

THE PAPER BAG PLAYERS

It's A Marvelous Paper Bag World!

New material for **THE PAPER BAG PLAYERS: It's A Marvelous Paper Bag World!**
was created by Kevin Richard Woodall and John Stone,
with classic sketches drawing from material created by founding Artistic Director Judith Martin and The Paper Bag Players
Performed by Ceili Fitzpatrick, Claire Lundin, Erika Mesa and Kevin Richard Woodall
Music by John Stone and Donald Ashwander Production Supervisor: James Huggans
Scenic Artist: Florencia Escudero (with Jonathan Peck, archival)
Directed by Kevin Richard Woodall

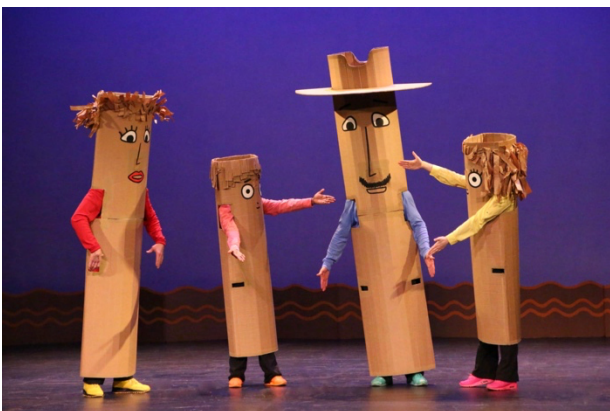
2023-24 Study Guide

Dear Teachers and Parents,

This season, The Paper Bag Players celebrates its 65th anniversary! The company got its start on the Lower East Side of Manhattan in 1958, when a group of artists from diverse backgrounds of dance, theater, visual arts, music and children's books – formed a new theater group that would entertain and delight children using the same simple materials children themselves play with: paper, cardboard, and found objects. Pioneers such as founding artistic director Judy Martin, Remy Charlip, Shirley Kaplan, Irving Burton, Betty Osgood, and early on, composer Donald Ashwander, together created a kind of theater that respects the intelligence and imagination of young children, offering up worlds of play and discovery they can recognize, emulate, learn from, and be inspired by. There is a lyrical quality to the plays which means that children are engaged *actively*. As Judy Martin once said, "Everybody works so hard at selling stuff to kids and amusing them that children don't have much poetry in their lives. And they like poetry."



Many things have changed in the world over these six and a half decades, perhaps most notably the proliferation of technology and screens. But fundamentally, children have not changed: they will always crave to be actively involved in their playtime, and to have their imaginations sparked. We proudly continue the traditions of our company's founders (using simple materials and lo-tech theater magic) not only because they're our identity and aesthetic, but because they work!



This season, we present a kaleidoscope of classics such as "Lost in the Mall," about a very mixed-up family of giant tubes that needs your help to find each other; "Big Red Day," a storybook tale about a house on a hill as day passes to night; "Volcano," the story of a lovable dragon with an oversized roar; and "The Tommy-185," about a brainy robot who wants nothing more than to just dance, especially if you dance along with him. "Arrows" is kind of dance with no words, just arrows: whatever each of you believes it means... is the right answer!

From the entire Paper Bag Players team, thank you for being a part of this experience. We hope you enjoy the show!

A Message to Share with the Children

*Your presence is a very important ingredient of this show. In fact, without an audience, there is no show! You are part of the show whether you are silently listening, laughing or clapping. Sometimes, you will be called upon to help the performers, shouting advice, getting out of your seats to dance, and singing along with them. We can't wait for you to see our show – and to be part of it, too! Finally, **we love to hear from you**: If you have time to draw us a picture about your favorite moment, or a letter telling us what made you laugh or think about something in a new way, we will certainly appreciate it. Your artworks and letters are always treasured!*

THE TOMMY-185

The Tommy-185 is a very sweet robot who loves to dance, but sometimes he gets very confused when answering questions. Do you remember what he said when the scientist asked him how many wheels there are on a bicycle? (Answer: banana!)

Art and Communication Activity

✳ Draw your own robot using lines, squares, rectangles and one triangle; try not to make any circles, ovals or curved lines! You can make a robot face or the full robot (face + body). Give your robot a funny name. Classmates can take turns demonstrating their drawings and robot names.

✳ On the back of your drawing, create your own question and correct answer, for example: Question: What sound does a dog make? Answer: Woof! When everyone in the class has finished, take turns: One person reads only the question they wrote down and then calls on another who reads only their answer: the question and answer won't match, but should be pretty funny! Now the second person reads their question, and a third person reads their answer. Continue until everyone has gone. Discuss what was funny or surprising.



THE BIG COOKIE



In this play, a customer buys a very large cookie to bring to a fancy party.

Memory Game! 1) What kind of cookie did the customer ask for (e.g. oatmeal, lemon, chocolate)? 2) What was the secret ingredient that made the cookie so large? 3) What did the cookie and customer do together before going to the party? 4) Bonus: what was name of the oven? [Answers: 1) chocolate, 2) BIG, 3) they danced, 4) BEATS ALL OVEN]

Math Activity

Imagine you're a baker with a big bowl of delicious cookie dough. With one bowl of dough you can make eight little cookies or one big cookie. But wait: your assistant has just brought in two more bowls of cookie dough!

