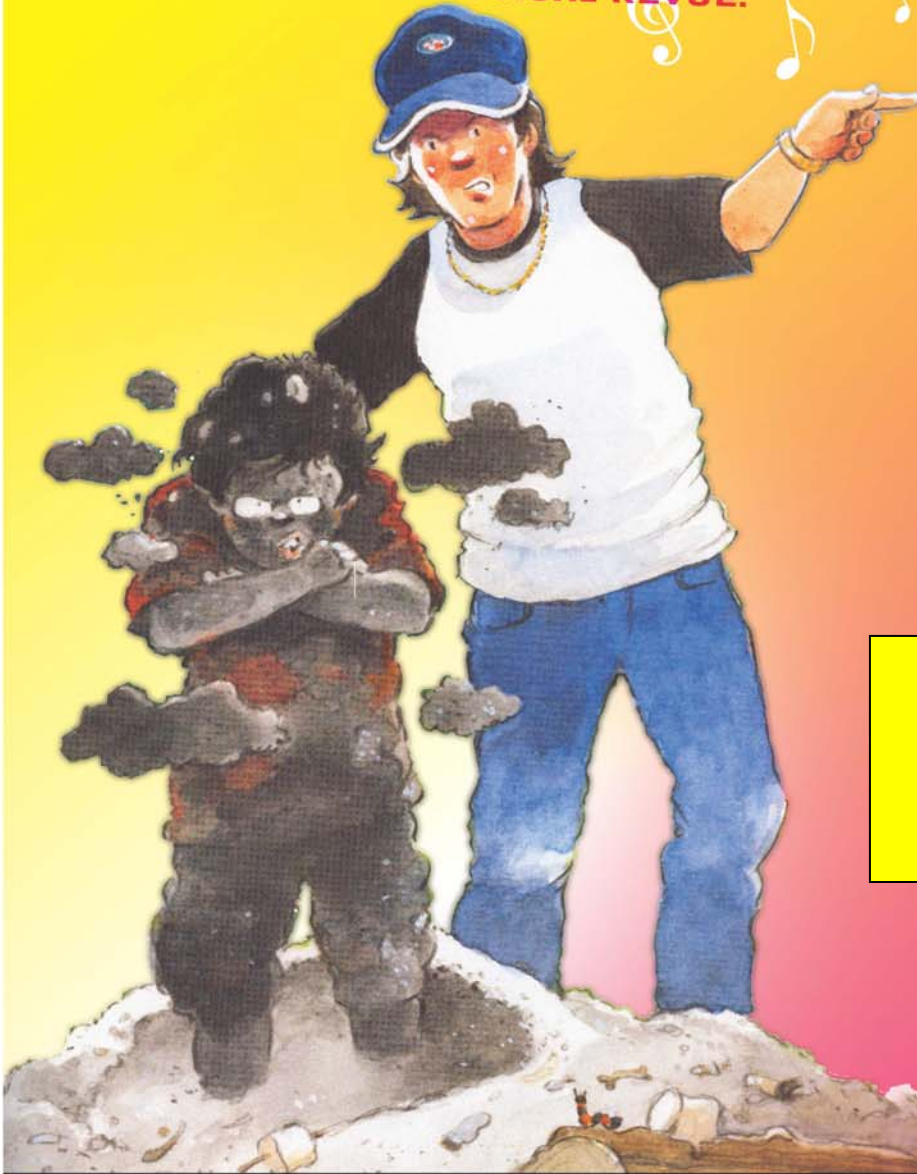


PRAIRIE THEATRE
EXCHANGE

MUNSCHA MEEYA

FAMILY
HOLIDAY
SHOW

MUNSCH goes VEGAS
WITH A MADCAP MUSICAL REVUE.



