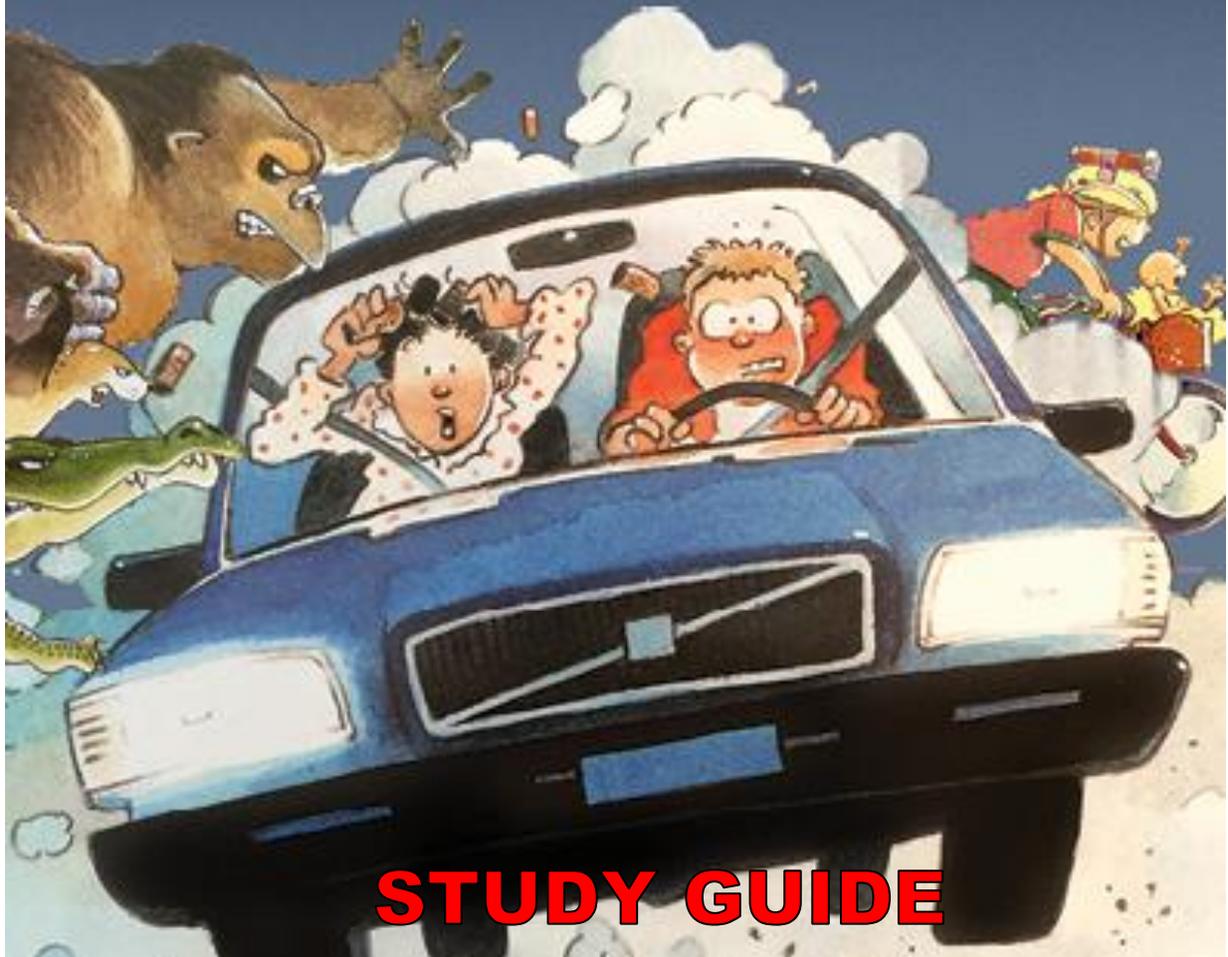


MUNSCH BUSTERS!

Based on the stories of
ROBERT MUNSCH

Adapted by
DEBBIE PATTERSON



STUDY GUIDE

Winnipeg Tour: January 17 – February 3, 2017
Provincial Tour: February 4 – March 26, 2017

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Presents



MUNSCHBUSTERS!

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

Director:	Sharon Bajer
Set and Costume Designer:	Sean E. McMullen
Lighting Designer:	Larry Isacoff
Tour Stage Manager:	Holly LaJambe

Featuring:

Spenser Payne	Allie
RobYn Slade	Bernice
Jane Testar	Cassie

The performance is approximately 50 minutes long.

