



TEACHER'S GUIDE

2019-2020 Class Acts season supported by  PNC

The Snowy Day and Other Stories by Ezra Jack Keats

Thursday, February 20, 2020
10:30 AM & 12:30 PM



University of Illinois Springfield
**PERFORMING
ARTS CENTER**



Welcome!

Welcome to Class Acts at the University of Illinois Springfield! We hope this guide will help you expand on concepts found in this particular performance and incorporate them into your classroom teaching, both before and after the performance. We want students to think of the arts as an integral part of their lives – not just a one-time event.

Before arriving, you can prepare your students by helping them understand the story or by sharing basic information about the art form they are going to see. We also ask you to review the theater etiquette information with your students (found on pages 2-3 of this guide) to help prepare them for attending a live performance.

After the performance you can talk to your students about their experience. Did they enjoy the performance? What did they learn? How was the performance different than what they expected? We hope the information and activities included in this guide will help your students gain a deeper understanding of the performance.

We look forward to seeing you! If you have any questions about these materials or about the performance, please contact me at (217) 206-6150 or carmi1@uis.edu.

Betsy O'Brien

Education Connections Coordinator
UIS Performing Arts Center



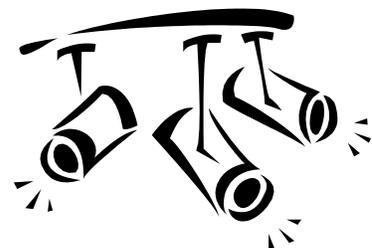
Youth programming in the Class Acts series is supported in part by the Helen Hamilton Performing Arts Endowment for Youth Fund, gifts from Elizabeth and Robert Staley, and a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.



Theater Etiquette

Going to a live theatrical performance is different than watching a movie or TV show – the members of the audience are very important, and the way they behave will affect the performance. Therefore, theaters have their own special rules about behavior.

- **Ask the ushers if you need help with anything** – The people who wear red coats are volunteer ushers, and they want to make sure everyone is able to enjoy the performance. They will guide you to your seat, and they can help you find a restroom. In any emergency situation, the ushers will help guide your class to safety. There may be as many as 1700 people coming to see the performance! Please follow the instructions of the ushers at all times.
- **Turn off and put away cell phones and anything else that can light up or make noise** – These can be very distracting to the performers and your fellow audience members.
- **Do not eat, drink, or chew gum in the auditorium** – Even the quietest chewers and slurpers can be distracting to the performers and to the other people around you. Also, even if you are very careful, food and drinks can sometimes make a mess in the auditorium. We try to keep the auditorium as clean as possible so that it will be just as nice for the next audience.
- **Never throw anything in the auditorium** – This is distracting and dangerous for the performers and people in the audience.
- **Do not put your feet on the back of the seat in front of you**
- **Please do not wear a hat inside the auditorium** – It is difficult for the people behind you to see the stage if you're wearing a hat.
- **Use the restroom before the performance begins** – As soon as your class arrives and is seated in the auditorium, the teacher can arrange visits to the restroom before the performance begins. The ushers will help you find the closest restroom. Of course, if you *must* use the restroom during the performance, please be as quiet as possible about leaving your seat. Once you get to the aisle, an usher will help you find the way.
- **When the lights begin to dim, the performance is beginning** – This tells the audience to stop conversations, get settled in their seats, and focus their attention on the stage. A person will come out and make an announcement before the performance begins. Pay close attention to the announcement because it might include special instructions that you will need to remember.



