

KidSeries Season 2019-20



Educator Study Guide

Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile (Fall 2019)
Bunny's Book Club (Winter 2020)
Neither (Spring 2020)

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Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile



Based on the book by Bernard Waber

Adapted by Christina Calvit

Music by George Howe

Directed by Amanda Link

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Introduction to the Student Matinee Program

Lifeline Theatre's award-winning adaptations of children's literature inspire a love of reading that will activate your students' imaginations and stay with them throughout their lives. Every year, Lifeline Theatre's KidSeries Student Matinee Program serves over 3,000 students, 40 schools, 129 classrooms, and 222 teachers with school-day performances of our season productions.

We encourage you to use this study guide to enrich your students' experience of *Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile* and enhance the educational value of the production. Please let us know what parts are helpful to you and where you would like additional materials. There is a teacher feedback form and student survey to copy for your class, and we hope you will take the time to let us know what you thought of both the show and the study guide. We do this work for you and your students, and we want to make it beneficial and user friendly!

Preparing for Your Field Trip

Before the Play: Discuss Appropriate Behavior

Have a discussion with your students about proper theatre etiquette. For example, it's okay to clap and laugh, but it's not okay to talk to your neighbor. Have students compare and contrast the difference between watching a movie and watching a play. Ask if students have been to a play before. If so, what play? What was the experience like? Talk about the concentration that performing in a play requires, and ask the students what they find distracting when they are trying to accomplish a task in front of people. How can they help the actors succeed and do a good job? Let students know that in plays, actors sometimes play several different characters, and change roles by simply swapping out costume pieces and altering their voices and bodies.

After the Play: Reflect on the Experience

Ask students if they enjoyed the play. Based on this experience, would they like to see other plays? If they've seen plays before, how did this play compare? What happened that they weren't expecting? How was seeing a play a different experience than seeing a movie?

Have the students write a review of the play. Encourage students to be specific about why they enjoyed a certain part of the play. If they liked a scene because it was funny, have them explain *why* it was funny, what the characters *did* or *said* that was funny, etc. Have the students draw a picture or make a collage of their favorite scene or character. Have them show their picture to the class and explain why that scene or character was their favorite. We invite you to send the reviews and pictures to Lifeline – we enjoy reading them and learn from student feedback.

Traditional Plays vs. Literary Adaptations

Lifeline Theatre's KidSeries productions are often musical adaptations of picture books and short stories for children. Sometimes the playwright is very faithful to the source material, and sometimes the original book is simply inspiration. We encourage you to discuss the elements of each version and compare/contrast the two both before and after you see the play.

Before the Play: Get to Know the Original Story* (see p. 6!)

Read the story to your students, or have them read the book themselves, before the production. After reading the book, discuss it with your students, using these questions as launch pads:

- Who are the characters in the story?
- What happens in the beginning of the story? The middle? The end?
- Is there a character in the story you don't like?
- What makes you dislike this character?
- How do you think he/she might be portrayed in the stage version?
- What do you think you will see on stage as the actors tell this story?
- How might the play be different from the story? How might it be the same?

Beginning, Middle and End

To encourage sequential thinking, have students act out the beginning, middle and end of the story. Split the students into three groups (or more, depending on the number of students in your class) and have one group enact the beginning, another group enact the middle, and the final group the end. Have the students watching the performances help the group to remember any parts they may have left out. Give the groups the chance to redo their performances, including any elements suggested by their classmates.

After the Play: Compare/Contrast the Story to the Play

- How were the book and the play different?
- How were the book and the play the same?
- What elements of the play surprised you?
- Which did you enjoy more, reading the book or watching the play?
- What was your favorite part of the play?
- Was that your favorite part of the book too?
- Were there any characters in the book that were not in the play, or vice versa?
- Why do you think the playwright added or subtracted certain parts?
- How would you describe the style of music in the show?

