

Study Guide and Activities

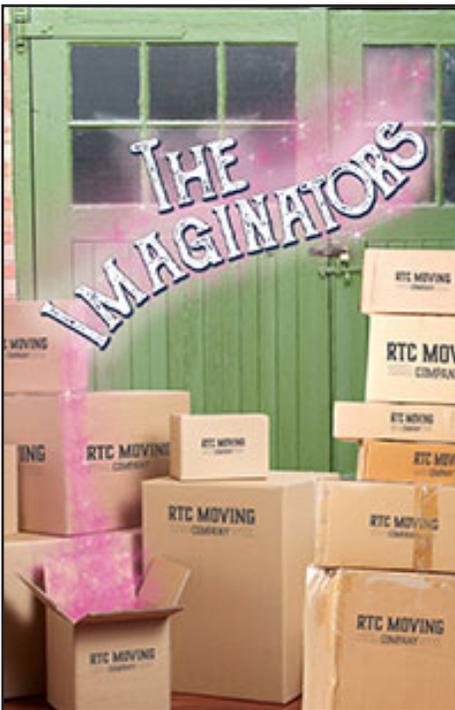


This study guide includes information about our production along with creative activities to make connections in your classroom both before and after the show. We've aligned all activities to both the Common Core Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards. Look for the symbol below throughout the guide for curriculum connections.



NCES-TheaArts.(3-5).TA.A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances. NCES-TheaArts.(3-5).TA.A.1.1: Recall the basic parts of a story, such as characters, setting, and events.

Touring production Ages 8 and older



**Written by
Dwayne Hartford**

**Director
Nicia Carla**

Themes explored

creative play, (non)conformity,
brothers and sisters, making
new friends, poetry, courage

Synopsis

Anne and Tim have just moved to the big city. Tim is playing among the moving boxes in their garage, pretending to be Dr. Icicle, ruler of the entire earth! Anne, his older sister, enters the garage and is upset that Tim doesn't play with toys like a "normal kid." Moving here is a new start for both of them. Other children picked on Tim at the old school, and Anne didn't have any friends. She's worried if any of the new kids see Tim acting weirdly, or her playing with him, then Anne won't have any friends here either.

Anne goes back inside the house to work on her computer, and Tim begins playing a new game, "Captain Steve Fisher of the USS Explorer." Just then, the fabulous Nina Frances Elizabeth Vanderhelden from next door enters the garage and immediately begins playing with Tim. She introduces herself as Zeldetha, Queen of the Universe, and together they fight the evil Plutonians. Unfortunately, Tim can't speak to her because Anne told him he could only say "hello" to anyone he met. Nina figures this out and offers him protection from whatever monster is holding him to this promise. Tim agrees to her protection, and they begin to share stories with each other. Tim tells her about a "little baby deer" he found in the woods and raised it. He took it on walks where they used to live. One day, they were on a walk and they met another family of deer and it left to live with them. Anne enters and hears the end of the story, only to tell Nina it's all made-up.

Anne invites Nina inside to look at her computer, but Nina asks why Anne doesn't play anymore like Tim does. Anne tells her stories belong in books, not acted out like babies do. Nina thinks this is an emergency and creates a new team to help Anne play—the Imaginators! As they're beginning their story, we hear William, Nina's teenage brother, calling for her. Nina makes them all hide because she says her brother has been replaced by the Mooklecratz, a fierce monster who eats children but is also very shy. In his excitement, Tim stands and William sees him. He asks if Tim has seen his sister, and Tim tells him no. As William exits, Tim sees a spiky tail poking out from underneath William's shirt. Nina and Tim decide they must defeat the Mooklecratz, and Anne reluctantly agrees to help.

Using items from around the garage, they create mystical protections to help in their battle against the monster. Anne begins to worry Nina may not be the kind of friend she wants to have at school. She'd rather be popular than act out these weird games. But Nina tells her, "If I have to act like a different person in order to be popular, then, I'd rather be unpopular and be me." As their fight finishes, green smoke begins to fill the garage and the red eyes of the Mooklecratz appear. The battle begins and the monster eats Nina, and then Tim, leaving Anne by herself. She begins to play the game, turning a feather duster into magic flowers that cause the monster to cough up her brother. Tim and Anne remember what Nina told them about how shy the monster is and begin to take down the wall of moving boxes so he can't hide. Once they knock the wall down, they defeat the Mooklecratz and save Nina. William returns to the garage to take Nina home. Tim and Anne are left to play their new game, as the green smoke returns and the Mooklecratz's tail shoots up from one of the boxes.

