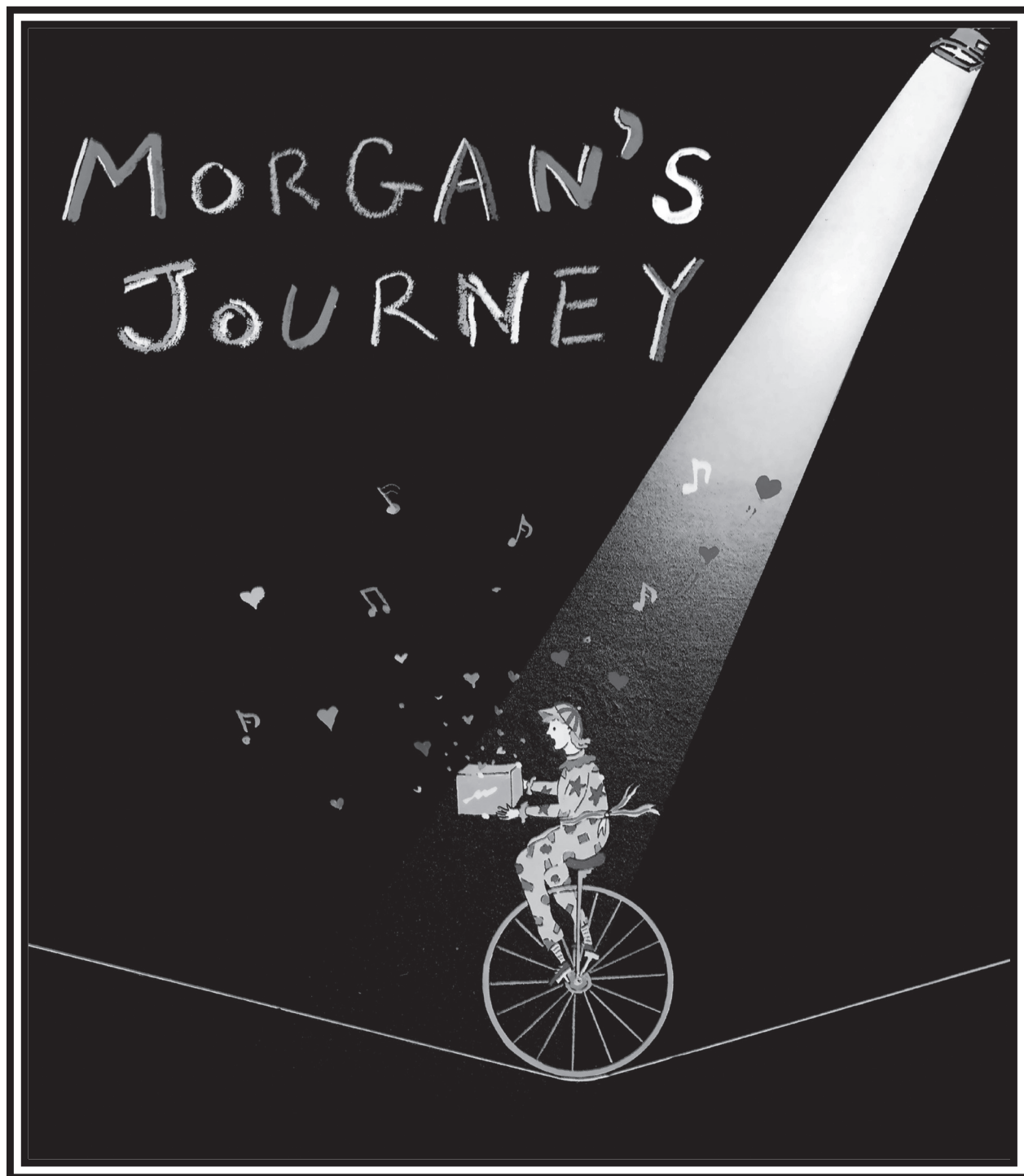


Seattle Children's Theatre

EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE



Morgan's Journey

Performed by Robert Morgan

Created by Robert Morgan and Director David S. Craig

OCT 21 - NOV 14, 2010

AGES 3-8

Grades PreK - 3

EALRs: Seeing the show and using our ERG will help teachers meet the following:

Reading: 2.1, 2.3, 2.4 Communication: 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1

Arts: 1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2 Writing: 1.1, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2

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BOOKLIST

For Children:

Clown Child
Amy Littlesugar

Funny Business: Clowning Around, Practical Jokes, Cool Comedy, Cartooning and More...
Helaine Becker and Claudia Davila

I Will Surprise My Friend!
Mo Willems

The Magician's Boy
Susan Cooper

Make Your Own Puppets
Anna-Marie D'Cruz

The Most Excellent Book of How to be a Puppeteer
Roger Lade

Rabbit's Gift: A Fable from China
George Shannon

One Shoe Blues
Sandra Boynton
Sock puppets help legendary bluesman B.B. King look for his missing shoe. Accompanying this picture book is a DVD featuring King singing "One Shoe Blues."

