



PRESCHOOL TEACHER'S GUIDE

The Arts Start program is supported by



Grow Up Great

The Snowy Day and Other Stories by Ezra Jack Keats

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10:30 AM & 12:30 PM



University of Illinois Springfield
**PERFORMING
ARTS CENTER**



Welcome!

This guide was created for use by teachers in the Springfield Urban League Head Start program, but it will also be sent to other teachers attending the performance who indicate they teach preschool students. Another Teacher's Guide, with content for older students, is available online at <http://uispac.com/education/class-acts/>. We hope the information and activities included in this guide will help your students better understand the performance.

We look forward to seeing you!



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The Arts Start program is an initiative of **University of Illinois Springfield** and the **Springfield Urban League Head Start**, funded by **PNC's Grow Up Great**® initiative. Through this arts education program, Head Start students, their teachers, and their families will become involved in live performances, enhancing the students' educational opportunities and school readiness.



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 azepp2@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 Class Acts sponsors, so they can see the impact of their donations.



Attending a Live Performance

Please use the information below to help prepare your young students for attending a live theatrical performance. For many, this will be their first experience with live theater.

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. That’s why theaters have their own special rules about behavior.

- Tell your students that when they arrive in the parking lot, there will be a lot of other buses there too. They will need to follow the instructions of their teachers and walk in a straight line (or maybe in a buddy-system line) to come into the building. Once inside, they need to stay in line because of all the other students who will be there.
- Ask your students how they think an audience should behave at a live performance. What are some of the things they should do and not do? If it is not covered by the student answers, make sure you talk about:
 - **Listen** to the performance (this ties into “don’t talk,” but it can be helpful to keep all the discussion points phrased in the positive and not in the “don’t-do-this” mode); use a “cupped ear” gesture to emphasize listening when it is mentioned
 - **Watch** the performance; point at both sides of your face near your eyes with your index fingers to emphasize watching when it is mentioned
 - **Clap** at the end of songs and at the end of the performance when the performers take their bows. Take the time to practice clapping with the students. Call one student forward who will pretend to take a bow at the end of a performance and the rest of the room will practice clapping for this student.

Repeat the gestures for the three points above and have the students do it with you.

- Let your students know that like in a movie theater, the area where the audience sits for the performance will be rather dark, but there will be lights on the stage and some small lights will remain on in the aisles. If they need to use the bathroom in the middle of the show, they can come to the end of the row and an usher will use a flashlight to make sure they can find their way to the correct bathroom.



Preschool Activities – The Snowy Day

These activities can be used together in any combination that works for the teacher. It would be best to do some activities before the performance, to help students understand the plot of the story, and some activities after the performance, to reinforce what they have seen.

Pre-Field Trip Discussion Questions

Discuss the different types of performing arts (music, dance, theater) to help students understand that they are going to see people perform. Ask if they have ever experienced a live theater performance before. What did they see? What was it like?

How is live theater different than movies and TV?

- There are real people on the stage.
- The performance will never be exactly the same again.

Familiarize your students with the following words – theater, play, actor, stage, costume, usher, puppet

What's the Play About?

The Snowy Day and Other Stories celebrates the magic and boundless possibilities of the first snowfall! Follow Peter and his friends as they romp and play, starting snowball 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?

Science - The Four Seasons

The 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.