Before the show

About our theatre



Founded in 1948, Children's Theatre of Charlotte has opened young minds to the wonders of live theatre for seventy years. Today, it continues to be one of the most technically imaginative and resourceful theatres in the country. Annually, it reaches nearly 300,000 young people and their families through our Mainstage productions, Resident Touring Company and its Education Department's classes and workshops. Learn more about Children's Theatre of Charlotte at ctcharlotte.org.

Additionally, our touring productions are enjoyed by schools and community centers across the Southeast, bringing high-quality, live theatre to everyone in the region. Contact our touring performance and sales coordinator, Margot Parrott, at margotp@ctcharlotte.org to book your tour today!

Audience expectations

You may wish to have a discussion with your students about their role as audience members. Live theatre only exists when an audience is present, and your students' energy and response directly affects the actors on stage.

Young audiences should know watching live theatre isn't like watching more familiar forms of entertainment: they can't pause or rewind it like a DVD, there are no commercials for bathroom breaks, nor can they increase the volume to hear if someone else is talking. Encourage your students to listen and watch the play intently, so they may laugh and cheer for their favorite characters when it is appropriate.

At the end of the play, applause is an opportunity for students to thank the actors, while the actors are thanking you for your role as an audience member. Here are some other guidelines to remember while you're watching the performance:

- Respect others during the performance. Stay seated and keep your hands to yourself.
- Please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices during the performance.
- Photography and video of the performance is prohibited by copyright law.



NCES-TheaArts.(3-5).TA.CU.2: Understand the traditions, roles, and conventions of theatre as an art form. NCES-TheaArts.3.TA.CU.2.1: Illustrate theatre etiquette appropriate to the performance situation.

Theatre 360 connections



Theatre 360 provides a way to interact with Children's Theatre of Charlotte productions by extending the theatre experience for families and classroom—providing access to all! Best of all, many programs are free. Go to ctcharlotte.org/theatre-360 to view the full list of events throughout the year.

Audience engagement These interactive experiences located around *ImaginOn* are available from the first public performance of a production through the entire run of the show. We change the exhibits to reflect the uniqueness of each show.

Online engagement Whether you're a teacher or a parent looking for quality activities, we've assembled a collection of online games, websites and articles that deepen the connections of elements from the show. [Click here](#) for online content for *The Imaginators*.

Workshops and residencies Teachers, are you looking for a way for your class to make stronger connections with our shows? You can add our workshops, led by our professional teaching artists, before or after you view the performance. Or incorporate the arts into your everyday classroom through a residency created to fit your subject area. Contact our programs coordinator, Tommy Prudenti, at tommyp@ctcharlotte.org to book yours today!

Before the show

Vocabulary enrichment

squint(ing) v. look at something with one or both eyes partly closed in an attempt to see more clearly

anticipate v. guess or be aware of (what will happen) and take action in order to be prepared

geek n. a carnival performer who performs wild or disgusting acts

fortunate adj. favored by or involving good luck or fortune; lucky

mature adj. fully developed, full-grown

mechanism n. a system of parts working together in a machine

evaluate v. form an idea of the amount, number, or value of; assess

caravanned v. travelling as a company through a desert or hostile region

acquainted v. make someone aware of or familiar with

fiendish adj. extremely cruel or unpleasant; devilish

treachery n. betrayal of trust; deceptive action or nature

gallant adj. brave; heroic



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.(3-5).4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases.

**Now, quiet please,
while I court the muse.**

–Nina, *The Imaginators*

The Muses were the Greek goddesses of inspiration in literature, science and the arts. They were the daughters of Zeus and were nine in total.

To this day, artists and musicians say they're "courting the muse" when they dive into the creative process.

The BIG QUESTIONS before the show

1. We all experience fear or excitement about events in our lives, whether moving to a new neighborhood, going to a new school or visiting the doctor's office. When are times you've felt afraid or excited? When you watch the performance, identify what makes the characters feel these emotions.
2. If you and your friends had to play for an entire day without using computers, phones or anything requiring electricity, how would you fill the day?



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.(3-5).2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. NCES-PhysEd.PE.(3-5).PR.4.2: Use cooperation and communication skills to achieve common goals. NCES.3.MEH.1.2: Classify stress as preventable or manageable.

Hello (with subtext)

An actor memorizes lines from a script. The actor's job is to give meaning or context to the line. This is called an actor's subtext. In the play, Tim's sister only allows him to say, "Hello," if he sees the neighborhood children. When he meets Nina for the first time, she figures out something's wrong by the way he says, "Hello."

Encourage your students to deliver a line with subtext. Instruct them to say the word "hello" a certain way (angry, sad, etc.). Can your students guess the subtext? For an extra challenge, give students a physical action to perform as well (brushing your teeth, climbing a tree, etc.).



NCES-TheaArts.(3-5).TA.C.2: Use performance [improvisation] to communicate ideas and feelings.