Jobs in the Theatre: Behind the Scenes

Before the Play: Prepare Your Students to Observe All Aspects of the Production

When we create a play at Lifeline, we have a community of artists working together to make a complete production. Ask students to be particularly observant during the performance for the parts of the show that are done by the various people listed below:

Playwright/Adaptor/Author – writes the play

Composer – writes the music for the show

Lyricist – writes the words (or “lyrics”) for the songs in the play

Director – directs the play - makes decisions about costumes, lights, sets, and what the actors do onstage

Choreographer – creates and teaches the actors the dances in the show

Lighting Designer – designs and hangs the lights for the show; designs lighting effects

Set Designer – designs and builds the scenery and props for the show

Sound Designer – designs and records the sound effects for the show

Costume Designer – designs and finds or makes the costumes for the show

Stage Manager – helps the director during rehearsals; sets props and scenery before each performance; runs the sound and lights during the performance

Actors – perform the play

After the Play: Discuss the Students’ Observations

Ask the students what they noticed about the “behind-the-scenes” jobs:

- How did the costume designer make the actors look like the characters they were playing?
- What about their costumes helped you to know what kind of people or animals they were?
- Did you have a favorite costume in the show? Which one? Why was it your favorite?
- If there were animal costumes, how did the costume designer create them so that they would look more like animals than people?
- What are some of the locations the play took place in?
- How did the set designer make the settings look realistic?
- What sound effects did you hear in the play? How did those sound effects help you to know what was happening in the play?
- Why do you think the composer chose the styles of music he did? What sorts of music would not make sense with the story?

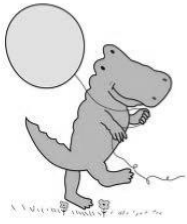
Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile **Synopsis**

Moving into a new apartment in New York City, the Primm family discovers a crocodile living in the bathtub. They find a note explaining that the crocodile is named Lyle, a performer who has played in some of the grandest theatres in the world. Lyle only eats Turkish caviar, and is actually quite friendly. The note is signed by Mr. Hector P. Valenti, who is nowhere to be seen. Over time, the Primms come to love Lyle, and he becomes one of the family. Lyle loves to fold clothes and play stickball with Joshua, the Primm's son. While Joshua is at school and Mr. Primm is at work, Lyle spends the day with Mrs. Primm, tagging along on all of her adventures.

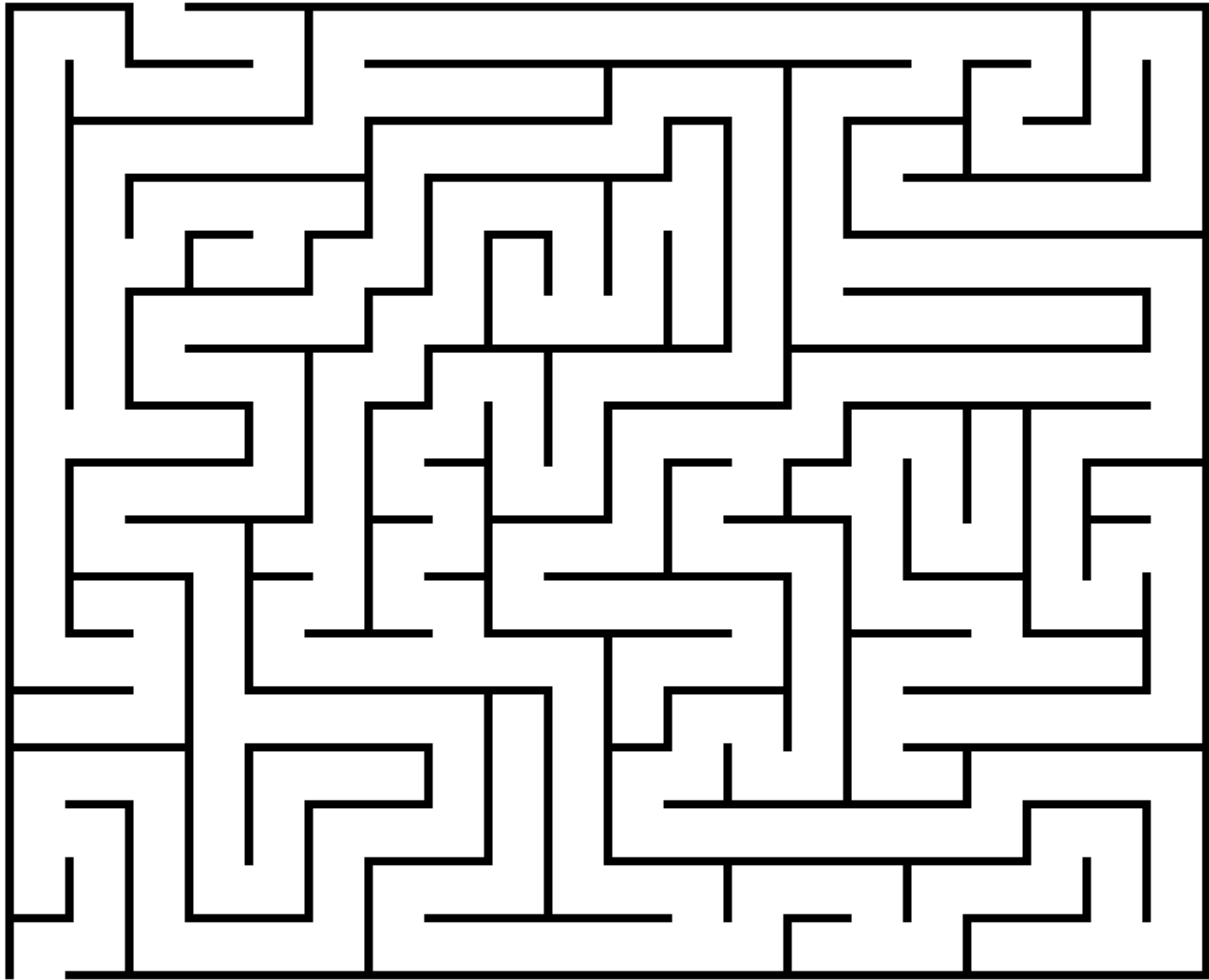
One day, Mrs. Primm and Lyle run into their neighbor, Mr. Grumps, who very much lives up to his name. Although most people adore Lyle, Mr. Grumps and his cat, Loretta, are fed up with his presence, and threaten to call the police to take Lyle to the zoo where he belongs. Mrs. Primm promises to keep Lyle with her at all times and manages to hold off Mr. Grumps for the time being. Lyle and Mrs. Primm, a little discouraged, head off to find some fun to cheer themselves up. They end up wandering around Macy's department store. At one point, they hear an announcement on the loudspeaker, and they realize that Mr. Grumps is actually employed by the store. Mrs. Primm and Lyle rush to leave, but before they reach the door, they run into Mr. Valenti, Lyle's previous owner and performance partner, who also happens to work at Macy's. Mr. Valenti goads Lyle into performing for the customers, and a disgruntled Mr. Grumps storms over. Angry that Mrs. Primm has broken their agreement, Mr. Grumps fires Mr. Valenti, and calls the police to have Lyle taken to the zoo. Mrs. Primm promises Lyle that she will get him out as soon as she can.

