ELEPHANT AND PIGGIE’S

mon MAR 20 9:15 & 11:15 am

We Are in a Play!
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!

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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 PERFORMANCE

This performance is a Kennedy Center for the Arts commission, adapted from the Elephant & Piggie books by Mo Willems. It is a musical, meaning the characters sing and dance to help tell the story. Many people helped to create this performance. The script—the words that the characters speak—and lyrics—the words the characters sing—were written by Mo Willems. The music was written by Deborah Wicks La Puma. Jerry Whiddon directed the performance; the director makes most of the important decisions. All of the dancing in the show was created by choreographer (kor-ee-AH-grah-fer) Jessica Hartman. As the set designer, James Kronzer created how things look on the stage, and Kathleen Geldard planned and helped create the costumes, what the actors wear on stage. You will see five actors on stage performing the characters of Elephant, Piggie and the Squirelles (skwir-ELS), three squirrels who are friends of Elephant and Piggie. Many people worked hard and used their imaginations to create this performance.

THE STORY

The Story: An elephant named Gerald and a pig named Piggie are best, best, bestus friends. But Gerald worries that something could go wrong that would end their friendship. Piggie is not worried at all. She is even happier and more excited than usual. That’s because she and Gerald are invited to a party hosted by the Squirrelles, three singing squirrels who love to have a good time. The party is just the beginning of the adventure. Gerald and Piggie go on to solve problems together, sing and dance, make each other laugh, share their favorite things, get mad and sad with each other and even teach the audience the “Flippy Floppy Floory” dance!

The story of the play is a combination of six Elephant and Piggie books:

I Am Invited to a Party!
Listen to My Trumpet!
I Am Going!
Should I Share My Ice Cream?
I Love My New Toy!
We Are in a Book!
ABOUT THE COMPANY
Since 1992, Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences on Tour has been a leader in bringing imaginative and original works to communities around the nation. In the program’s 19 year history, 43 tours have played in hundreds of cities in 49 states as well as parts of Canada. More than 2 million children, teachers and parents have been part of these audiences. Many of the students who see these productions may never have the chance to visit the nation’s performing arts center, but are still able to experience the professionalism and talent that has become the trademark of Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences. The tours begin with a fully mounted production at the Kennedy Center for Washington, D.C. metropolitan area audiences, then the shows are re-worked to go out on the road. Many works are specifically commissioned by the Kennedy Center and affiliates in order to contribute to the development of new plays and musicals for young audiences. It is their belief that supporting the creation of new works for young audiences is critical to the ongoing revitalization of the field.

Three actors play the The Squirrelles

Three actors play the The Squirrelles

Elephant Gerald, Piggie and the Squirrelles sing songs, including one about going to a fancy dress pool party.

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (often shortened to “Kennedy Center”) opened in 1971 in Washington D.C. near the Lincoln Memorial. The center hosts over 3000 events a year for around two million people and is home to the National Symphony Orchestra, the Susanne Farrell Ballet and the Washington National Opera.

The Kennedy Center
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mo Willems has written and drawn pictures for 24 *Elephant and Piggie* books so far and lots of other books, including *Knuffle Bunny* and a series of books starring a cantankerous pigeon. Mo says, “When I was a kid, I wanted to draw and be funny.” Today, Mo lives in Massachusetts with his family and they like to draw together every night at dinner time. Mo’s first book was *Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* Before deciding to write children’s books, Mo wrote for *Sesame Street*, the Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon. His books and television writing have won many awards.

Watch Mo cook some silly soup at https://youtu.be/c8cYF_O9_hA

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

It would be fun to have a real elephant and pig onstage but it is also fun to play pretend. In this performance, the actors pretend to be Gerald, Piggie and the Squirrelles. They use their bodies, voices and imaginations to show the audience how an elephant, pig and squirrels might act if they had voices and bodies like us and loved things like fancy dress pool parties. Unlike animals, actors can dance, sing and talk. To become their animal characters, the actors will change their voices and movements. They will put on costumes, like a gray suit for Gerald and a pink dress for Piggie. The audience is also an important part of the show. They bring their eyes to watch, their ears to listen and—most importantly—their imaginations. When they see something funny, they can laugh. When they see something they like, they can smile. Near the end of the show, the audience also gets to sing along with Elephant, Piggie and the Squirrelles. So even though the audience does not talk during the show, they will get to use their voices to sing!

WORDS, WORDS, WORDS

There might be a few words in the performance that are new—here are a few to learn before you arrive at the Hop:

**Bestus (BEH-stuss):** a word made up by Gerald that means something is the very best

**Unintended consequence:** things that happen might surprise you

**Pachyderm (PAK-uh-durm):** a thick-skinned animal like an elephant or hippopotamus

**Swine (sweyen):** a short-haired animal with a curly tail and hooves, like a pig

**Impossible:** a made-up word Gerald uses when he means not possible or impossible

**Contingency (cuhn-TIN-jen-see):** something that might happen

**Sty (steye):** a fenced area, usually for pigs

**Manipulate (mah-NIH-pew-layt):** to change what people do or the way something happens

Piggie and Elephant Gerald dance and sing during the performance.
Elephant and Piggie’s We Are in a Play is a musical, which means that, in addition to talking to each other, the characters sing songs. The songs tell you a lot about the character and what is happening in the story. During the performance, watch and listen for how the performers communicate through their actions and words when they sing these songs:

