



Teacher Resource Guide and Lesson Plan Activities

Featuring general information about our production along with some creative activities which will help you make connections to your classroom curriculum, before and after the show.



The production and accompanying activities address **North Carolina Essential Standards in Theatre Arts, Goal A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances.** Look for this symbol throughout the resource guide for other curriculum connections.

The Velveteen Rabbit



Adapted by Scott Davidson
From the Story by Margery Williams

Founded in 1948, Children's Theatre of Charlotte has been opening young minds to the wonders of live theatre for over half a century. Today it continues to be one of the most technically imaginative and resourceful theatres in the country. Annually it reaches over 320,000 young people and their families with multiple program areas: Mainstage productions, Tarradiddle Players Professional Touring Company and a full scope of Education classes for both community and schools. Children's Theatre of Charlotte is housed in **ImaginOn: The Joe & Joan Martin Center**. The facility is shared with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.



About the Play

The Velveteen Rabbit is an ordinary stuffed bunny filled with sawdust. All the other toys in the nursery snub him for being boring and old-fashioned, but once the Boy discovers the forlorn little rabbit they become instant friends. As their friendship grows, the Velveteen Rabbit learns what it means to be truly loved—and the joy and pain of what it means to be real. Adapted from the classic book by Margery Williams, this poignant story of the transformative power of love has charmed generations, and continues to be one of our most popular productions.

About the Author

Margery Williams (1881-1944) was born in London in 1881, and first came to the United States when she was nine years old. She lived in the United States and England alternately for the rest of her life. Her first adult novel was published when she was 21, but **The Velveteen Rabbit** was the first, and best-known, of her thirty children's books.

About the Playwright

Scott Davidson is a professional actor, director and writer who resides with his family in Chicago. There he works as Director Of Theatre at Pleasant Company's American Girl Place. He holds a BFA in Theatre from the University of Southern California. He is the founding Artistic Director for both the Laguna Playhouse Youth Theatre, Laguna Beach, CA and the Serendipity Theatre Co, Los Angeles, CA. - both national and international award winning theatre companies.

“Real is something you must feel in your heart.”

The Velveteen Rabbit is a story about friendship and loyalty. As a class, discuss the friendship between the Skin Horse, the Boy and the Velveteen Rabbit.

No matter where he is, the Velveteen Rabbit seems different from everyone else. In the nursery he is different because he doesn't have mechanical clockwork. In the wild he is different because he doesn't have legs and he "smells like a wet pin-cushion." What does it mean to be different? How do we treat people who are different? Listen to this quote: "We may look different on the outside but we are all the same on the inside." Do you think this statement is true? Why or why not? Write a poem about a time you felt "different."

If someone new joins your class at school, what are some ways you could treat him or her kindly? Write down your ideas and draw a picture of something that you might give them to make them feel comfortable. What if someone moved into your neighborhood? Explore ways that you can make people feel welcome.

Stuffed Animal Stories

Encourage students to bring a stuffed animal to class for show and tell. As each child is sharing, prompt them to imagine the things that their toy likes to do. Working individually, students may write an adventure their toy might have, then illustrate the story if they choose. In a large group setting, read the stories to the class and allow the students to enact parts of each story. Allow the author to serve as the director, choosing parts and helping students show the action of their adventure.

*In a follow-up discussion, ask students how it felt to see a story they had written come to life, the way the toys do in **The Velveteen Rabbit**.*

Adaptation

Dramatist Scott Davidson wrote the play *The Velveteen Rabbit* based on the book by Margery Williams. Read the story before you see the play. With the class or in small groups, discuss which things are the same and which things are different about the book and the play.

If you were going to write a play based on a book, what story would you choose? Write a list of the characters and events that would take place in the play.



Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy: RI4: Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text; SL2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media; RL7: Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text; W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences.

