



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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Bunny's Book Club



A world premiere based on the book by Annie Silvestro and Tatjana Mai-Wyss

Adapted by Aly Renee Amidei

Directed by Anthony Kayer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Introduction to the Student Matinee Program
 - Preparing for your Field Trip
 - Traditional Plays vs. Literary Adaptations
 - Jobs in Theatre
- 6 Synopsis of the Play
- 7 Activity Pages
 - A Day in Your Favorite Book
 - Book Return
 - Lost in a Good Book
 - The Power of Books
- 11 Further Adventures: Drama Games relating to *Bunny's Book Club*
- 12 Student Review Sheet
- 13 Teacher Comment Form

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 *Bunny's Book Club* 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?

Bunny's Book Club

Synopsis

Bunny and Raccoon are enjoying a beautiful summer's day when a parent and child sit down on a nearby bench to read a book. Bunny has never heard of books before, and after Raccoon accidentally scares off the family, Bunny inspects their forgotten book. Raccoon explains that there are buildings filled with books called libraries, and the pair of friends decide to go and check it out. At the library, they overhear a librarian reading *The Velveteen Rabbit*, and Bunny becomes eager to hear more stories and to learn about everything!

Over the next few weeks, Bunny and Raccoon attend story time at the Library. Their imaginations transport them to the exciting locations from the books, such as the snowy mountains of Mount Everest and the deserts of Ancient Persia. Bunny is enthused by all the things they are learning from books. As Summer comes to an end, the librarian announces that story time will take place inside, and Bunny doesn't know how they can go back to a life without books.

Unable to give up the world of stories, Bunny sneaks into the library through the book drop. Bunny is overjoyed at the sight of books piled high to the sky! Raccoon emerges from a trashcan, and together they select a couple of books to borrow and promise to bring them back.

Bunny returns home to their burrow, eager to dive into their pile of books. Porcupine and Mole arrive, and Bunny shows them their books, but Mole cannot appreciate them because of their poor eye sight. Bunny and Porcupine go on a mission to see if there are "different kinds of books for critters with different kinds of needs." At the library, they discover Braille and Audiobooks. Supplied with a new pile of books, Porcupine and Bunny go to share what they found with their friend.

Back at Bunny's burrow, Bunny, Porcupine, and Mole settle in to enjoy their books. Their friend Bear arrives, and they share the books with them. Bear asks if there are any books about outer space, and they brainstorm about what kind of books their other friends would like and decide to make another trip to the library!

At the library, the animal friends decide to start a book club, so they can share their love of books with one another! Just then, the librarian enters, and the animals are caught red handed. Instead of punishing them, she gives them each their very own library cards so that they may continue to expand their mind and grow their hearts through books, as long as they return them on time.

The animal friends gather in Bunny's burrow for their first meeting of Bunny's Book Club. Together they share snacks, laughs, and each other's company, and they start their next big adventure through the world of books.

A Day in Your Favorite Book

In *Bunny's Book Club*, the books transport Bunny and their friends to exciting new worlds in their imaginations. Imagine what you would do if you were transported into the world of your favorite book for one day.

My favorite book is _____

In the morning, I would _____

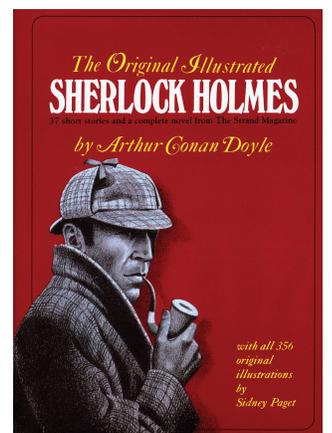
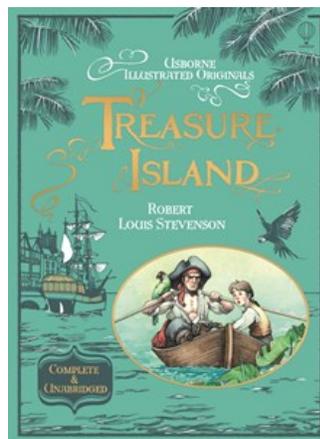
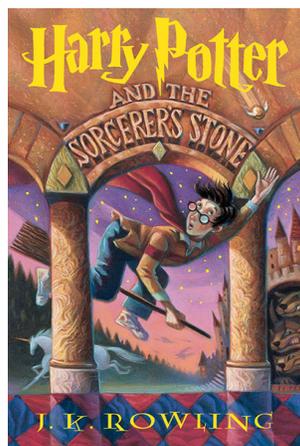
In the afternoon, I would _____

In the evening, I would _____

Before saying goodbye, I would _____

Book Return

Can you return each book back to the proper shelf? Draw arrows to show where each book belongs.



Lost in a Good Book

Bunny is lost in the world of their story. Draw what you think Bunny is reading about in the space around them.



FURTHER CLASSROOM ADVENTURES

Drama Games relating to *Bunny's Book Club*

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.

All the Animals Were Reading

How to Play: Split the students up into 2 or 3 groups (depending on space and time). Each group will get to perform and observe. The performers stand in the playing space, and when you call out "All the animals were reading," the students sit down and pantomime reading a book. You say, "and they read about..." choosing whatever action, location, or event you want the performers to explore. Students can use the entire playing space pantomiming, as if they were transported into their books. After 30 seconds to a minute, say, "All the animals were reading," and the students go back to sitting on the ground and pantomime reading until the next prompt.

Eight-Line Story

How to Play: Eight students are chosen to help tell a story. Each person is responsible for only one line. The students must listen to each other and relate their line to the one that came before. You can play this as a written exercise as well, either in groups or individually. The prompts for each sentence are:

Once upon a time...
And every day...
Until one day...
Because of this...
Because of this...
Because of this...
Until finally...
And ever since that day...

Stealthy Ninjas

How to Play: Students line up on one side of the room, and on the opposite side is a pile of books. The goal of the game is to stealthily retrieve a book and return to the other side of the room. The students are allowed to move only when the lights are off, and they must freeze when the lights turn on. The teacher is responsible for turning on and off the lights and calling out those who move when the lights are on. If a student gets caught moving when the light is on, they must return back to the starting line. The first student to retrieve a book and return to their side of the room is the winner. For extra fun, play some spy music to feel extra sneaky!

Student Review of *Bunny's Book Club*

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 _____