“Lucky to See You!”
“Swimmy! Fancy!”
“Don’t Go”
“Ice Cream Hero”

“The performance uses recorded music which means the musicians do not have to be in the theater for us to hear their wonderful music—it will be played over speakers. The actors sing along to the music as it plays during the performance. As you listen, you will hear five instruments being played in the recorded music: piano, drums, clarinet, saxophone and the double bass—the largest instrument in the string instrument family. Onstage in the performance, a trumpet is played. Not Gerald’s elephant trunk, but a real trumpet! A trumpet is made out of brass or other metal tubing that loops around and opens up into a bell shape. Air is blown into the mouthpiece over the lips (to “buzz” them) and three keys help make the different sounds when they are pressed down or let up.

Can you spot the trumpet when it comes onstage?
LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

THE CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF TOYS (PREK-K)
Have students draw a picture of their favorite toy—a stuffed animal, game, book, action hero or heroine, doll, truck, etc. Pair students together so they can trade pictures. Have each student take a few minutes to explain to the other why this is their favorite toy, then return to their desks with the other student’s toy drawing. Explain that the drawings represent important items and students are going to practice taking care of them for one day. Make a list together of what is important to know when taking care of someone’s favorite toy. Discuss ways to make sure the “toy” is returned in the same condition it was received. The next day, trade back the toy drawings and discuss how it is the same or different from when it was first traded. Talk about how it would have felt if they had traded the real toy. How was this activity the same? How was it different?

EXPLORING CHARACTERS (GRADES K-2)
Elephant, Piggie and the Squirellers are all great characters, in their books and on the stage. With students seated on the floor or in their desks, read students an Elephant and Piggie story or stories of your choice. Focus on how the faces of the characters look and talk about the feelings the characters experience in the story. Take a moment to explore a variety of emotions using facial expressions. Next have them incorporate arms/head/hands motion to show the emotion (no talking, just movement). Finally, standing up and in their space (designate how much room they have), explore full body movement and facial expressions that reflect those of the characters from the book. After exploring movement, ask students to decide on one movement and one facial expression that are their favorites. One at a time, have student come to the front of the classroom or to the middle if seated in a circle and share their movement and facial expression. Can other students guess what they are feeling without their words? Talk about how the shape of the body and face help tell a story without using voices. What does the way a person moves tell us? Why is that important?

TELL A STORY, DRAW A STORY (GRADES 1-2)
With everyone sitting in a circle, explain that students are going to make up their own story, one word at a time, working together. Ask students for ideas, characters or themes that they want to be in their story (or pre-select these based on curriculum). Going around the circle, students each contribute one word based on the theme; coach them in their choices as needed. Tell or read back the short story they just wrote. Next, have students each contribute a sentence as they go around the circle, writing each down. Read back the story for all to hear. After completing the story, students may return to their desks to draw their sentence, creating an illustration for that part of the story. Come back to the circle to have each student share their picture as the story is read one more time. Staple pictures together to make a book for the entire class to share!
PRE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Why do you think an elephant and pig—two very different animals—are friends? What is different about you and your friend(s)? What is the same?
- Read or listen to an Elephant and Piggie book. What words would you use to describe Elephant Gerald? What words would you use to describe Piggie?
- Look at the list of songs provided in the “Music” section. What do you think these songs might be about? How do you think they might sound?

POST PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What did Gerald and Piggie do that made them friends? What do you think makes a good friend?
- In what ways did Gerald, Piggie and the Squirelles use song and dance to tell a story? How could you use song and dance to tell a story?
- Did you think the actors did a good job playing an elephant, pig and squirrels? Why or why not? How would you choose to play one or more of these characters?

VOCABULARY

**Adapted**: change something so it works in a new way or for a new purpose

**Affiliate**: a person or organization that works together with another organization

**Cantankerous**: grumpy, irritable

**Commission**: a work of art that a person or organization asked an artist to make for a specific purpose

**Metropolitan**: referring to a large, busy city

**Professionalism**: showing great skill and ability at doing an activity or job

**Revitalization**: to give new life to something

**Tour**: a journey made by performers in which they perform in several different towns

**Trademark**: something identified with a person or organization

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

- More Books by Mo Willems:
  - That Is Not a Good Idea
  - Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale
  - Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity
  - Hooray for Amanda and Her Alligator
  - Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs
  - Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed
  - Leonardo the Terrible Monster
  - Edwina, the Dinosaur Who Didn’t Know She Was Extinct
  - Don’t Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late
  - The Duckling Gets a Cookie?!?
  - The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog

- Get more information about the performance at:
  http://shawentertainment.com/the-kennedy-centers-elephant-and-piggie/

- Read more about Mo Willems at his website:
  http://www.mowillems.com/

- Learn how Mo Willem’s books became a musical in this video story from The Kennedy Center:

- Learn more about the Kennedy Center’s wonderful arts in education resources at:
  http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators.aspx?_ga=1.251082118.1670322302.1481214154