THEATREWORKS USA

SKIPPY JON JONES IN SNOW WHAT?

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DEC 4 9:15 am and 11:15 am
WELCOME TO THE HOP
A performance needs an audience, so be prepared to play your part!

THEATER ETIQUETTE
When entering the Hopkins Center, show consideration for all those sharing the building by remaining quiet and respectful in common areas.

Be aware and use quiet voices. Remember that live theater differs greatly from watching television or movies or attending a sporting event. Live performers can hear and see you and are easily distracted by any talking or moving around in the audience. Even the smallest sounds can be heard throughout the theater, so it’s best to be quiet so that everyone can enjoy the performance.

Applause is the best way to show your enthusiasm and appreciation!

Important things to remember: Backpacks, food, drink, and gum are not allowed in the theater. Please turn off all cell phones and note that recording the performance or taking any photos is strictly prohibited. Hats off! It is respectful to remove hats during your time in the theater.

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS
Be prepared and arrive early. You should arrive at the theater 30 to 45 minutes before the show. Allow for travel time, parking, and trips to the restroom. You should be in your seat at least 15 minutes before the performance begins.

Have a head count. On the day of the performance be sure to have an accurate head count of students, chaperones, and teachers.

Staying for lunch? Please call 603.646.2010 no later than one week in advance of the show to make a reservation for lunch. The day of the show, bring lunches in marked boxes and give them to a Hop staff member. Lunches will be ready for you after the show in Alumni Hall.

Photo Policy. The Hopkins Center may take photographs during the performance for use on our website or on promotional materials. If you or your students do not wish to be photographed, please see a Hop staff member.

The Show Must Go On! We do not cancel events due to inclement weather. Performances will only be canceled if the artist is unable to reach the theater. Schools will be notified by phone if the performance has been cancelled. We do not issue refunds for weather-related cancellations; please feel free to fill empty seats with other school or community members.

This study guide was created for you by the Outreach & Arts Education team. To download copies of this study guide, see additional resources for this event, or view past study guides, please visit: www.hop.dartmouth.edu/outreach.

ENJOY THE SHOW!
Hopkins Center Outreach Department:
Stephanie Pacheco, Outreach Manager
Mary Gaetz, Outreach Coordinator
Erin Smith, Outreach Coordinator

The Hopkins Center Outreach & Arts Education department embodies the Hop’s mission to “ignite and sustain a passion for the arts.” It provides Dartmouth, the community and beyond rare personal contact with artists and a broad context for the performing arts. Unveiling the creative process of extraordinarily diverse artists, Outreach programs touch more than 14,000 lives each year.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Hopkins Center opened in 1962.
- The Hopkins Center was designed by Wallace Harrison, architect of Lincoln Center and the United Nations Building in New York City.
- The first three rows of The Moore Theater are on an elevator that goes eleven feet below ground to create an orchestra pit and can also be raised to the height of the stage to make it larger.
- In The Moore Theater, the area over the stage, called the “fly loft,” is 63 feet tall.
ABOUT THE COMPANY

Based in New York City, the mission of Theatreworks USA is to create, produce and provide access to professional theater for young and family audiences nationwide, including disadvantaged youth and under-served communities. Since its founding in 1961, it has presented more than 90 million children and their families with opportunities to enjoy theatrical productions in 49 states and Canada. Theatreworks USA has a distinguished history of not only providing young audiences with their first taste of the performing arts, but also giving young actors, writers, directors and designers an early opportunity to work in this field. Approximately 16 shows tour each season from Theatreworks USA’s repertoire of 133 plays and musicals.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Judy Schachner grew up in Boston, Massachusetts, and as a child she loved to draw pictures and make up stories about the characters she drew. She attended the Massachusetts College of Fine Arts and earned a degree in illustration. After graduation she worked as an illustrator for Hallmark and other greeting card companies. She now lives with her family, which includes two daughters, a dog and two Siamese cats, in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. In addition to all the Skippyjon Jones stories (see Additional Resources for a full list), she writes stories about her family’s adventures and illustrates books for other authors. Her books have won the Nebraska Golden Sower Award and the E. B. White Read Aloud Award. The Skippyjon Jones series has inspired a line of books for younger children, including Skippyjon Jones, Color Crazy, and Skippyjon Jones, 1-2-3.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the bravest of them all? Skippyjon Jones, the Siamese cat who pretends he’s a Chihuahua, of course! While his mama reads his sisters the story of Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, Skippy bounces on his big boy bed and heads off for the real Snow White adventure in his closet. There—as his alter ego Skippito Friskito—he teams up with his friends the Seven Chimichangos to rescue the beautiful princess, Nieve Qué, who has been frozen in a large block of ice by a witch. To get to her, Skippito and the Chimichangos must battle the fire-breathing dragon. In the end, one icy kiss is all that stands between Skippito and the princess—but he does not want to do it! Will the dragon win? Will the princess be in a block of ice forever? Or will Skippito save the day!?
CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND: PLAYING MANY PARTS