Vocabulary Enrichment

- velveteen** - a fabric made of cotton that feels like velvet
- dawdling** - taking a long time to do something
- realistic** - seeming to be real
- superior** - better than anything else
- acquaint** - to get to know
- sophisticated** - made wise by experience
- lineage** - relating to ancestors
- Belgium** - a country in Europe
- Brussels** - the capital of Belgium
- interrupt** - to talk when someone else is talking
- chatter** - to talk on and on
- boast** - to brag
- swagger** - to brag
- cyclone** - like a tornado
- confetti** - tiny pieces of paper that you throw up into the air
- warren** - an area where rabbits live
- trousers** - pants
- skitter** - to skip lightly or quickly
- bracken** - a large fern
- console** - to help someone feel better when they are sad
- mysterious** - hard to explain or understand
- patience** - ability to wait; calm
- grave** - serious
- disinfect** - to free from infection by getting rid of germs
- fret** - to become irritated; worry
- threadbare** - shabby

Questions for Discussion

1. What does the rabbit learn from other toys in the nursery?
2. What does the word “real” mean to the Velveteen Rabbit and the other toys in the nursery?
3. How does the skin horse know what “real” is? Do you think the Velveteen Rabbit understands the skin horse’s meaning?
4. What happens to the Velveteen Rabbit's appearance as he becomes real to the little boy? How does the Velveteen Rabbit feel about his changing appearance?
5. How do the other toys in the nursery treat the Rabbit? How would it make you feel to be treated like that?
6. What happened when the Velveteen Rabbit met the real rabbits in the wood? How did these rabbits treat him? Why did they treat him that way?
7. What did the Velveteen Rabbit do while the boy was sick with scarlet fever? What would you do if your very best friend were to get as sick as the little boy was?
8. Why did the doctors order Nanny to get rid of the Velveteen Rabbit?
9. What happens when the Velveteen Rabbit meets the nursery magic? How does the Velveteen Rabbit feel about becoming real?
10. Do you have a favorite stuffed animal or toy? How would it feel to have that animal or toy become real?



Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy: RL3: Describe characters, settings and major events in a story, using key details. SL2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media; North Carolina Essential Standards Theatre Arts A.1.1. Recall the basic parts of a story, such as characters, setting and events.

Science Connections

What's the difference between a Rabbit and a Hare?



Cottontail Rabbit



Snowshoe Rabbit



Brown Hare



Jackrabbit Hare

Rabbits and Hares are the common name for certain small, furry mammals with long ears and short tails. However, there are several differences between rabbits and hares. Typically, hares are larger than rabbits and have longer hind legs and longer ears than rabbits. Listed below are some other differences:

RABBITS:

Born hairless and blind
Baby is called a “bunny”
Live underground in burrows
Prefer to live in groups

HARES:

Born with a full head of hair
Baby is called a “leveret”
Like to hide amidst plants
Prefer to live alone

As a person, are you more like a rabbit or a hare?



North Carolina Essential Standards. Science K.L.1: Compare characteristics of animals that make them alike and different from other animals and nonliving things.

Recommended Reading

Albert the Bear – Butterworth/ Butterworth
Emma Bean – Van Leeuwen/Wijngaard
La La Rose – Ichikawa/ Ichikawa
Plaidypus Lost – Stevens/Stevens
Steadfast Tin Soldier – Isadora/Isadora
Tatty Ratty – Cooper/ Cooper
The Ticky-Tacky Doll – Rylant/Stevenson
The Tub Grandfather – Conrad/Egielski
What’s the Matter, Davy? – Weninger/Tharlet
Polar, The Titanic Bear – Spedden/McGaw
The Bat-Poet – Jarrell/Sendak
The Castle in the Attic – Winthrop
The Jamie and Angus Stories – Fine
The Mouse and His Child – Hoban/Small
Winnie-the-Pooh – Milne/Milne
Corduroy - Freeman
The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes - Heyward/Flack
A Bear Called Paddington - Bond
The Runaway Bunny - Brown/Hurd
The Story of Ferdinand - Leaf
The Tale of Peter Rabbit - Potter
The Story About Ping - Flack/Wiese

Every play produced by Children's Theatre of Charlotte is created in the city of Charlotte by a talented team of designers, carpenters, stitchers, props masters and lighting technicians, not to mention the director and the actors. Because it is presented live, a play is very different from a television show or a movie. As a class, discuss what you experienced when you went to the theatre.