- **The overture (music at the beginning of the show) is part of the performance** – If the performance has music in it, there might be an opening piece of music called an overture before any actors appear on stage. Give this piece of music the same respect you give the performers by being quiet and attentive while the overture is played.
- **Do not take pictures or recordings during the performance** – The flashes can be distracting to performers, and it is against the law to take pictures or recordings of many performances.
- **Refrain from talking, whispering, and making noise during the performance** – Remember that live performers can see and hear you from the stage. It is very distracting to the performers and the other audience members if you talk during the performance. After all, the audience came to hear the professionals perform!
- **It's ok to react to the performance** – Spontaneous laughter, applause, and gasps of surprise are welcome as part of the special connection between the performers and the audience during a live show. However, shouts, loud comments, and other inappropriate noises are distracting to the actors and your fellow audience members.
- **Clap at the appropriate times** – If you are enjoying the performance, you can let the performers know by clapping for them. During a play or musical, you can clap between scenes (during a blackout) or after songs. During a music concert or dance performance, you can clap after each piece is performed. In a jazz music concert it is ok to clap in the middle of a song when a musician has finished a solo. If a music ensemble plays a piece with several sections, called movements, the audience will usually only clap at the very end of all the movements.
- **The performers will bow when the performance ends** – This is called a curtain call. You should applaud to thank the performers for their hard work, but you should not begin to leave the auditorium until the curtain call is over and the lights become brighter. If you really enjoyed the performance, you are welcome to give a standing ovation while you applaud. This is reserved for performances you feel are *truly outstanding!*
- **Respect the hard work of the performers** – You may not enjoy every performance you see, but I hope you will recognize that each performance requires a tremendous amount of dedication on the part of the performers and those who work backstage. It is polite to keep any negative comments to yourself until you have left the building.





Class Acts and Learning Standards

Attendance at any Class Acts event can help teachers meet **Common Core Standards**. The clearest example can be found in the Standard for Speaking and Listening, #2:

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Additionally, in the Common Core Standards for Reading, the definition of the word “text” can be expanded to include non-printed works such as dance, music, theater, and visual arts. This makes the arts an important part of all standards in the Reading category, at every grade level.

Class Acts attendance can also help your students meet elements of the new **Illinois Arts Learning Standards**, which went into effect starting with the 2018-2019 school year. These standards reflect best practices and identify what is important for students to know and be able to do in dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts. You can learn more at www.illinoisartslearning.org.