Actor is the word used to describe a person who performs in a play, musical, movie or on a television show. Actors use their voice, body and imagination to bring a character in a story to life. In a musical like Skippyjon Jones: Snow What, the actors need to be able to sing, dance and say the words that have been written for their characters. It is the actor’s job to help the audience understand the story by being believable in the role he or she plays.

Theatreworks USA often performs plays and musicals with fewer actors than characters, so one actor may play two or more different characters. When an actor plays more than one role in a play, he or she must use his or her voice and body in a variety of different ways so the audience does not get confused. At the performance, listen carefully to the way the actors change their voices depending on what character they are playing. Watch to see how they walk or move differently. They may also change all or part of their costume or use props to help show which character they are playing. Another important thing that helps actors play multiple roles is the audience. The imagination of the audience members is very important. The actors use their imaginations, and if the audience members use their imaginations also, then the show is a success!

SPANISH/ENGLISH VOCABULARY

When Skippyjon turns into Skippito Friskito he speaks some Spanish, the language spoken in Mexico. Here are some of the Spanish words from this story.

Amigo (uh-MEE-go) - friend
Besos (BEY-sos) - kisses
Bruja (BREW-hah) - witch
Bueno (BWAY-noh) - good
Cama (KAH-Ma) - bed
Corazón (core-ah-SAHHN) - heart
Cubito de hielo (COO-bee-toe duh YEA-low) – little cube of ice
Drágon (dra-GONE) - dragon
Espejo (es-SPEH-hoe) - mirror
Fuego (FWAY-go) - fire
Gatito (gah-TEE-toe) - kitten
Grande (GRAHN-day) - large
Hueso (way-SO) - bone
Leche (LEH-chey) - milk
Mañana (man-NHYAN-nah) - tomorrow
Muchacho (moo-CHA-cho) - boy
Muy (moo-eee) - very
Nada (NAH-dah) - nothing
Nieve Qué (nee-EV-ay kay) - Snow What
Ocho (OH-cho) - eight
Pantalones (PAHN-tah-LOW-nays) - pants
Pelota (pay-LOW-tah) - ball
Poquito (po-KEE-toe) - little, short
Princesa (prin-SESS-ah) - princess
Salchichas (sal-CHEE-chas) - sausages
Señor (say-NYOR) - Mr., sir
Silla (SEE-yah) - chair or seat
Tío (TEE-oh) - uncle
Zapato (za-PAH-toe) - shoe

Skippyjon uses many words that are made to sound like they are Spanish, but are really just English words with the suffix –ito, which shows that something is small, young, or that the speaker feels affection.

Examples:
Smooch-ito
Witch-ito
Snow-ito
Pooch-itos
A Chihuahua (SH-wah-wah) is a breed of dog that originated in Mexico and is named for the Mexican state Chihuahua. The dog Chihuahua, with large ears and eyes, is the smallest of all the dog breeds, but the state of Chihuahua is the biggest state in Mexico!

A Siamese cat is a breed of cat that is thought to have originally come from the East Asian country of Thailand. In Thailand, it is known as Wichian Mat, which means “Moon Diamond.” Siamese cats are one of the most popular breeds in North America.
LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

USE YOUR IMAGINATION (GRADES PRE-K-1)

Skippyjon uses the simple toys and items he has in his room to pretend that he is Skippito Friskito, a sword fighter off on an adventure. Use your imagination and the objects around you to create costumes, characters and scenes.