At the zoo, Lyle meets two crocodiles with very different lives than his pampered existence. They eat rabbits and fish, and sleep to pass the time. The distraught Primm family visits Lyle at the zoo, bringing him all of his favorite things. When they eventually have to go home, Lyle is once again left alone, until Mr. Valenti appears in the night to sneak him out. With dreams of continuing their careers as performers, Mr. Valenti tries to persuade Lyle into coming with him to Australia. Lyle is anxious to leave the zoo, so he reluctantly agrees. On the way to the airport, he and Mr. Valenti pass a house that is up in flames. Upon closer inspection, Lyle realizes it is Mr. Grumps house, who is trapped inside with Loretta. Lyle calls for help and goes inside to rescue them.

Lyle emerges with Mr. Grumps' cat, Loretta, and the police and Primm family arrive on the scene. Mr. Grumps declares that Lyle is the bravest crocodile in the world, and that he would love to have him as a neighbor again. After a very eventful day, Lyle ends up back with the loving Primm family, where he belongs.



HELP LYLE FIND
THE PRIMMS!



You made it! Great job!

Where are Lyle's Friends And Family Hiding?

O G B B R B T R R D C J Y F R
O N F C E U D H N E F W M C E
O N T A H D C N E R H M L N H
F U R O T C E H W R I T D D T
C W T Q O M E M T R E J O R A
I Z I V M J Q L P R O S R M F
N V F X E U V S E S T J A V I
W L T J L S R N H Y S A M P J
K Q P H I M D U B L N M B G O
J V W U D T A Q U F B B R O C
B F V G O Z A C H A E P O I J
G P U Z C M R P R I M M T S M
J K C Q O G Y Y S S K O H C L
S L M N R F E O Y Q U X E M Z
Z Y V V C Z R M Z M A O R F I

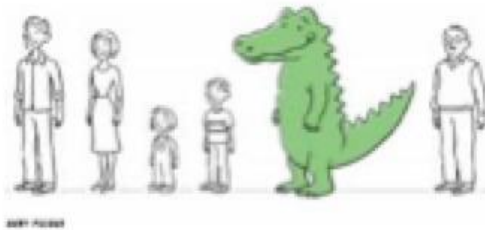
Words to Find:

CROCODILE
FATHER
HECTOR
JOSHUA

MRS. PRIMM
MR. PRIMM
MOTHER
BROTHER

FAMILY PORTRAITS

*Lyle lives with the Primms and is proud to call them his family.
Who are the members of your family? Can you draw a picture of
them here?*



MY FAMILY:

Practice Makes Perfect

Lyle is great at juggling and performing – but it took a lot of practice.