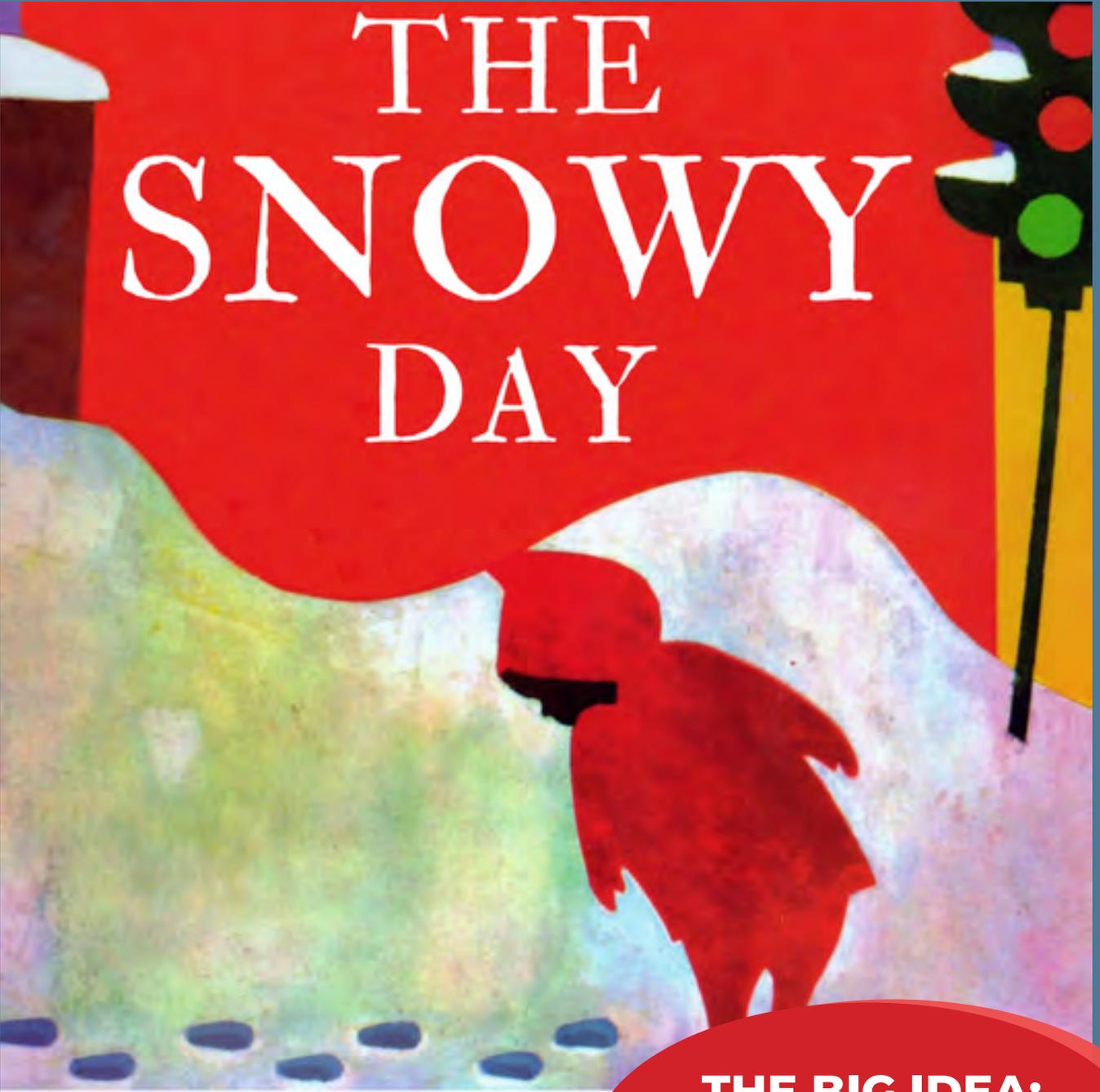


Write to Us!

We would love to hear from you and your students! If your students write about the performance they saw or create artwork related to it, you are welcome to send it to us via email to carmi1@uis.edu or through the mail to:

Betsy O'Brien
UIS Performing Arts Services
One University Plaza, MS PAC 397
Springfield, IL 62703

We love sharing student work with our donors and Class Acts sponsors, so they can see the impact of their donations.



THE SNOWY DAY

BY JEROME HAIRSTON

**BASED ON THE BOOKS BY
EZRA JACK KEATS**

DIRECTED BY KATIE McFADZEN and ANTHONY RUNFOLA

THE BIG IDEA:

Hallmarks of Childhood

WHAT THE PLAY IS ABOUT

The Snowy Day celebrates the magic and boundless possibilities of the first snowfall! Follow Peter and his friends as they romp and play, starting snow ball fights and making snow angels in this imaginative musical play about the childhood joys and challenges of growing up. Using innovative shadow puppetry, Keats' treasured characters come to life in this humorous and fun adaptation of *Whistle for Willie*, *Goggles!*, *A Letter to Amy*, and *The Snowy Day*.



TALK ABOUT IT

Start a conversation before the show:

- ★ Peter loves to go outside on a snowy day. What are your favorite outside activities? Do they change during different seasons?
- ★ Peter learns new things throughout the play. How do you feel when you learn something new, especially if it was very difficult? How do you express that feeling?

Start a conversation after the show:

- ★ *The Snowy Day and Other Stories* is based on four different books. How was the play like the books? How was it different?
- ★ Peter's snowball disappeared in his pocket. What do you think happened to it? Why?
- ★ In the play, Peter experiences joy in many ways including making snow angels and playing with his dog Willie. What brings you joy?
- ★ How did Peter and Archie stand up to the boys who bully them about the goggles. Do you think they did the right thing? What should you do if you see someone being bullied?
- ★ Peter and his friends all talk about what they wish for. What do you wish for?