1. What was the first thing you noticed on the stage?
2. Name three things you noticed about the set. Did the set help tell the story? What sort of set would you have designed?
3. What did you like about the costumes? Did they fit the story? What sort of costumes would you have designed?
4. What role did lighting play in telling the story? How did the lights enhance what you were seeing?
5. Talk about the actors. Were there moments you were so caught up in the story that you forgot you were watching a play? Talk about those moments.
6. Is there a TV or movie version of the play you saw today? What makes a stage play unique?
7. Were there any actors who played more than one character? At what point in the play could you tell that it was the same person? What are some ways that you can be the same person but play different characters?



North Carolina Essential Standards in Theatre Arts
3.A.1.2: Evaluate formal or informal theatre productions

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Meet the Tarradiddle Players



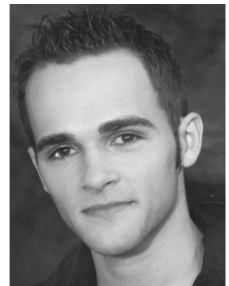
Leslie Ann Giles is beginning her 6th season with the Tarradiddle Players. She is originally from Anderson, SC, and graduated from Winthrop University with a BA in Theatre Performance. She spent a year as an acting apprentice at the Round House Theatre in MD. She has received several nominations for MTA including Outstanding Supporting Actress for *The Littlest Angel* and *A Thousand Cranes*, and Exemplary Ensemble for *The Velveteen Rabbit*. "The only thing I feel more blessed about than being able to live my dream is having the most amazing family in the world!"

Darlene Parker marks her ninth season with the Tarradiddle Players since 1989. That's not even counting her Tarradiddle Preschool Tours! She has experienced many wonderful seasons, talented coworkers and multiple touring vans. Some of her favorite roles include Charlotte in *Charlotte's Web*, Judge in *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* and her first Tarradiddle role, Jim in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Some of her favorite work around town includes *Crowns*, *The Body Chronicles*, *Carrie Ann's Kiss* and *The Fairytale Chronicles*.



Nick Kern is excited to join the CTC family! Performing since age 5, Nick holds a BA in Theatre Arts from UNC-Charlotte. Recently seen in *Lyle the Crocodile* as Mr. Primm, other roles include: Sam Byck in *Assassins*, George Crawn in *India Song*, Robert Sideway in *Our Country's Good*, and Frank in *[sic]*. Nick worked in the entertainment department of Walt Disney World and has been nominated for the KCACTF Irene Ryan acting award and a Metrolina Theatre Award. He would like to thank his family for pushing him and for the unconditional love and support. If they hadn't been there, he would not be here.

Stephen Seay is very excited to work with Children's Theatre of Charlotte for his fifth season. He loves working with his "touring" family and the staff at CTC. His favorite CTC roles have been Mouse in *If you Give a Pig a Party*, Martha Henderson in *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*, Henry B. Swap in *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* and Arlequino in the *Commedia* series. Stephen would like to thank his family for their continued support. "You cannot love life until you live the life you love."



Caleb Ryan Sigmon began this real-life dream as a five-year-old kid playing the Glow Worm in *James and the Giant Peach*. During Caleb's stay with Hibriten Acting Company, they won the North Carolina Thespian Festival with their production of *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*. This performance took them to the International Thespian Festival, where they performed in the Johnny Carson Theatre in Lincoln, Nebraska. He is a recipient of the Doug Carter Award with Foothills Performing Arts, being one of the youngest to hold this lifetime achievement. He is a graduate from the School of Drama at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.



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