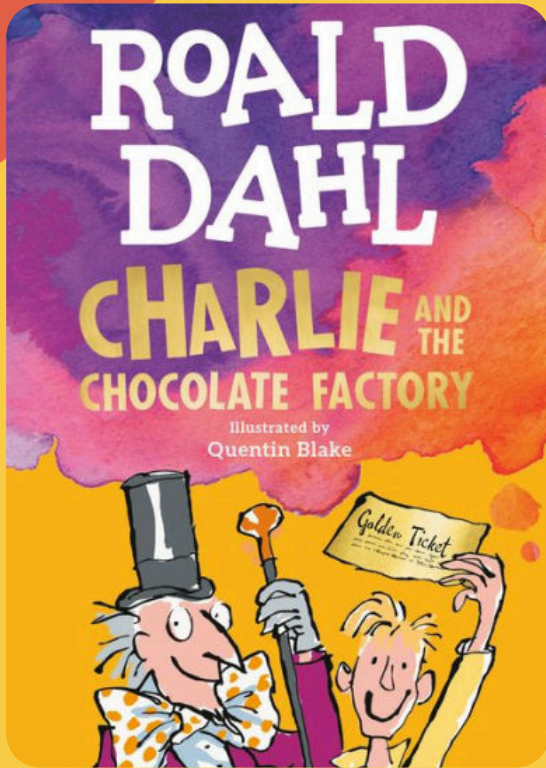
1. Want to change the world? There's nothing to it!
2. I'm just different. But I have a sense of pride.
3. So if you meet someone different and they seem a little shy, you'll make friends in any language.
4. Just imagine how much cooler I'll be in summer!
5. And if you're at a loss remember the phrase that says "To thine own elf be true."
6. And Neverland will always be the home of youth and joy and liberty.
7. We're in a play! We're on a stage!
8. Never again will I doubt it when my mummy says I'm a miracle.
9. Don't know where I'm going, but I know where I've been.
10. What makes us special makes us strong!

Who Said It?

Answer Key

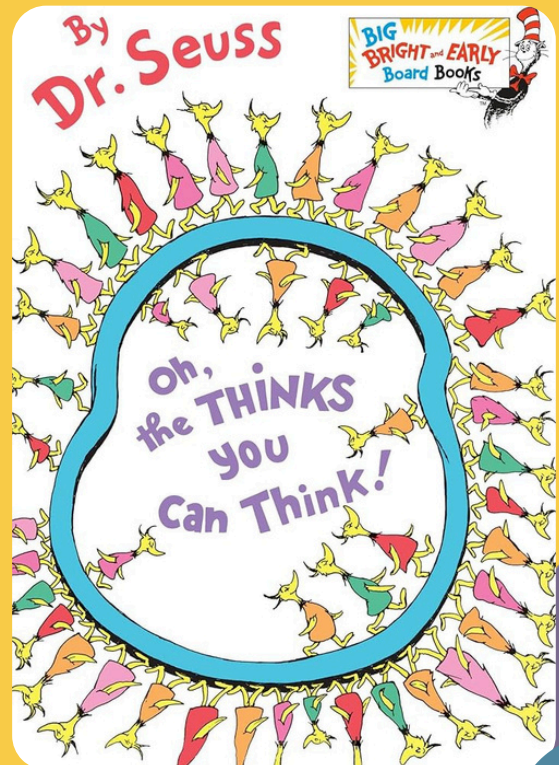
- 1. Willy Wonka**
- 2. Ugly**
- 3. Hola Lola Ensemble**
- 4. Olaf**
- 5. Buddy**
- 6. Peter and Lost Boys**
- 7. Piggie and Squirrelles**
- 8. Bruce**
- 9. Junie B.**
- 10. Freak Flag Ensemble**