✳ Now how many big cookies can you make (including your first bowl)? (Answer: 3)

✳ How many little cookies can you make with the three bowls of cookie dough? (Answer: 24) Twelve children enter the store; if you divide all the little cookies evenly among them, how many does each child receive? (Answer: 2)

✳ Now pretend big cookies represent zeroes which you can put in front of numbers. How many big cookies would you need to make the number 30? How about the number 7000? Or 200? (Answers: 1; 3; 2)

MISS MIXUP is a magician who does tricks with language. When she claps together two cards, one showing a stick of butter, and the other, a fly, she's able to make a *butterfly*! Miss Mixup's tricks are *visual puns*. A visual pun uses a picture (something visual) for each half of a *compound word*. A compound word is a word that is made up of two smaller words. For example, *watermelon* is made up of *water* and *melon*. A pun is a kind of joke that plays with different meanings of a word or of two words that sound alike. Most Knock-Knock jokes rely on puns. (*Knock knock? Who's there? Lettuce. Lettuce who? Lettuce in, it's cold out here!*)



Rainbow

Discussion and Activities

✳ What were Miss Mixup's other puns? (Answers: Horse + Shoe = horseshoe. Pan + Cake = pancake. Rain + bow = rainbow.) Can we as a class come up with some more? Some ideas: chickpea, weekend, cheesecake, homework, lunchbox. How would you draw the two parts to give clues for the compound word?



Pancake

✳ There are many other ways of playing with language. One popular one is **RHYME**. Rhyming words sound like each other. Ex: Moose / Goose / Loose. 🖐 Wavy / Gravy 🖐 Eight / Gate / Skate 🖐 Dog / Log / Frog 🖐 Home / Gnome / Foam

Think of a word and see how many other words rhyme with it. Write them down and see if you can make a little poem or song. The Paper Bag Players love using rhymes in our songs. We'd love to hear some of your favorite rhyming words and songs!

ARROWS

Arrows is a play with no words, just movement. It's a dance!

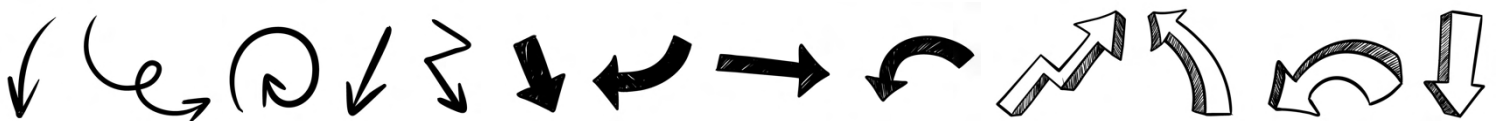
Discussion

✳ There are many kinds of arrows in our piece: ones that point toward and away from each other, dancing arrows, arrows that fly through space, even arrows of a clock! Some plays tell a story, but in this special piece, it's up to viewers like you to make up your own story or decide what the images and movements mean. You can even enjoy it just because the movement is interesting, or beautiful or inspiring. What thoughts came to your mind when you saw the piece, *Arrows*?



Activity

✳ Let's have some fun drawing pictures that tell stories with nothing but arrows. First, draw some lines to divide your page into four parts. In one corner, draw a family of arrows (two parents and two kids). In another corner, draw two or more arrows that are shooting to the stars like rockets. In the next corner, arrows that chase each other. Now draw a funny face made from arrows. Turn your page over: what stories or scenes can you draw with nothing but arrows of all shapes, sizes and directions?



BIG RED DAY



In this play, we tell a simple story of how day turns to night.

✳ Theater terms: What is a prop? In a stage play or movie, a prop (which is short for “property”) is something an actor holds or uses or moves. Props are different from scenery (also known as “set”), which is the background setting for action, such as a large painting or physical structure that represents the place the actors are in. For example, in a different play in the show called *Volcano*, you saw a large cardboard set painted to look like the forest.

In *Big Red Day*, each actor holds a flat cardboard prop. Who can remember all the daytime props? (Answers: Sun, mountain, house, cloud). In our shows, we sometimes make a single prop transform into

more than one thing! When the day turns to night, the props spin around; what do they become? (Answer: the green mountain and red house become black; the sun becomes the moon; and the cloud becomes a star-filled night sky.)

Discussion

✳ Opposites. Day and night are *opposites*, things that are as different from one another as possible. The teacher will say some words, one by one, and you will take turns saying the opposite. Ready?

High | Heavy | Far-away | Scared | Tiny | Hot | Serious | Wet | Bumpy | Slow | Noisy | Empty | Messy | Dark | Sad | Beginning

The Art & Fun of The Paper Bag Players: Workshops

Deepen your students’ experience of the arts by taking them from seeing theater to creating it! Our innovative arts educational program is designed to expand upon the theatrical experience and bring to arts education into the classroom. Our workshops, led by The Paper Bag Players Creative Team, are tailored to children Pre-K – 3rd grade. Children become a Paper Bag Player for the Day, engaging in movement, storytelling, and improvisation, as well as creating sets, props, and costumes. Our 1-week and 2-week programs allow for in-depth exploration of each area and culminates in a class performance of the play for family, friends and community. Single 90-minute workshops are process-oriented, giving children the opportunity to fully explore working with paper in art, movement and dramatic play.



Children learn how to make theater out of what is all around them with the help of their own ideas, creativity, and a little bit of paper – just like The Paper Bag Players do! The paper transforms into everything from trombone to telescope, puppy to party dress. This dramatic play exercises children’s imagination, as well as social, language and motor skills. Students work as a team and learn how to collaborate. Our workshops provide early readers and writers with an active context for literacy development and for exploring new and abstract concepts. In addition, teachers can witness The Paper Bag Players approach, tools, and techniques to enhance their own curriculum, utilizing low-cost, readily available, expressive paper.

Workshops are designed for groups of 10-25 children, can be held during or after school. For more details, or to book dates and times, call 212-353-2332. For examples of our work, CDs & DVDS, please visit www.thepaperbagplayers.org

The Paper Bag Players

A Non-Profit Theater for Children

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