Books for Adults Working with Children:

Creative Family: How to Encourage Imagination and Nurture Family Connections
Amanda Blake Soule

Making Make-Believe: Fun Props, Costumes and Creative Play Ideas
MaryAnn F. Kohl

Parent's Guide to Storytelling: How to Make Up New Stories and Retell Old Favorites
Margaret Read MacDonald
Local Storyteller, Margaret Read MacDonald, offers advice and great techniques for learning and sharing traditional as well as original stories with family and friends.

*Prepared by Pamela LaBorde
from Seattle Public Library Ballard Branch*

MORGAN'S JOURNEY

SYNOPSIS

This internationally acclaimed play is a captivating exploration of joyous, yet challenging, human experiences, complete with a unique opportunity for active audience participation.

From the moment of his birth, audiences follow Morgan the Clown on a journey of self-discovery. Together they celebrate his birthday and share his delight by opening the presents he receives. His presents include a simple sock puppet named Herkimer who becomes his companion. Through an experience common to many children, Morgan learns a valuable and moving lesson about love and the true meaning of friendship.

This production, with a creative drama post-play experience, is the perfect show to transition your child into the world of theatre.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Child development
Sharing
Friendship
Language
Learning
Movement
Puppetry
Selfishness
Materialism
Gifts

BIOGRAPHY

Robert Morgan has helped establish Canada as one of the world's foremost producers of theatre for young audiences. He has written more than twenty professionally produced plays, many of which have toured nationally and internationally, and has acted in and directed over forty productions. He has won the prestigious Chalmers Award for outstanding playwriting six times and four of his plays have won the Dora Mavor Moore award for best production. His work has received a total of ten Dora nominations and have been performed around the world.

In 2001, Robert founded the Children's Peace Theatre in Toronto, Canada. In its first three seasons, the Peace Theatre involved more than three hundred children, teenagers, adults and elders in active programs of training, workshops and performances. In his role as Artistic Director, Robert delivered two official presentations to the United Nations in New York at the 2002 Special Session on the Children of the World. The work of the Peace Theatre is part of a global movement reflected in the United Nations declaration that 2001-2010 is the decade for the establishment of "a culture of peace for the children of the world."

Prior to his work with the Peace Theatre, Robert formed Roseneath Productions in 1986 with David S. Craig in order to produce and tour his solo show *Morgan's Journey*. The play, which has become the longest-running touring play in Canadian history, has been called "a children's classic," and the company, which incorporated as Roseneath Theatre in 1993, has established an international reputation for producing plays of the highest quality for audiences of all ages.

Robert has planned, produced and presented large theatrical events nationally and internationally, most recently a celebration for more than 16,000 people at Lourdes, France. He produced and directed *The Circus of the Heart* with a cast of over 150 performers, co-produced and co-wrote *One Heart at a Time* presented at the Winter Garden and Markham Theatres in Toronto with a cast of 60, and officially thanked Mother Teresa when she spoke in Toronto. In the summer of 2000, Robert was invited to Belfast to direct a play he co-authored, *A Time for Magic*, for an international festival of the arts for children. He has prepared and performed at youth events across Canada, given workshops and made many appearances as a keynote speaker.

Robert has been a strong advocate for arts in education, committed to bringing performances to schools and non-traditional venues so that all children, particularly those who would not otherwise have the opportunity, are able to experience live theatre.

While continuing to perform in prestigious venues and at international theatre festivals throughout North America and the UK, Robert welcomes opportunities to perform in remote areas, which to date have included schools in all of the Canadian provinces and territories, prisons, churches, synagogues, Northern Cree communities on the shores of the James and Hudson Bays, Alaskan Villages on the Arctic Ocean, and a one-room school in Black Tickle, Labrador.



CHILD DEVELOPMENT: THE BASICS

When we talk about child development, what are we discussing? Tips and tricks to get kids to learn to read? Behavior modification advice for parents with children who “act up”? Getting our young ones ready to enter kindergarten? On the simplest level, the answer to all of that is yes. But more than just a collection of tips and tricks, advice and curricula, early child development is an investment in the future. We want our children, all children, to be happy and healthy and have the best possible opportunity for success later in their lives. These happy, healthy, successful children grow into business leaders, our work force, policy makers, scientists and the very people who become responsible for our future.