Recommended Reading

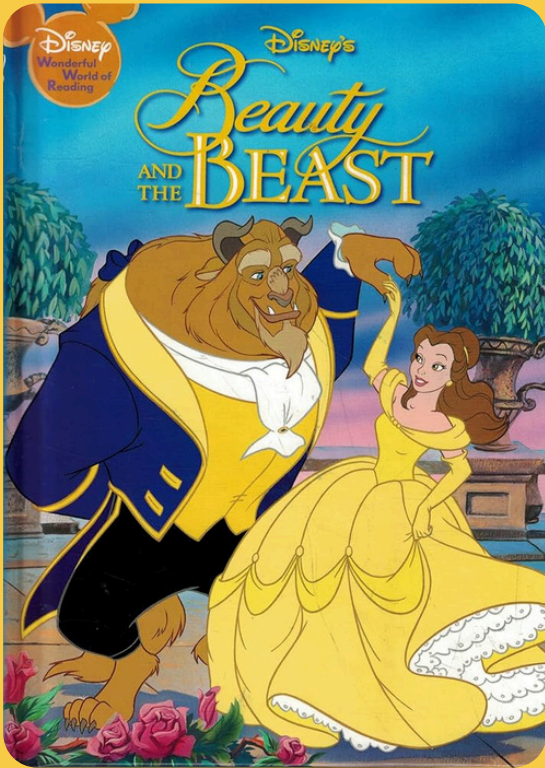


**Charlie & the
Chocolate Factory
by Roald Dahl**

**Oh, the Thinks You
Can Think
by Dr. Seuss**

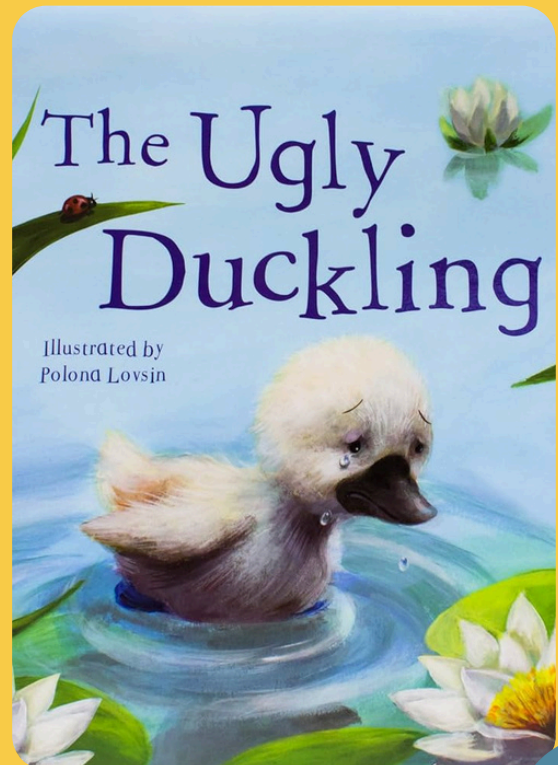


Recommended Reading

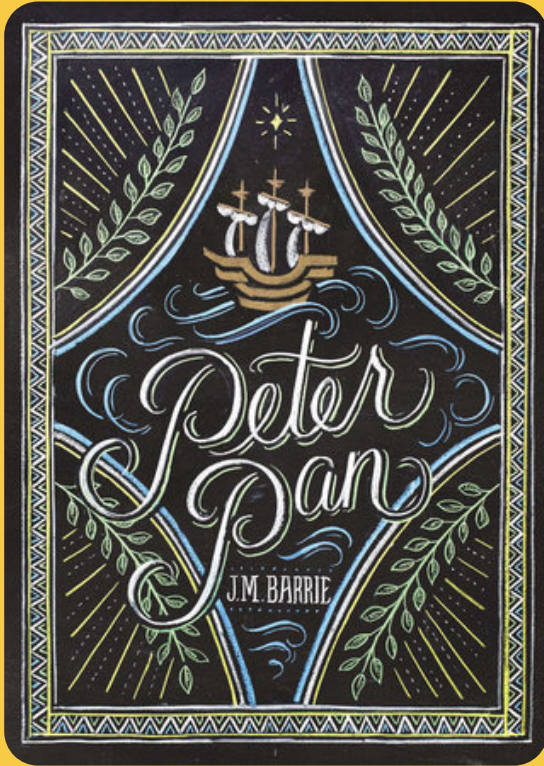


Beauty and the Beast
(Little Golden Book Version)
by Teddy Slater

The Ugly Duckling
by Hans Christian
Andersen

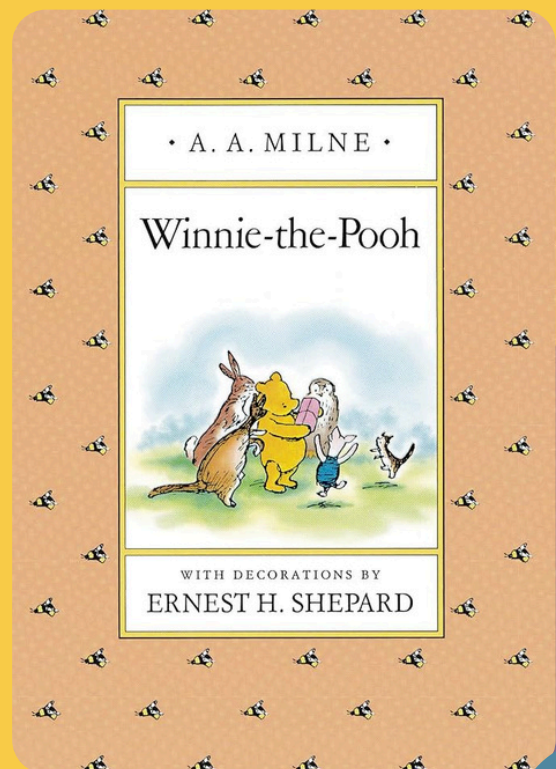


Recommended Reading

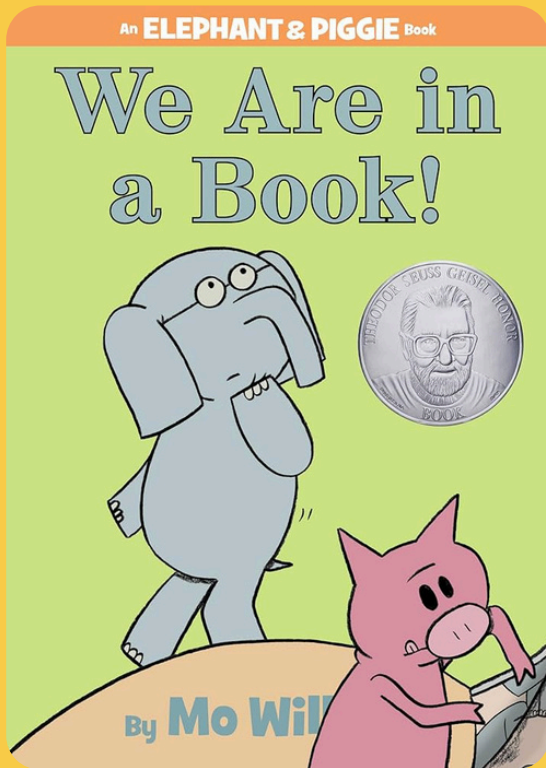


Peter Pan
by J.M.Barrie

Winnie the Pooh
by A. A. Milne

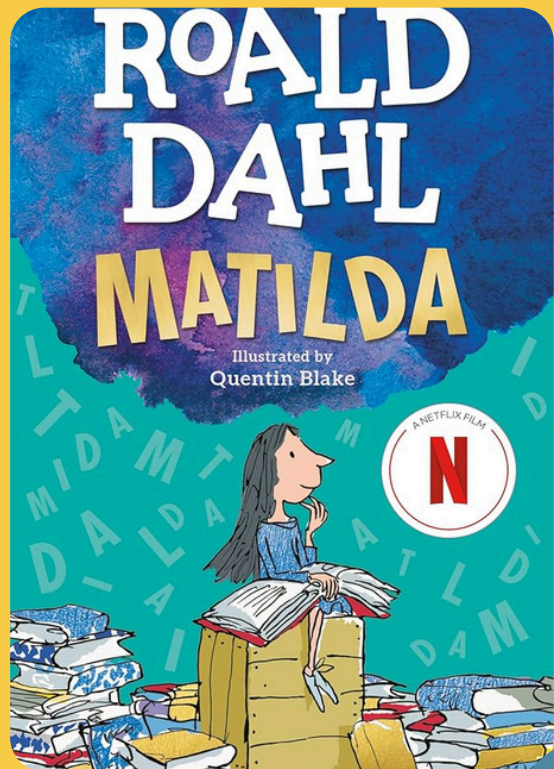


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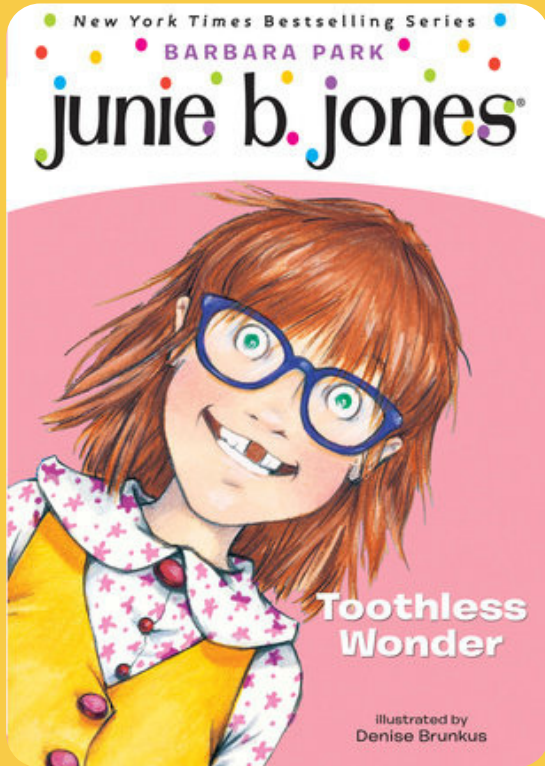


**Elephant and Piggie:
We Are in a Book!**
by Mo Willems

Matilda
by Roald Dahl

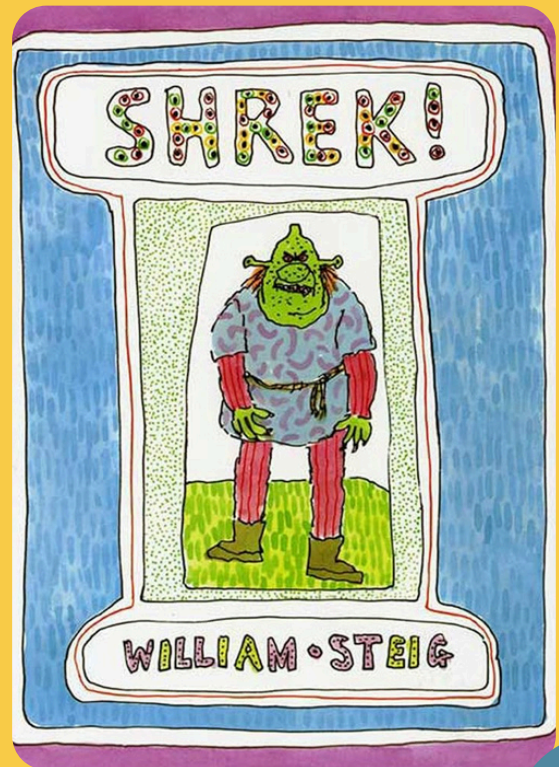


Recommended Reading



Junie B Jones
by Barbara Park

Shrek
by William Steig



Show Playlist

**Step into the world of Pure Imagination
with this special show playlist!**