1. Ask students to think back over the story and remember the items from Skippyjon’s room that play a part in his adventure (his tights and his dragon toy, for example). How were this items used to tell the story?
2. Gather a few objects from the classroom that can serve safely as props—curtains, pillows, cardboard boxes, etc.
3. Practice using your imagination to pretend that the object is something else. Sit in a circle and pass one object from child to child. Have each child “show” and then “tell” how they are using the object. For instance, one might put a cardboard box on her head and then say, “It’s a cowboy hat.”
4. Challenge the students by having them mime an activity with one of the objects. The rest of the class can try to guess the activity (“You’re knitting!”), the character being portrayed (“You’re a cowboy!”) or the location of the activity (“You’re in a library!”).

SCIENCE ON ICE (GRADES 1-3)

Skippyjon loves ice. Try this experiment: put an ice cube in a glass of water and lay the end of a piece of string on it. Let string remain on cube for two minutes and observe what happens—are you able to remove the string from the ice? Next, take some salt (stir in a few drops of food coloring if you want to make it easier to see), sprinkle it on an ice cube and place the cube in the water. Place string on cube and repeat waiting and observation—are you able to remove the string from the ice? Compare and contrast these two experiments. Why do you think you got the results you did?

EXTENSION: Research the way salt interacts with ice and other forms of water. Why is the ocean salty? What happens to salt when water turns to steam? What other ways do ice and salt interact in the world around us?

FAIRY TALES 2.0 (GRADES 1-3)

In Skippyjon Jones: Snow What, what are some of the similarities between Skippyjon’s story and the story of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs? What are some of the differences? Talk together about what makes a fairy tale. What kinds of characters are in fairy tales? Where do these stories take place? Read or tell another traditional fairy tale to the class. As a class, brainstorm some alternate events and endings for the fairy tale. Pick one alternate ending and use it as a starting off point for a “What Happens Next” fairy tale. Have each student illustrate and write their own version of what happens next in this new version of the tale.

VOCABULARY

Breed: a specific group of animals that look and act alike
Character: a person or animal portrayed in a play, musical, book or movie by an actor
Costume: clothes worn to make a person look like a character
Degree: an award given by a college or university showing that a person has completed his or her course of study

Props: short for properties; items used by characters on stage to help tell their story
Repertoire: several plays or musicals which are prepared and ready to perform
Role: an individual part in a play, musical, opera, film or other performance
PRE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- When Skippyjon Jones opens his closet door, he imagines that he is travelling to a magical forest. What adventure would you go on in your imagination when you open the closet door?
- Has your imagination ever gotten you in trouble? When is it good to use your imagination? When is it important not to imagine things?
- You will hear some Spanish words spoken in the play. What Spanish words do you already know? In which countries do people speak Spanish?
- Discuss types of cats and dogs. In the story there are Siamese cats and Chihuahua dogs. What other kind of cat and dog breeds do you know?
- Who has a cat or a dog for a pet? Describe its behavior. Does it ever act like a human? Does it ever act like another kind of animal?

POST PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- How was the performance similar to the book Skippyjon Jones: Snow What? What differences did you notice?
- What Spanish words did you recognize? What words did you not know?
- Most of the play takes place in Skippyjon’s imagination. Which parts are Skippyjon’s “real life” and which are his imagination? What other books have you read that take place in the character’s imagination (e.g. Where the Wild Things Are)?
- Why do you think Skippyjon likes to pretend he is a different animal? How does he feel about his family? What do they think of him?
- How did you tell the difference between the different actors on stage? How many different characters did each actor play? How could you tell which character they were playing? What was your favorite character? Why?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Theatreworks USA:
http://www.theatreworksusa.org/

Judy Schachner’s books:
- Skippyjon Jones
- Skippyjon Jones in the Doghouse
- Skippyjon Jones in Mummy Trouble
- Skippyjon Jones and the Big Bones
- Skippyjon Jones, Lost in Space
- Skippyjon Jones, Class Action
- Skippyjon Jones, Cirque de Ole
- Skippyjon Jones, Snow What
- Willy and May
- Mr. Emerson’s Cook
- I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Pie
- The Grannyman
- Yo, Vikings!
- How the Cat Swallowed Thunder
- Dewey Bob

Learn about author Judy Schachner and see her sketchbooks:
http://www.judithbyronschachner.com/

Play games, watch videos, color pictures, and download a curriculum guide:
http://www.skippyjonjones.com/

Other books with characters who use their imagination:
- Aunt Molly’s Attic by Breann M. George
- Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
- Frederick by Leo Lionni
- Not a Box By Antoinette Portis

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