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

PLAY SYNOPSIS

Business is pretty slow for the MunschBusters until Cassie walks in. Munschnormal Investigators Bernice and Allie are only too happy to help Cassie find her parents, who have been trapped in the Dark and can't find their way home. In order to do that, they must research their past cases for all the wisdom of the Munsch Busters they contain.

The Dark -- Jule Ann pounds on the bottom of a cookie jar, and a small dark lump bounces out. The Dark quickly gobbles up every shadow in sight, growing bigger with each one. Munsch's plucky heroine resolves the perplexing problem with brilliant, spirited logic.

Mud Puddle – When Jule Ann goes outside, a mud puddle jumps on her and gets her dirty all over. No sooner does her mother scrub her clean than she ventures out again, only to be pounced upon by the pesky mud puddle. Jule Ann finally gets the better of the mud puddle with cheerful ingenuity and two bars of smelly yellow soap.

The Boy in the Drawer – Shelley finds a small boy in her drawer who causes a lot of trouble. All her efforts to make him go away just make him grow bigger. Then she discovers that kindness was the key.

Good Families Don't – Carmen's mom and dad don't believe her that there is a purple, green and yellow fart on her bed. It takes all her determination and a beautiful rose to vanquish the smelly thing and save her parents.

Alligator Baby -- Kristen's parents are expecting a baby any minute, but they get lost on the way to the hospital. They have a baby in the zoo, and in all the excitement, they bring home an alligator baby!

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 the daycare to sleep by telling them stories he would create, but he never wrote those stories down. At the strong urging of his employer and 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 degree in History and a Masters degree in Anthropology. He has also studied at Elliot Pearson School of Child Studies at Tufts University.

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

Adaptation – Debbie Patterson

Debbie Patterson is a Winnipeg playwright, director and actor. This is her eleventh adaptation of Robert Munsch stories for PTE, and she loves writing them. Currently she is one of the Artistic Associates at Prairie Theatre Exchange and is a member of the PTE Playwrights Unit. She's also a founding member of Shakespeare in the Ruins where she directs shows (like *Macbeth*) and sometimes acts in shows (like *Richard III*). She loves her two grown-up kids (Gislina and Solmund), her sweet husband (Arne) and her cuddly cat (Riot).

Please let us know how your students reacted to the show!

We'd love a letter from you, and we'd love letters from your students even more, especially if they tell us **how the show made them feel** and **what their favourite moments were!**

Send the letters to Ivan Henwood, Prairie Theatre Exchange, Unit Y300 – 393 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 3H6

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

GRADES K-3

Creative Drama

MR. MUNSCH SAYS

In a twist on the classic “Simon Says” game, give the instructions to the class as Mr. Munsch, as in “Mr. Munsch says, stick out your tongue.” Anyone who doesn’t carry through an instruction prefaced by “Mr. Munsch says” is out. Anyone who obeys an instruction that ISN’T prefaced by “Mr. Munsch says” is out. Once the class gets the hang of the game, the children can take turns being Mr. Munsch for a few rounds.

EMOTION IN MOTION

Prior to the exercise prepare a set of cards with specific emotions printed on them (words such as “angry”, “sad”, “happy”, “hungry”, “thirsty”, “sleepy”, etc.).

Assemble the group in a semicircle. One by one the players are assigned an Emotion in Motion card. You may have to read the card to the player. Once the player has an understanding of what is on the card, he or she portrays the emotion through mime to the rest of the group. Upon completion of the player’s portrayal, the group is given three chances to guess the emotion that was put into motion. When conducting this exercise, the emphasis should be placed upon individual participation.

A variation of the exercise involves having the players use only facial expressions to convey the meaning on the card given them.

ZOO STATUES

There’s a whole zoo in *Alligator Baby*. In this game of statues, divide the class into two or more groups. Have one group spin around three times, and then freeze in the position of an animal of their choice. The other group or groups have to guess which animals they’re seeing. Then another group takes a turn as statues.

JULE ANN’S MAGIC COOKIE JAR

The Dark came out of Jule Ann’s cookie jar. What will come out of yours? In a circle, each student takes a turn taking something out of the ‘cookie jar’ (could be invisible, could be an actual empty container) and using it, so others can guess what the object is. They can mime a drum set, an umbrella, a basketball, a toothbrush, etc.

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

GRADES K-3

Art

MASK MAGIC

Have the class create masks using paper plates (you can pre-cut eyeholes before the activity – the plates could also be cut in half for demi-masks that cover just the top part of the face). The children can decorate the masks to be people or animals, using crayons and objects like feathers, pompoms, glitter or whatever can be supplied. The masks could be attached on one side to a stick (like a chopstick), or you could thread string or yarn on each side to tie the mask behind the wearer's head.