**This playlist includes most of the wonderful
and whimsical songs from the show, so you
can keep singing them again and again!**



Thank you to our donors!

Philanthropy is giving (time, money, goods, or talents) to make the world a better place.

At First Stage we are so thankful to our donors, sponsors, volunteers, families, students and staff who help transform lives through theater!

First Stage's current donors:



How can you get involved?



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**Bring First
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**Take an
Academy class**

**Tell your
friends about
First Stage**

First Stage Staff Feature!

Academy Presents: Pure Imagination is celebrating everything First Stage. This feature highlights some of the amazing people who make First Stage the magical place it is.

Jim Wnuczek.....	pg. 44
Patron Services Manager	
Brinn Hill.....	pg. 45
Education Director	
Hannah Esch.....	pg. 46
K-4 and Next Steps Manager	
Elizabeth Anderson.....	pg. 47
Associate Director of Development	

Get to know Jim Wnuczek



1. What do you do at First Stage? How long have you worked here?

a. I am the Patron Services Manager at First Stage. I am in charge of everything involved with ticketing the shows. I will create the shows in our Tessitura ticketing system and help people find the perfect seats for their price range and party size. I've worked with First Stage for 13 years now.

2. What is your favorite First Stage memory?

a. There are so many great memories, but I think my favorite was helping create the partnership we have with Autism United. I have a niece that is autistic and am aware of the challenges involved to simply allow all children the chance to enjoy a show and be swept away in its magic. I hear such positive and remarkable stories from parents that attend our sensory friendly productions.