When have you had to practice something? Write about something that you have gotten good at by practicing it over and over. What was hard about learning how to do that thing? What did you do to get better at it?

Something I learned to do by practicing it over and over is _____

FURTHER CLASSROOM ADVENTURES

Drama Games relating to *Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile*

Once back in the classroom, we encourage you to maximize your students' experience at Lifeline by using drama to teach drama! In our residency program, we use theatre games to not only teach the basics of performance, but also to explore themes in the student matinees. Below are some games you can play with your class that touch upon some of the concepts conveyed in the story.

Family Portraits (for the theme of family)

Number of Players: Small Groups

Objectives: Physicality, Imagination, Character

How to Play: 5-8 students are brought to the front of the room, facing the audience. The teacher explains that they are going to be a family who is getting a group photograph taken. When the teacher says "1,2,3, click," the students must create a family pose with levels, making sure all faces can be seen, etc. Then ask students to use their imaginations to create family portraits using thematic prompts that will be given, such as: "The Sick Family! 1,2,3, Click!" or "The Paranoid Family! 1,2,3, Click!" Other ideas: The Sad, Terrified, Circus, Daredevil, Artistic, Exhausted, Bully, and Zoo Families.

Curricular Connection: Can be used to perform any characters from literature read in class.

Mirror (for the performed act between Hector and Lyle)

Number of Players: Partners

Objectives: Physicality, Focus, Listening

How to Play: Students are put into pairs, and instructed to find their own space in the room. They should face each other and determine which player will be Player A and which will be Player B. Then, Player A begins slowly, silently, moving his body, and Player B must be the mirror, following his actions exactly, creating the illusion of the mirror. At the teacher's prompting, Player B then leads, and Player A follows. Urge students to move slowly, in ways that their partners can follow, working together to create the illusion of the mirror. Eventually, designate "no leader," so that both players are leading and following simultaneously, or switching back and forth on their own.

Traveling Through The Door (for the traveling adventure)

Number of Players: Small Groups

Objectives: Ensemble, Environment, Physicalizing

How to Play: Slips of paper with names of environments must be made in advance, which can be done with the students. Split the class into three groups, each led by a teacher. Each group draws a piece of paper with a secret location that they will "travel through" as performers for the audience. Examples: Edge of a volcano, dark scary cave, New York City, etc. The students have two minutes to practice performing their given environment together (which can be just physical, or with vocalization, as well). Then, each group performs for each other. Remember not to overrehearse! The point of this game is to react in the moment in a given environment. Each performing group must enter the environment they are traveling through by opening an imaginary door in unison. Students should be encouraged to play people, objects, and elements of their selected environment. After each performance, the audience members will have the chance to try and guess where the students were and why they thought that was so.

Curricular Connection: Can be used to play out any environments in fiction and non-fiction texts studied in class.

Student Review of *Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile*

By: _____

I give this play a (circle the number of stars): ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

My favorite part of the play was _____

because _____

_____.

If I could be friends with any of the characters, it would be

_____, because _____

_____.

If I had to choose what I liked best, I would choose (circle one)

the story the characters the music the costumes the scenery

because _____

_____.

KidSeries Teacher Comment Form

We'd love to hear from you! Please fill out this comment form, and get it back to us one of two ways: Either mail it to Julie Ganey, Education Director, Lifeline Theatre, 6912 North Glenwood Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60626, or email it back to us at julie@lifelinetheatre.com. If your students have completed review sheets, we'd love to see those too!

School: _____ Grade Level: ____ Number of Students: _____

Show your class saw: _____

Have you attended a Lifeline KidSeries show before? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, which one(s) have you seen?

Did you read your class the book before coming to see the show? ___ Yes ___ No

What part of the show did your students respond to/enjoy the best?

What part of the show did your students respond to/enjoy to the least?

Would you bring your students to another performance at Lifeline? ___ Yes ___ No

Why or why not?

Which activities in the study guide were most beneficial to your students?

Please tell us about any other books you would like to see Lifeline adapt:

(optional) Name _____ Email _____