This activity can be expanded to include story-telling with the masks. Have one child start telling a story using the mask character. One by one, each child adds to the story with their mask character, with one or two sentences each.

WATER COLOUR PAINTING

1. Mix up several colours of tempera paint. Purple, green and yellow would relate to the story of *Good Families Don't*, or you could use yellow, red and blue to show how all the other colours are created using just the three primary colours.
2. Supply each child with a sheet of fairly heavy white paper (sketch book paper works well), a cup of water and a brush just for the water.
3. Have the children brush water onto the paper in sections, trying not to get the paper too wet.
4. Touch a paintbrush loaded with one colour onto the wet part of the paper. It should spread and bleed outwards.
5. Touch another colour near the first one so that the two colours touch. What happens where they mingle?
6. Once the paper is mostly covered in paint, let it dry. After it's dry, the children can find the prettiest parts of the painting and draw shapes over it to cut out. They could cut out flowers to glue to paper in a bouquet, like Cassie might give the Munsch Busters as a thank you for helping her save her parents, or they could draw different shapes like circles, triangles and squares to glue to paper to make an abstract mosaic, or to create a frame for a picture about the play.

Alternatively, the painting could be left intact, and figures drawn by the students of the characters in the play could be cut out and glued on top.

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

GRADES K-3

Language Arts

THE CASE OF THE MISSING ADJECTIVES

Explain to the students what adjectives are. Go around the class in a circle, having each student suggest an adjective. They could use colours (like red or blue), emotions (happy, sad, silly, funny), or physical traits (short, beautiful, hairy, etc.). Fill in each blank in the story. You can adjust the number of blanks to match the number of students; there can be more than one blank per noun, if you want. After all the blanks are filled, read the story out loud.

Once upon a _____ time, Cassie came running into the _____ offices of the _____ Munsch Busters. She begged the _____ Munschnormal Investigators, the _____ Allie and the _____ Bernice, to help her find her parents who had been lost to the _____ Dark. Cassie told the _____ story of The Dark. Allie wanted to go right out and find the _____ Dark, and blast it with _____ proton packs or _____ neutron wands. Bernice was more cautious. She insisted that they read some of the _____ case files to get clues on how to deal with the Dark. They read the _____ stories of the _____ Mud Puddle, the _____ Boy in the _____ Drawer, _____ Families Don't and the _____ Alligator Baby. Using everything they learned from the _____ case files, the _____ Bernice, _____ Ally and _____ Cassie trapped the Dark back in its _____ cookie jar and sent it away in a _____ garbage truck, so it would never hurt anyone again.

LETTERS TO PRAIRIE THEATRE EXCHANGE

This would be a great language arts activity – ask the students to draw a picture of their favourite moment in the play, with a sentence about how watching the play made them feel. Make sure they sign their name and grade.

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

GRADES 4-6

Drama

PASS IT ON

With the students sitting in a circle, the person at the beginning of the circle gets to choose a line out of a Robert Munsch book and whisper it to the person next to them. That student whispers what they heard in the ear of another person and so on. Once the last student in the circle hears the line, they tell everyone else what was said to them, and the first student reveals what that sentence was originally. This could also be done with sentences selected by the teacher and passed to the initiating student on a folded piece of paper.

KNOT FOR NOTHING

Split the class into two groups. Each group forms a circle, with each student grabbing the hands of two other students who are not next to them. Once everyone has hold of two hands, have everyone try to figure out how to get out of the knot. The group which gets out of the knot first, wins. This game is great for team-work.

ON THE HUNT FOR THE DARK

Sitting in a circle, have each student add to the sentence, "On the hunt for The Dark, the MunschBusters took ...". The first child might say, "On the hunt for The Dark, the MunschBusters took ...a net." The second child might say "On the hunt for The Dark, the Munsch Busters took a net...and a flashlight." The third child might say "On the hunt for The Dark, the MunschBusters took a net, a flashlight...and a proton pack." The list can get quite long, so you may want to break the students into groups, with the other groups listening as each list is created.

MOVE GROOVE

Let the players walk freely about the room. At regular intervals announce that everyone is to move as though they are:

happy...excited...curious...proud...afraid...sleepy...hungry...sick...bored

In *Alligator Baby*, there's a lot of fast movement that is portrayed without really going anywhere. Divide the players into pairs, and have each pair show the others how they would look moving on a bicycle, a pogo stick, in deep snow, against a strong wind, etc.