3. If you could see any First Stage show again, what show would it be? Why?

a. It will always be Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer for me. I grew up loving the animated classic and between the costumes, sets and wonderful casting, it makes me feel like I'm stepping into that world.

4. Why should kids join First Stage's Theater Academy?

a. Each year I watch the children gain confidence and learn to conquer the fears most of us faced when we were younger, like public speaking. Once you discover who you can be, your world opens in so many ways.

Get to know Brinn Hill



Ms Brinn as an
Academy Student!

1. What do you do at First Stage? How long have you worked here?

- a. I'm the Education Director at First Stage. That means I run the Education department, manage the teaching artists, oversee curriculum development and so much more! I've worked at First Stage for 9 years. This is my 10th year! But I've been at First Stage for more than 20 years; I started as an Academy student when I was 10!

2. What is your favorite First Stage memory?

- a. I have so many! I LOVED playing Cordelia from King Lear in Shakespeare class when I was an FM4. When I taught my first solo workshop at Pilgrim Lutheran about First Stage's production of Welcome to Bronzeville! It was so much fun! Seeing my niece in her first Academy class last summer! And seeing The Pigeon Gets a Big Time Holiday Extravaganza and meeting Mo Willems with my nephews was pretty awesome!

3. If you could see any First Stage show again, what show would it be? Why?

- a. Perseus Bayou (The Search for the Cajun Medusa)! I really like Greek Mythology, and it was so much fun to see this reimagining of Greek Myths with my friends! There was a song in the show that my friend and I sang all of the time in middle school!

4. Why should kids join First Stage's Theater Academy?

- a. It's fun! You get to learn new things, meet new friends, sing, dance, and act! You learn so many skills that will benefit you as an actor and as a person. I had no idea that taking an Academy class when I was 10 would be the beginning of a career in theater, but it was what kicked off my journey as a theater educator!

Get to know Hannah Esch



1. What do you do at First Stage? How long have you worked here?

- a. I am the K-4th Grade and Next Steps Manager for First Stage's Theater Academy. I have been with First Stage for 2 years and 4 months.

2. What is your favorite First Stage memory?

- a. Leading Beginning of Day with my 3rd - 4th grade students!

3. If you could see any First Stage show again, what show would it be? Why?

- a. Goosebumps! I love spooky season and seeing Goosebumps was very nostalgic for me. It was such a fun, silly and spooktacular show!

4. Why should kids join First Stage's Theater Academy?

- a. Kids should join First Stage's Theater Academy because:
 - i. Everyone is free to be themselves - we do not tolerate bullying of any kind and we welcome everyone as they are.
 - ii. We have young people coming to First Stage from all across the state of WI and sometimes around the world! Our students get to make new friends and build an expansive community.
 - iii. Lastly, and bestly, our students learn incredible life skills through stage skills. Not every student wants to become a Broadway star, but the skills we learn at First Stage are beneficial no matter what your future holds!

Get to know Elizabeth Anderson



1. What do you do at First Stage? How long have you worked here?

- a. Hi! I am the Associate Director of Development and I have worked at First Stage for 5 years. I also participated in Theater Academy when I was younger.

2. What is your favorite First Stage memory?

- a. There are so many wonderful memories that I could share, but one of my favorites was traveling with members of our Young Company to the Utah Shakespeare Festival where they took first place! This annual pilgrimage is very special for the group we lovingly call "Team Yorick" because it is an opportunity for them to share their passion for Shakespeare with other like-minded young people. It is hard to describe the palpable artistic energy that is present during that weekend!

3. If you could see any First Stage show again, what show would it be? Why?

- a. Although it just closed last spring, I would love to see Disney's Frozen again. I was blown away by the incredible work of our artists, craftspeople, actors, and crew. Taking on such a large production on a small stage like the Todd Wehr Theater was a herculean feat!

4. Why should kids join First Stage's Theater Academy?

- a. I can confidently say that I would not be the person I am today without my First Stage Theater Academy experiences. For me, the impact of the training is perfectly embodied in the Theater Academy cheer (which I still say to myself sometimes) - "I can't is not in my vocabulary! I take risks! I conquer my fears! I am not afraid to lead!" Confidence, leadership, empathy, and hard work are all skills that I learned here through the magic of theater. First Stage is a place where everyone is honored for exactly who they are. Young people's experiences, perspectives, and stories are at the center of what we do and are the heartbeat of this organization.