Based on the stories by
**ROBERT
MUNSCH**

Adapted by
**DEBBIE
PATTERSON**

Including:
STEPHANIE'S PONYTAIL,
*JONATHAN CLEANED UP...
THEN HE HEARD A SOUND,*
AARON'S HAIR,
SANDCASTLE CONTEST
and *DOWN THE DRAIN*

PRESENTED
AS LIVE
THEATRE

STUDY GUIDE
Written by Lisa Martin

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THE
Great-West Life
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TOUR SPONSORS



Joe Brain
Foundation



Prairie Theatre Exchange presents

Munsch Meeya

**Based on stories by Robert Munsch
Adapted by Debbie Patterson**

Director: Arne MacPherson

Set & Costume Designer: Lisa Hancharek

Lighting Designer: Eric Bossé

Composer: Debbie Patterson

Stage Manager: Candace Maxwell

Featuring:

Joseph Aragon

Dorothy Carroll

Gwendolyn Collins

The performance is approximately 50 minutes long.

We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts which last year invested \$5.9 million in the arts in Manitoba.

Nous remercions de son soutien le Conseil des Arts du Canada., qui a investi 5,9 millions de dollars l'an dernier dans les arts au Manitoba.

Prairie Theatre Exchange is a not-for-profit theatre and an active member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT), and engages, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Lotta and **Meeyah** are the two stars of the show – which is one star too many! With **Ace** accompanying on piano, Lotta and Meeyah have to learn how to share the stage, while sharing Munsch stories with the audience. Luckily, through singing silly songs and telling tall tales, they begin to understand each other better.

Stephanie's Ponytail

Stephanie wants to do her hair differently than the rest of her class, but every time she changes her hair, the rest of the class copies her! A story about how being unique can be a difficult task!

Down the Drain

When Adam gets dirty playing outside, Dad insists it's time for a bath...but when Dad gets distracted, the tub keeps filling and filling! Adam needs to pull the plug, but nothing's ever that simple in a Munsch story!

Aaron's Hair

Aaron thought he wanted long hair, but then he doesn't want it anymore, and tells it so. Not wanted, the hair runs away! With Aaron in hot pursuit, the hair tries to find itself a new home, in some very strange places!

Jonathan Cleaned Up – Then He Heard a Sound

Jonathan's mom goes to the store, and tells Jonathan to keep things tidy while she's gone. Unfortunately, their house seems to be a stop for the subway! How can Jonathan keep their house clean if their living room is covered in junk – and there's a man sleeping on their couch?!

The Sandcastle Contest

Matthew is excited when he finds out that the beach he's at is holding a sandcastle contest, and he builds the greatest sand house ever – too great. No one can believe that such a fabulous house is made of sand. How can Matthew make them see?

ABOUT THE CREATORS

Author -- Robert Munsch

Robert Munsch was born June 11, 1945 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Although he struggled in school as a child, he had an early and lasting love of poetry. His first career path was that of a Jesuit Priest, but he abandoned this after working at an orphanage, realizing that he wanted to work with children instead.

After some time, he and his wife moved to Guelph, Ontario to work at the lab preschool at the University of Guelph. He regularly put the children at daycare to sleep by telling them stories he would create, but never wrote them down. At the strong urging of his employer and his wife – a children’s librarian – he took the time to write the stories and have them published. The first accepted for publication was *Mud Puddle*. Subsequent bestsellers include *Love You Forever* and *Mortimer*.

Robert Munsch holds a Bachelor of History, a Masters in Anthropology, and studied at Elliot Pearson School of Child Studies at Tufts University.

For more info on Robert Munsch, visit his official website at www.robertmunsch.com

Adapter -- Debbie Patterson

This is Debbie’s fifth adaptation of Robert Munsch stories for PTE. Together with her husband, Arne MacPherson, as director, Debbie was responsible for some of the most wildly popular Munsch shows in PTE’s 23 year history of bringing the stories to stage, including *Munschapalooza*, *Munsch Ado About Nothing*, and last year’s *Little Munsch on the Prairie*. A talented musician, as well as an actor and director, Debbie brings her songwriting talents to bear in creating a musical version of some of the most enduring stories in children’s literature.

A graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada, Debbie Patterson is a founding member of Shakespeare in the Ruins, with which she has directed and acted in dozens of plays. Recently, she produced and published the full-length musical *Head*, about the last days of Anne Boleyn. She has also written and directed plays in the Winnipeg Fringe Festival, many which have involved her entire family in the acting and directing roles.

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Grades K-3

Creative Drama

Magic Box

In a circle, each student takes a turn taking something out of the 'magic box' (could be invisible, could be an empty box) and using it, so others can guess what the object is. They can mime a drum set, an umbrella, a basketball, a toothbrush, etc.

Pass the Pencil

Similar to *Magic Box*, but instead of creating an object out of thin air, a pencil is passed around and made into anything they can think of – a telescope, a walking cane, a skateboard...the sky's the limit!

Alien Discovery

Place everyday objects around the room, and have the students imagine that they are from another planet and have never seen these objects before. When they go to an object, they must imagine a 'new' use for it – a cup is now a hat, a ruler is a comb, etc. They can explain this new object to the group, and demonstrate how to use it!

Sand Sculptures

Matthew makes a sand house so realistic no one can believe it was made of sand; what if we could make a sculpture out of our friends? In pairs, each student will take turns standing neutrally, as a pile of sand. The other student is the artist, and can 'mould' their sand into a statue of anything they want – teacher-led, they might receive a suggestion such as making an animal. Gently, they move their sand around to look like their favourite animal!

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Grades K-3

Art

Pictures from the Play

After seeing the play and hearing the stories the actors told, what is the moment that the students remember the most? Was it when the subway first stops in Jonathan's living room? Is it when Lotta realizes that she was tricked into shaving off her hair? Have the students draw or paint their own representation of that moment, finishing it off with a title.

Sock Puppets

Re-create the stories in the play with puppets! Each student brings in a sock, and makes a puppet of one of the characters. The story can be read aloud as the puppets do the actions, or they can re-tell the story in their own words.

What you need:

- one sock per student
- scissors
- index cards (one per student)
- felt squares (one per student, same size as index cards) or colored construction paper
- mini glue guns (for the adults to use) and glue sticks
- decorations (googly eyes, fabric and/or felt pieces, puff balls, yarn, feathers, beads, buttons, etc.)

Instructions:

1. Hold the sock up by the toe end, and cut downward into the sock, about the length of your index finger – this will be the mouth opening.
2. Lay the index card down on the table, and trace your hand, fingers together, on the card. Close the hand trace where your wrist is – your hand trace will become the inside of the mouth.
3. Cut out the trace of your hand, and lay it on the felt piece. Trace the shape onto the felt, and cut it out.
4. Fold the index card cut out in half, to make the top and bottom of the mouth. Place the index card inside the sock opening that was cut. Using the glue gun, glue the sides of the sock over the edges of the card, forming the open mouth of the puppet.
5. Glue the felt cut out to line the inside of the mouth, covering the index card and the glued edges of the sock.
6. Put eyes, hair, hats, etc. on your puppet.

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Grades 3–6

Drama

Conductor

The songs in the play reflect what the stories are about, but we can sing about anything! Ask each student to decide on a short sentence that says something about them or what they like (ie. “ *I love cookies*). Once everyone has their sentence, and has said it aloud, the teacher (or *Conductor*), asks everyone to sing their line, repeating it over and over.

- Raising your hand high in the air means everyone sings their line on a high note, low is low note, etc.
- Moving hands back and forth shows pace, so slowly means sing slowly, fast hand movements mean faster singing.
- start and stop individual singers by showing them a signal for stopping, such as a ‘cut’ sign across the throat, or a ‘talk to the hand’ signal.

A very unusual choral piece will emerge!

Tableaux

Meaning ‘frozen picture’, tableaux begin the process of taking stories from the page to the stage! Take a book that you have read in class (or a new book that hasn’t been read yet), and choose passages to create onstage. Focusing on the poses of the body to create characters and setting, there is no movement or words to worry about – the students are literally making a 3D picture-based version of the story. You can split the class into groups of 4 or 5, and give each group a particular passage of a book to create a picture representation of. Then, have the groups present their tableaux in the order in which they would appear in the book.