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

GRADES 4-6

Art

SHADOW PUPPETS

In the story *The Dark*, shadows of different objects are eaten up by this mysterious creature. Create your own shadows in the form of shadow puppets! Using cardboard, draw and cut out the shape of your shadow in whatever form you'd like; then, paste it to one end of a chopstick or popsicle stick. For a 'stage', all you need is a screen or sheet with a light shining behind it – stick the shadow puppet in front of the light, and voila, shadow puppet theatre! Create mini plays, or re-create a story that already exists by dividing up the characters amongst the class.

SOAP BUBBLE PAINTING

In *Mud Puddle*, Jule Ann takes a lot of baths and the soap bubbles fly. Painting with soap bubbles can create some very beautiful pictures, like Jule Ann's cookie jar.

1. Mix blue, green or yellow tempera paint with a squirt of liquid dishwashing soap and a little water in a large bowl. Mix well.
2. Put a straw into the mixture and blow hard until bubbles puff up above the rim of the bowl.
3. Lay a sheet of white paper gently on top of the bubbles, so that it is resting on the bowl. Don't press down.
4. Lift up, and you will have a bubble print. Repeat the process with the next colour. Remember to blow up the bubbles after each print. If the mixture is not bubbly enough, add more liquid soap.
5. Let the bubble print dry. Once it's dry, draw a cookie jar shape over the prettiest part of the print and cut it out and glue on a COOKIES label. Or use the print as a background for a scene from the play by drawing and gluing on figures.

CREATE A LOGO

Explain what a logo is, using the classic Ghostbusters or PTE's MunschBusters logo as an example. Have the students create their own ghost-catching company's name and logo, drawing and colouring it. Once the class has completed their images, have them each present the drawing and the name of their business to the class. This could also be done in pairs or small groups.

PLAY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

GRADES 4-6

Language Arts

IT WAS A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT...

Make up a story, one word at a time. The stories in *MunschBusters!* are about non-human creatures or odd circumstances, so making up a ghost story in class would fit the theme. Start with “It was a dark and stormy night...” Go around the circle and have each student add a word. You could record the story as it builds (either electronically, or on paper) and read/play it back once it’s done.

KIDS TO THE RESCUE

Some crazy things happen in Robert Munsch stories. Mud puddles come to life, the dark eats shadows, and parents keep bringing home the wrong baby – and the kids always figure out how to save the day. Ask the students to write their own Munsch-style story, with themselves as the main character. What silly thing could they have their parents do? How would they fix everything and save the day?

SMELLY JELLY SOAP

In *Mud Puddle*, Jule Ann eventually chases away the pestering mud puddle with two bars of smelly yellow soap. Ever wonder where those soap bars came from? Have the students write a story about going to a store and finding Smelly Jelly Soap on a shelf. What would it look like? What would it feel like? What would it smell like? How much would it cost? Why would one need it? How should it be used? What will it do to a person when used? And would it taste like jelly? And why would anyone try and taste it in the first place?

Older students can write their own 30 second commercial about their Smelly Jelly Soap, and then present it to the rest of the group.

LETTERS TO PRAIRIE THEATRE EXCHANGE

This would be a great language arts activity – ask the students to write a letter to the actors about their favourite moment in the play, with a sentence about how watching the play made them feel. They could add a sentence about how something they saw made them think of something that happened to them in their own life. They could draw a picture of their favourite moment, as well. Make sure they sign their name and grade.

RESOURCES

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Ross, Laura. *Scrap Puppets: How to Make and Move Them*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston,. 1978.

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Willson, Robina Beckles. *Creative Drama and Musical Activities for Children: Improvised Movement, Game, Action Songs, Rhymes and Playlets*. Boston: Plays, Inc., 1977.

In-Class Workshop – MunschBusters in the Classroom!

A guaranteed hit for students K-6

How Munsch fun can you have? Explore the fun of theatre through the books of Robert Munsch, with the experienced instructors of the **PTE Theatre & Film School**.

This play-related workshop is designed to enrich your students' comprehension and enjoyment of the production while encouraging imagination and self-expression through games, movement exercises, music and story theatre. Book this workshop as the perfect lead-up to your school performance or as a post-performance enhancement for your classroom.

For almost 45 years, Prairie Theatre Exchange has been offering top-quality drama education for students of all ages, both onsite in our Portage Place facility and throughout community classrooms. PTE Instructors are professional theatre artists and trained educators.

Call the PTE School Director, Loc Lu, at (204) 925-5252 to learn more about this workshop and others that can be tailored to your specific needs and students.