"Come, my neighbor"

Ask the whole group to spread out in the space. The teacher will start by saying "Come, my neighbor if ____." The teacher will fill in the blank with something he or she likes or something true about him or her. If other members of the group have these things in common, then they gather around the teacher, if not, they stay where they are. The teacher continues to choose students, one at a time, to find their own space in the room and repeat the pattern with a new statement.

Remember to stress making positive statements, rather than focusing on negative connections and associations. What similarities surprised you? Did you learn something new about another student in the class?



NCES-Guidance.P.SE.2.2: Explain how understanding differences among people can increase self-understanding.

After the show

Make a monster

Part 1—Divide the class into small groups of three or four to create their own monsters. Ask them to brainstorm what their monster will look like. Is it a big or small monster? Does the monster have a tail? The group will work together to create one monster, each student being a part of the whole. Instruct the students to use their bodies to become a part of their monster (a tail, an arm, an eyeball), so when the group stands together, they move like one monster.

Guide the groups to move around the room as their monster, to talk as their monster and to pantomime a few everyday activities (such as eating breakfast). Now, encourage each student to create come an action verb or an adjective describing their part of the monster.

After each group has created its monster, have each group share them first silently with the whole class, then have them freeze and one at a time unfreeze to say their word and use their part of the monster's body.

Part 2—Characters in *The Imaginators* use rhyming and poetry. Using the same rhyming scheme as in the show (A, B, C, B), encourage each group to write a narrative poem about the monster it just created. Narrative poems usually tell stories, so make sure each monster poem has a clear beginning, middle and end. The following questions might offer some help for your students to write their narrative poem:

- **Write about who the monster is:** What's the monster's personality? Who are the monster's parents? Is the monster good or bad? How old is the monster? Is the monster afraid of something? Is the monster misunderstood?
- **Write about a day in the life of the monster:** Does the monster sleep in or go to bed early? What does the monster like to eat? Who are the monster's friends? Did the monster have an adventure with another character? Did the monster do something surprising?

After each group is finished writing its poem, give the class five minutes to devise a way to share its poem and its monster at the same time. Suggest the groups use pantomime to animate some of the lines in their poems. Encourage each group to share its monster presentation with the class.



NCES-TheaArts.3.TA.C.1.1: Use non-verbal expression to communicate elements of characterization, including age and physicality. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.(3-5).3.B: Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

The BIG QUESTIONS after the show

1. Why do you think Tim invents the story of the deer? Why do you think he keeps retelling it, even though it's already been revealed he made up the story?
2. We all know how important it is to have good friends and to get along well with others. What are some examples of using teamwork or cooperation in everyday life? See if you can identify how the characters in *The Imaginators* use cooperation to solve a problem.
3. If you could use one object to help defeat the Mooklecratz, what would it be and how would you use it?



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.(3-5).2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. NCES.P.C.1: Use creative strategies to make decisions and solve problems.

Caine's Arcade



Nine-year-old Caine Monroy spent his summer vacation building an elaborate cardboard arcade inside his dad's used auto parts store. On the last day of summer, a filmmaker named Nirvan walked in and Caine asked him to play.

Inspired by Nirvan's film, *Caine's Arcade*, the Global Cardboard Challenge is an annual event presented by the Imagination Foundation celebrating child creativity and the role communities can play in fostering it.

[Click here](#) to watch his story.

Word scramble key

1. Mooklecratz
2. Tim
3. poetry
4. friend
5. Nina
6. tail
7. Anne
8. Imaginators
9. William
10. garage

Worksheet for after the show

NAME _____

COPY PAGE

Unscramble these words and character names used in the play, *The Imaginators*. Then on the back of this paper, write a letter to the actors from the show using the words below.

1. ezaltrcooM_____

2. miT_____

3. tyerop_____

4. ierdnf_____

5. aNin_____

6. itla_____

7. nAne_____

8. amntraoglis_____

9. illWmia_____

10. graaeg_____

Check out these recommended books at your local library or order them online.

Recommended for elementary

Roxaboxen

by Alice McLerran

A hill covered with rocks and wooden boxes becomes an imaginary town for Marian, her sisters and their friends.

Mirette On The High Wire

by Emily Arnold McCully

Mirette learns tightrope walking from Monsieur Bellini, a guest in her mother's boarding house, not knowing he's a celebrated tightrope artist who's withdrawn from performing because of fear.

Wingwalker

by Rosemary Wells

The Dust Bowl hit as hard as a prairie tornado. Reuben has grown up knowing the richness of farm life. Now his father, desperate to make ends meet, takes a job as a wingwalker in a traveling county fair. Uprooted from the life he's loved, Reuben needs a full measure of love and courage to get by.

Switch on the Night

by Ray Bradbury

A lonely little boy who is scared of the dark sits in his room alone, with only light for company, until a little girl named Dark appears and shows him light switches don't just switch off the light—they switch on the night.