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Grades 3-6

Drama

Big, Bigger, Biggest

The actors in the play and the characters in the Munsch stories have a lot of different reactions when things happen to them – happy, sad, confused, angry, etc. Sometimes the reactions are bigger than other times. What does it look like when someone is ‘happy’? Ask the class to show happy with their faces, bodies, and voices. Now, take it up a notch – if that’s ‘happy’, what’s ‘happier’? Finally, show ‘happiest’! Try it with many different emotions. A great way to bring kids out of their shell, explore feelings, and show expression.

Show and Tell

In pairs, students take turns miming an object for the other person. Ask them to think of an everyday object, and to think of how heavy it is, how large or small, and how it is carried and used. They then try to show through action what it is they have. Their partner gets three tries to figure it out – they might guess first by saying “Oh, that’s a very nice rock”. If the object is not a rock, the person showing may say “If it was a rock, I couldn’t do this with it”, and try showing its use a little more. The guesser can reply with their next guess – “Oh, why that’s a nifty television”. After 3 guesses, they switch roles, and try another object.

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Grades 3-6

Language Arts

They Didn't Believe Me!

In the stories *Jonathan Cleaned Up – Then He Heard a Sound* and *The Sandcastle Contest*, kids try and tell adults something that is true, but the adults don't believe them. Do you have a story like that? Did they ever end up believing you? If so, how did you show them you were telling the truth? After sharing some of the class' experiences, imagine a scenario where kids would need to explain their situation – a dirty room, no food left in what was a full fridge, etc. Write a story where the kids get the blame for something caused by someone (or something) else!

Down the Drain

Adam goes down the drain, along with his skateboard, red shoes, and hamburger...so what else could be down there? Imagine that you were in the tub, and ended up going down the drain – what's in there? What's it like in *your* drain? Write a poem about your adventures in bath drainage – it's sure to be unique!

Art

Me, but Different

With a nod to *Mr. Potato Head*, this activity allows children to play with what they might look like with different features. Ask the students to draw their own portrait (eyes, nose, mouth and hair) on an oval representing their face. Then, either with ready-to-cut templates or blank paper for drawing freehand, have them create several different 'looks' for themselves by placing different hair/eyes/noses etc. on top of their face picture. Which do they like best?

Play Poster

Your assignment is to make a poster to sell tickets to this play! Making sure the stories are being represented, create a poster for *Munsch's Meeya*. There are also the 3 characters that tell the stories, too. This can be a collage project, a drawing project, a painting project, or all of the above!

RESOURCES

Ball, Chris and Airs, John, *Taking Time to Act – A Guide to Cross-Curricular Drama*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 1995.

Booth, David, *Story Drama – Reading, writing and roleplaying across the curriculum*, Pembroke Publishers Ltd., Markham, ON, 1994.

Pura, Talia, *Stages – Creative Ideas for Teaching Drama*, J. Gordon Shillingford Publishing, Winnipeg, MB, 2002.

Rooyackers, Paul, *101 More Drama Games For Children*, Hunter House Inc., Berkeley, CA, 2002

Wood, David with Grant, Janet, *Theatre For Children – A Guide to Writing, Adapting, Directing and Acting*, Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1997.

Wagner, Betty Jane, *Dorothy Heathcote – Drama as a Learning Medium*, Revised Edition, Calendar Island Publishers, 1999.

PTE SCHOOL – Workshops in the School

PTE School offers custom-tailored workshops for any classroom, any age and any curriculum. Extend the students' experience of this play, or take advantage of limitless possibilities for drama to enhance other school subject matter or students' expression and creativity.

For over 37 years, Prairie Theatre Exchange School has been offering top-quality drama education for students of all ages, both onsite in our Portage Place facility and in the community, in classrooms. PTE instructors are professional theatre artists and trained educators.

Call the PTE School Coordinator, Lizabeth Kogan, at 925-5253 to discuss how our skills and knowledge can support your goals for your students.