In their report, “The Science of Early Childhood Development,” the National Scientific Council Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University looks at the cumulative scientific research done on early childhood development over decades to give us a clear understanding of some core concepts of this process.

We must remember that our brains develop over time, beginning pre-birth and extending into adulthood. The sequence and structure of this building helps determine our aptitudes and attitudes. Additionally, skills are built from the ground up. That is to say, complex abilities are dependent on the mastery of simpler ones. A child must learn to recognize the sounds of his or her language before speaking it.



development, so when we engage in hours of cooing and smiling at a gurgling baby, this is a necessary function for the child’s healthy growth.

It is essential for parents, schools, and other professionals to pay attention to and deal with a child’s emotional needs as well as their academic ones to foster future school success as well as proper brain development. Our emotional, cognitive and social capacities are entwined in our brains, so the health and development of one area is essential to the growth of all. We can see this in classrooms where children from abusive homes have a hard time with their studies. If they don’t have an environment in which they

ACTIVITY/ DISCUSSION: PASS THE FACE

1. Teacher makes a face, and passes it to the next person
2. That person copies the face exactly, and passes it on to the next person.
3. Each person in the circle “holds the face” and when it gets to the last person, compare the face to the “original” face.

can concentrate and feel safe, how can they possibly learn their multiplication tables?

It is our responsibility, as adults, to keep stress out of the equation for our young ones so their brains and nervous systems are not adversely affected by such toxins. When a developing brain is affected by negative, or toxic, stress, “cortisol levels are increased and actual damage to the brain’s architecture can occur.”

As we watch and help our children develop, we are seeing our future citizens, leaders, and parents. We must focus on the building blocks of development in the early years, for these provide the skeleton on which all subsequent skills can develop; these can help our children grow into healthy, happy, successful adults.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDSHIP

It isn’t hard to imagine how much fun, laughter, and adventure we would miss in our lives if we didn’t have friends. In her essay, “The Art of Friendship,” middle school teacher Carolyn Sandlin-Sniffen writes, “All kids need a few good friends, not only for fun and companionship, but also to learn cooperation, empathy, honesty and other traits needed for healthy relationships.”

Having this social interaction helps individuals develop their interpersonal skills and provides them with a sense of belonging and security. According to Sandlin-Sniffen, “Regardless of age, socially adept people possess the following traits: ability to communicate feelings, opinions, and needs; understanding others’ feelings; responsibility to own up to mistakes; and an outlook on life that is positive, challenging and fun.”

Sometimes, due to circumstance or environment, children are not given the opportunity to make real friendships and thereby hone those interpersonal skills so important to us as adults. For example, a little girl with a new sibling may find sharing her toys difficult, as she may not have had practice doing such. However, as Morgan learns in our story, a true friend must think of others first, sharing themselves even if they don’t want to at the start.

Once Morgan learns this tricky concept, putting his friend before himself, his attitude becomes more positive. Morgan learns what it means to have companionship without self-interest, a very valuable lesson for us all.

The joy of friendship is something we all encounter in our lives, and it is essential for children as well as adults. It is one of life’s universal treasures; it is priceless. With true friendship, we gain confidence, happiness and laughter. It makes our hearts full.

ACTIVITY/DISCUSSION:

How would you describe Morgan’s personality at the beginning of the show? And at the end? Do you think Morgan really learned a lesson? What was it? Can a person truly change?

Have each student cut a piece of red construction paper in the shape of a heart, making sure it is big enough so you can write on it. On each heart, write “A friend is someone who...” and have them finish the statement with their own thoughts. Hang the hearts from the ceiling, on the walls, or on the desks.

CHILDREN AT PLAY



Open the door to a child at play and you enter a world where the simple act of putting on a hat or scarf allows the child to become anything from a cowboy to the cowboy's horse. The way children entertain themselves has been studied and discussed for years. Jean Piaget, an authority on child development, theorizes that children aged four to seven are in a stage of development called the intuitive period. Children in this stage will often use a particular

object to represent something entirely different from what it actually is. A teacup may start out as a teacup at a tea party, but may soon become another person enjoying an afternoon tea. Also during this period, children are drawn to and can relate more easily with stories that include fantasy coupled with anthropomorphism (attributing human characteristics to animals or things), much like Morgan does with his sock puppet Herkamur. Herkamur is an inanimate object that the audience must believe to be real.