Recommended for middle school

Savvy

by Ingrid Law

Recounts the adventures of Mihs Beaumont, whose 13th birthday has revealed her "savvy"—a magical power unique to each member of her family—just as her father is injured in a terrible accident.

The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate

by Jacqueline Kelly

In central Texas in 1899, 11-year-old Callie Vee Tate's mom instructs her to be a lady; learns about love from the older three of her six brothers and studies the natural world with her grandfather, the latter of which leads to an important discovery.

THEATRE CORNER

Every play Children's Theatre of Charlotte produces is created by a talented team of designers, technicians, actors and a director. A play is different from a television show or a movie because it's presented live. As a class, discuss what you experienced when you saw the performance.

1. Name three things you noticed about the set. Did the set help tell the story? What sort of set would you have designed?
2. What did you like about the costumes? Did the costumes help tell the story? What sort of costumes would you have designed?
3. What role did lighting play in telling the story? How did the lights enhance what you were seeing?
4. Talk about the actors. Were there moments you were so caught up in the story you forgot you were watching a play?
5. Were there any actors who played more than one character? What are some ways you can be the same person but play different characters?

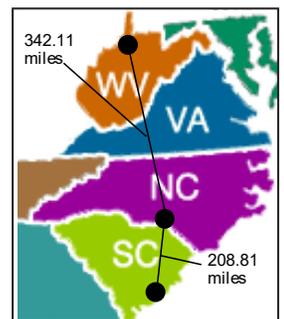


NCES-TheaArts.(3-5).TA.A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances. NCES-TheaArts.(3-5).TA.AE.1.2: Understand how costumes [and technical elements] enhance dramatic play.

Traveling with the tour

The Resident Touring Company (RTC) began in 1972 as the Tarradiddle Players, the vision of theatre educator Constance Welsh. In 1989, the company officially became part of Children's Theatre of Charlotte.

- If the RTC travels from Charleston, South Carolina, to Parkersburg, West Virginia, how many total miles would that be?
- The RTC van gets 15 miles per gallon of gas. How many gallons would it take to drive from Charlotte, North Carolina, to Parkersburg, West Virginia? If the van holds 20 gallons of gas, calculate the cost of travel based on current gas prices.
- The RTC will perform 400 times during the school year. If they perform five days per week, for about 34 weeks, how many average performances is this per day?



CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.OA.D.8: Solve two-step word problems using the four operations. Represent these problems using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity. Assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies including rounding.

Meet the Resident Touring Company



DEVIN CLARK is no stranger to Children's Theatre of Charlotte's stage. His previous shows include *Bud, Not Buddy*, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* and *Coraline*. He has also worked with Theatre Charlotte, Carolina Actors Studio Theatre, Central Piedmont Community College and Shakespeare Carolina. He's blessed to be a part of this year's Resident Touring Company. He thanks his mother, family and friends for their continued support.



CLAIRE HILTON is thrilled to return to Children's Theatre of Charlotte as a member of the Resident Touring Company for the 2017-2018 season. Audiences may remember her as the precocious best friend Rose in *Grace for President* or as the empowered teenager Lenny in *Liars*. When not performing, she spends her time choreographing and in the classroom at Children's Theatre of Charlotte as a teaching artist. She has also performed and taught professionally with The National Theatre for Children, Mill Mountain Theatre and The American Shakespeare Center. Claire sends love to the Children's Theatre of Charlotte family for allowing this show (and her career) to go on!



STEVEN JAMES is excited to return to the Queen City after relocating to New York City two years ago! No stranger to Children's Theatre of Charlotte, audiences may remember him as Papa Bear in 2017's production of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* or as Raphael in *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse*. Along with his performing credits here, you might also know "Mr. Steven" from teaching Summer Camp and School of Theatre Training classes with the wonderful Education department! He sends his thanks to you for supporting the arts and all his love to the usual suspects!



SHELBY RAY appears on Children's Theatre of Charlotte's stage for the first time in these roles, and she couldn't be more excited for her debut. She's a graduate of East Carolina University (Go Pirates!), where she earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts in theatre arts with a concentration in theatre for youth – performance. She's originally from Rocky Mount, North Carolina, and moved to Charlotte after graduation. She started working at Children's Theatre of Charlotte's Education department in 2014, where she did everything from working as a class assistant to stage manager for OnStage. Audiences might also recognize her from working in the front of house for school show performances. She feels blessed to have this wonderful opportunity to spread the joy of theatre to young and old alike. She sends a special thank you to her family and friends for supporting her during this journey.



Write to Us!

Children's Theatre of Charlotte
300 E. Seventh St.
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CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.(3-5).1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

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