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

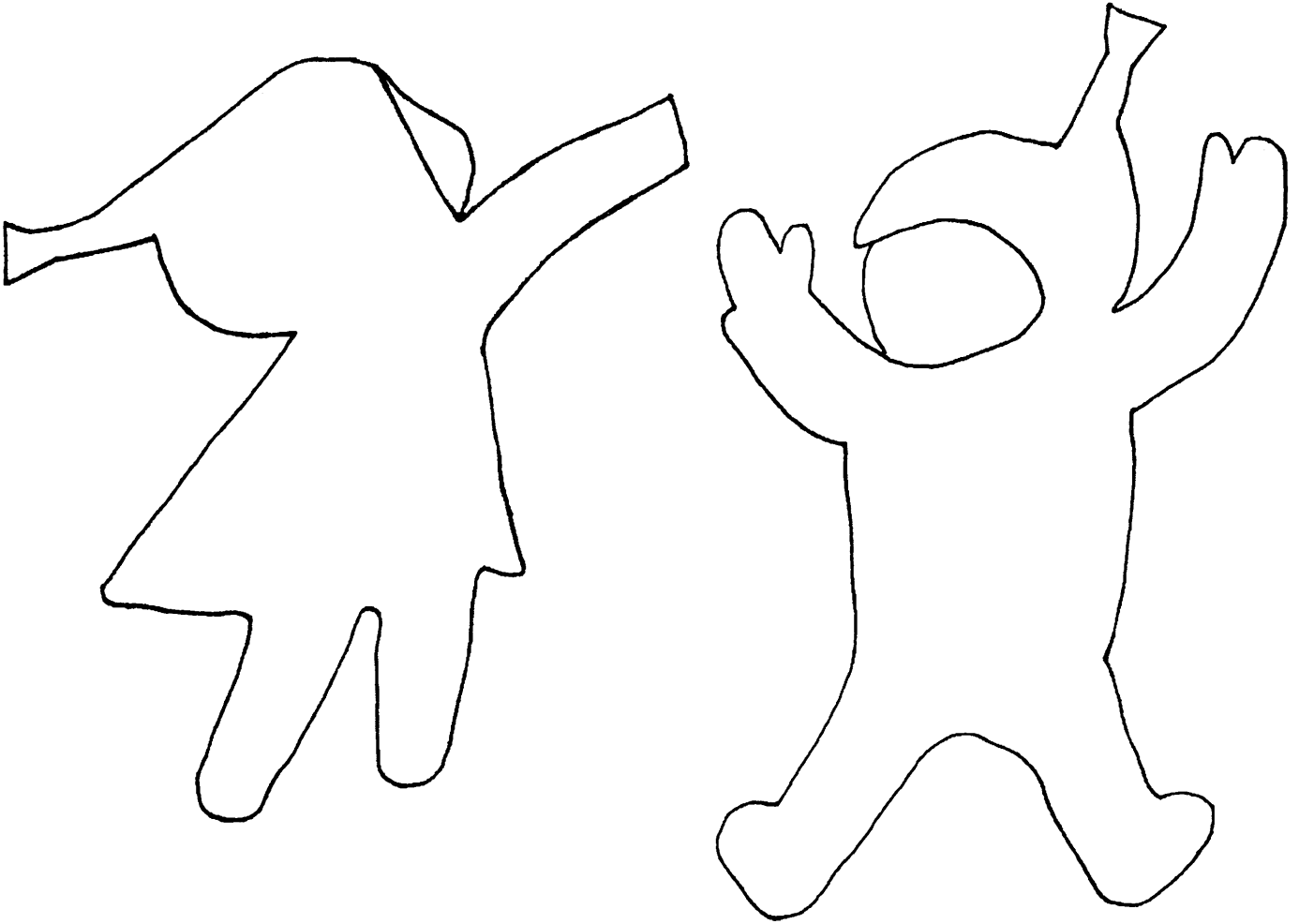
Art – A Snowy Day Masterpiece

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans/teaching-content/snowy-day-extension-activities/>

1. Teacher: mix equal parts shaving cream and white liquid glue for the “paint” in this project. This paint will have texture as students work with it and when it dries.
2. Have students “paint” a blue piece of paper with a white snowy hill.
3. Provide toothpicks for making places in the paint where Peter dragged his feet slowly.
4. Use doll shoes for making footprints to represent how Peter walked with his toes pointing in and with his toes pointing out.
5. Add a cutout of Peter to the blue construction paper (see next page), possibly cut out by an adult.
6. Use a Q-tip or fingertip to make snowflakes falling from the blue construction paper sky.
7. Optional: Have students dictate a sentence or words describing their favorite ways to spend a snowy day and write it on the artwork.



The Snowy Day Templates



Science – snowball activity

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans/teaching-content/snowy-day-science-lesson-0/>

In *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats, Peter awakens to a world of snow. He makes tracks and snow angels, goes sliding, and packs snowballs — saving one in his pocket for the next day. Keats' simple story and collage illustrations capture a child's natural wonder for the world in a book that charms readers of all ages.

MATERIALS

- Snow
- Pans or dishes
- Pens/paper

DIRECTIONS

If you've got snow on hand, let students scoop some up to make some snowballs. See how long they last in your classroom under different conditions. Have students measure the amount of snow that they use so each snowball is the same size. Set each snowball in a pan or dish to catch the drips and then place them in different places around the room — a sunny windowsill, under a cover, in the closet, or in a pocket — like Peter did in the story!

Place paper and pen beside each snowball and ask students to record observations every 30 minutes. Which snowball do they think will last longest? Which will melt first? Why?



Theatre – shadows

Invite children to explore their own shadows just like Peter does in the story. Shine a flashlight and encourage children to try moving in front of the light in different ways to see how their shadows move. Ask children to write sentences about their shadows.

Write the following sentences on the chalkboard:

- My shadow is tall and wavy.
- My shadow looks like a tree.



Help children complete verbal sentences by telling you what their shadow looks like. Invite them to draw a picture of their shadows.

Social-Emotional Learning - Emotion Call and Response Activity

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 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



Science and Theatre – Across the Room

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 windstorm
- 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

Theatre – Build a Snowman using Mime

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.


Cognition Activity - Things Peter and I Both Do

See the next page for a cutout visual and cognitive activity you can do together as a class or kids can work on separately.



Things Peter Does


Things Peter and I Both Do

sleep by a window



wear a snowsuit



eat breakfast



live in an apartment



pretend to be someone



play in the snow



take a bath



talk to mother



play with a friend

Teacher: Give each student a piece of 12" x 18" construction paper and a copy of this page. Guide students through this activity step by step. Have students: 1) Color the pictures and cut out the boxes. 2) Fold the construction paper in half. Open. 3) Glue one title on the left side of the construction paper and one title on the right. Then have students find the picture of the bed. Read to them the words on it and have students glue it under the appropriate title. Continue until all the pictures have been used.

Post-Field Trip Discussion Questions

After attending the performance, it is very important to talk to your students about their experience, memory, and reaction to the live performance. These are some possible questions:

- Tell me about what you saw on the field trip.
- Tell me about what you heard on the field trip.
- What will you remember about the performance?
- What surprised you about our field trip?
- What was the most exciting part of our field trip for you?

Talk about it

Start a conversation about the show after you've seen it:

- *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?
- Peter learned how to whistle. 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?

Color in a Winter Wonderland!

Peter's neighborhood is a full of snow—but that doesn't mean everything is white!
Help color in the community around him.