The intuitive period is an ideal time in a child's cognitive development to stretch their creativity. Winifred Ward, a pioneer of child drama, said "drama comes to the door of school with every child," and in many pre- and elementary school classrooms teachers are using creative drama techniques to activate all types of curriculum areas. Creative drama in the classroom can be defined as an "improvisational, non-exhibitory, process-centered form of drama in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact and reflect upon human experiences." Teachers custom-make learning experiences to promote the utilization of the imagination in their students. Participants in creative drama have the opportunity to develop language and communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and creativity. Using drama in a classroom can be an exciting and motivating way to promote a positive self-concept, social awareness,

ACTIVITY: I CAN BE ANYTHING... ANYTHING I CAN BE... I CAN BE A

This exercise is a way to introduce creative drama in your classroom:

- The teacher (or leader) and students, with their hands in the air, repeat the words, "I can be anything...anything I can be."
- The teacher fills in the end of the saying. For example: "I can be anything...anything I can be...I can be a...mouse," which is the prompt for the students to become mice.
- The teacher freezes the action by putting his/her hands in the air, which is the prompt for the students to freeze all sound and movement and give their focus to the teacher.
- As soon as full focus is given a new round is started.
- After a few rounds, the teacher may add more descriptive prompts such as "I can be a...mouse who moves in slow motion."

empathy towards others, group cooperation, and an understanding of storytelling. Dorothy Heathcote, one of England's best-known educators, suggests that using this type of methodology in the classroom brings out what students already know, but don't know they know.

Outside the classroom, there are opportunities for students to explore creative drama at home and in organized classes at many theatre companies in the community. These programs tend to focus on understanding a story or creating a unique environment by having the students imitate and reenact. The students use imagination, movement, sensory skills and cooperation as ways of expressing themselves. The classes center on students as participants, not as performers.

FUN THINGS FOR YOUR CLASS TO DO WITH *MORGAN'S JOURNEY*

From the original Teaching Notes by Bridget Lynch

REFLECTIONS ON THE PLAY

1. How did the play make you feel?
Did you like how you felt? Why? Why not?
Was the heart a magic heart?
What made you think so/not?
Where did Morgan go on his journey?
What gift did Herkimer give Morgan?
How was Herkimer's gift different from Morgan's other gifts?
What happened to the heart at the end of the play?
Where did Morgan and Herkimer go at the end of the play?
2. Paint or draw your favorite part of the play.
Paint or draw a picture that expresses how you feel about the play.
3. Write a letter to Herkimer or Morgan.
You may want to tell them how you felt about them – or ask them questions about some special part of the play. Examples: Why doesn't Herkimer talk out loud? Why was Morgan alone on his birthday? Etc.
4. Write or discuss the next "scene" in the play – either alone or in small groups.
What do you think happened to Herkimer and Morgan after the play ended?
Act out your scene for the rest of the class.



FEELINGS

1. Think, for a moment, about the feelings of Morgan and Herkimer.
What emotion did Morgan feel when he opened his presents?
What feeling did Herkimer have for Morgan?
How did Herkimer and Morgan show their feelings?
List all the feelings on the board. Look at the list. Everyone think of times when you have had the same emotions. Share them.
2. Sit in a circle. One person volunteers to 'make a face' and tell what their feeling is. Pass the feeling on to the next person and have everyone take a turn around the circle. Have someone else with a different emotion volunteer. Take turns doing OPPOSITE feelings.
3. We are going to play some 'make believe'. Listen carefully and pay attention to how you FEEL.

Someone has just come into the room with a big double-scoop cone of your favorite ice cream. Everyone who feels happy – jump up!

You've just been told you can't go to a movie you've been wanting to see because you are too sick. Everyone who feels sad – sit down.

Your little brother rode your brand new bike and crashed it into a tree, bending the front wheel. Everyone who feels angry – stamp your feet.
Continue this game with different situations.

JOURNEY

1. What is a journey? Is there another word for journey?
What journeys have you taken?
What did you experience on your journey?
Write about your journey and what you did and learned.
2. Separate into groups of 4 or 5. You, as a group, are going on a journey. Decide who is going, what role each will play, where you are going, how you will get there, what happens on the way, etc.
3. What types of journeys are there?
Can we have an imaginary journey like a daydream?
Write about an imaginary journey. Remember, anything can happen. Use your imagination!
4. Pack a suitcase for a journey you plan to take.
What would you like to bring?
5. Write about where you hope your life journey will take you.