WRITE ABOUT IT

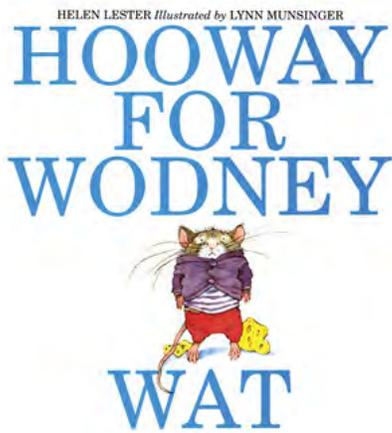
Journal entry or free-writing prompts for before or after the show:

- ★ Peter learns how to whistle. What are some things you've learned how to do? What are some things that you were too small to do before, but you can do now? What are you looking forward to learning when you get bigger?
- ★ Peter is nervous about how his friends will react because he invited Amy to his party. If you were Peter's friend, how would you react? Why do you think he is nervous?

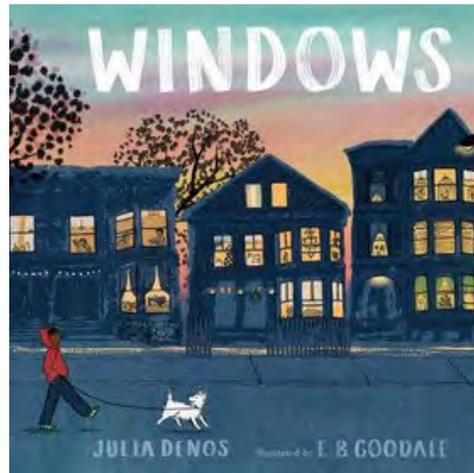
Our amazing volunteer librarian Sharon Ewers has put together a great list of books connected to ideas and themes in *The Snowy Day*. All books are appropriate for children in grades PreK-2

READ ABOUT IT

Find the full list by going to <https://tinyurl.com/yxcufloj> and clicking Booklist



Hooray for Wodney Wat
by Helen Lester



Windows
by Julia Denos



Split! Splat!
by Amy S. Gibson

EXPLORE IT

Close Reading Activity: Costume Designers as Close Readers...

Theatre is a collection of choices. A choice is an artistic decision that is made to highlight a component of a character's personality, the story, or the theme. Costume Designers help create the world of the play with clothing. The designers pull information from the text to inspire their design choices and bring the story to life on stage.

Activity: What Can You Learn From a Costume?

In *The Snowy Day and Other Stories*, the personality of the character is presented through the costume. The next page of this document contains sections from the show. Read, or have students read, the text. Have the students pretend to be costume designers and draw costumes for the characters. Play around with different choices to see how the personality changes. Pay close attention to the stage directions (in italics) and text to find information about what the characters are feeling and doing. When making choices, think about color, texture, movement, and how the characters are feeling. Share the drawings with others!

The following scene is from *The Snowy Day and Other Stories* by Jerome Hairston to be used for educational purposes only. Words in italics are stage directions.

ALL 3 ACTORS: One winter morning,

FEMALE PLAYER: Peter woke up and looked out the window.

PETER: Wow!

FEMALE PLAYER: Snow had fallen during the night. It covered everything as far as he could see.

PETER: Snow!

MOM: Peter, breakfast!

PETER: (*PETER bounds out of bed.*) Coming!

MALE PLAYER: After breakfast, Peter put on his snowsuit!

(*PETER peels out of his PJs and hurries into the snowsuit. He pulls on his hood and runs:*)

FEMALE PLAYER: He ran outside. The snow was piled up very high along the street to make a path for walking. Crunch! Crunch! Crunch!

(*PETER is stopped by the sight of something in the pipe. He bends over and pulls it free.*)

PETER: Archie! Look what I found! (*holding them up*) MOTORCYCLE GOGGLES!

ARCHIE: Let me see, let me see!

PETER: We could be...I don't know...(*light bulb, fantasy begins*) MOTORCYCLE RACERS!

ARCHIE: No, no, no. We should be more like... Deep sea divers.

PETER: No way! Motorcycles are much cooler.

ARCHIE: Says who?!

PETER: Me!

PETER: Wait! I got it. Astronauts! Blast off! (*they blast off*)



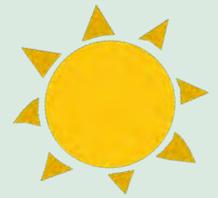
The Four Seasons ¹

- *Snowy Day and other Stories* takes place in all different seasons. We have 4 seasons during the year, and **each season lasts for 3 months**. In order, the seasons are:
- **Spring** gets warmer and can be rainy. Plants come back to life after winter.
- **Summer** is the hottest season. People can swim and play outside.
- **Autumn** gets cooler so the leaves change colors and fall off the trees.
- **Winter** is the coldest season. It usually snows and people can make snowmen.



Why do seasons happen?

- The Earth travels around the Sun, called an **orbit**, once a year or every 365 days.
 - As the Earth orbits the Sun, each location on the planet gets a slightly different amount of sunlight. This change causes the seasons.
- **The Earth is Tilted**
 - When the North Pole is pointing **toward** the Sun, the northern hemisphere gets summer. When the North Pole is pointing **away** from the Sun, the northern hemisphere gets winter.
 - Seasons in the north hemisphere are **opposite** of seasons in the south hemisphere.



Watch this video for more on seasons: <https://youtu.be/eXFe4tUCd40>

Try this Activity!

(Standard: Social Emotional Learning SE.1.C2)

Emotion Call and Response

Begin this activity in a circle so everyone can see each others' physical choices.

Ask, "how would you feel if _____".

Direct children to show how they would feel with their bodies and faces.

How would you feel if:

- you were playing outside in the snow.
- older kids said you couldn't play with them.
- you lost a toy in the snow.
- you were drinking a hot cup of cocoa.
- snow got in your boot.
- a snowball melted in your pocket.
- you caught a snowflake on your tongue.
- you helped someone build a snowman.



ENGAGE WITH IT

Explore these standards-based activities!

★ Across the Room - Science: (K.S6.C3.PO 3)

Line up against one side of the room and cross as if you are experiencing different weather situations. Use bodies and faces to show where you are and how you feel. Cross the room as if:

- it were a blustery winter day.
- you were a chicken in a wind storm.
- you were walking in an ice storm.
- it were a sizzling hot day in the desert.
- you were getting on the bus in the rain.
- you were walking your dog in a tornado.

★ Build a Snowman - 21st Century Learning: Work Independently (K-12)

Show a picture of snow, and a snowman. Talk about snow's texture, temperature, smell and other characteristics. Find a space in the room where you can work independently, and create your own snowman using mime. Begin building at your own pace. Dress your snowman in scarves, coats, whatever your imagination holds! After you have finished your snowman, introduce it and share the details you made.

CONNECTION TO STANDARDS

Science: (K.S6.C3.PO 3): Give examples of how the weather affects people's daily activities.

Early Learning Standard: Social Emotional Learning (S1.C2): Recognizes and Expresses Feelings of self and others

21st Century Learning: Life and Career Skills (K-12)
Work Independently

#SHAREWITHUS

Follow us on social media and share your comments and photos!

#ChildsplayAZ
#SnowyDay



ABOUT CHILDSPLAY

Childsplay is a nonprofit professional theatre company of adult actors who perform for young audiences and families.

Our Mission is to create theatre so strikingly original in form, content, or both, that it instills in young people an enduring awe, love, and respect for the medium, thus preserving imagination and wonder, those hallmarks of childhood that are the keys to the future.

For more information:
www.childsplayaz.org

