

stages
theatre company



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STUDY GUIDE

SEPT 16 - OCT 20, 2016

Book and lyrics by Will Osborne and Murray Horwitz. Music and additional lyrics by Allen Toussaint. Based on "MAGIC TREE HOUSE #42: A Good Night for Ghosts," by Mary Pope Osborne.

STAGESTHEATRE.ORG

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BEHIND THE STAGE DOOR - STUDY GUIDE

A resource guide for teachers

BEHIND THE STAGE DOOR is intended as a resource guide for teachers and students to use before and after attending a performance at Stages Theatre Company. Our goal is to provide helpful information to enhance your theatre-going experience and to offer a resource that serves as a springboard for extending this experience into the classroom and across the curriculum.

WHO WE ARE...

Stages Theatre Company is committed to the enrichment and education of children and youth in a professional theatre environment that stimulates artistic excellence and personal growth.

Guide content by Jeannine Coulombe

WHAT GOES INTO A PERFORMANCE

The performance you see at Stages Theatre Company is the result of many people working together. As the audience, you mostly see the performer On stage, but there are many more people working behind the scenes that you never see. Each person, both on stage and off, serves an important role to create the performance you see as an audience member.

Role of the Director

- Responsible for the overall vision of the production
- Guides actors in interpreting characters and provides them with stage movement
- Works with designers in planning the sound, lights, costumes, make-up, props, scenery, stage effects

Role of the Designers

- Responsible for creating the look of the lights, scenery, costumes, make-up, sound and stage effects
- Works with the director in realizing the overall vision of the production

Role of the Stage Manager

- Responsible for organizing the production, including schedules, resources, communications, technical effects and personnel
- In charge of making sure everything runs smoothly both during rehearsals and performances

Role of the Crew

- Responsible for building the scenery, costumes, props and stage effects that you see on stage
- Work backstage during the performance operating the scenery, props, costumes, effects, lights and sound

Role of the Cast

- Responsible for performing the characters in the play on stage in front of the audience.

Role of the Audience

- The play doesn't exist without you! That's right, you are a collaborator in any performance you see. All of the work that goes into a production means nothing without the audience there to experience the performance. It is a unique responsibility. It is important for you to learn your role so you can join everyone else who has worked to create the production

THE ROLE OF THE AUDIENCE

The audience has an important role in the theatre experience. When the lights go down, a performance, especially for you, begins. This special relationship only happens in live theatre. When you take your seat in the audience, you accept the responsibility of a special agreement.

The Audience Agreement

1. Believe what happens is real. It is happening live, before your eyes!
2. Listen carefully and quietly.
3. Let the production unfold and enfold you.
4. Respond honestly and sincerely. The actors are aware of your presence and your responses.
5. Tune in to what is happening on the stage.
6. Remain polite throughout the performance.

How to be a Polite Audience Member

1. Avoid anything that distracts the performers. Un-necessary talking, rustling papers, gum-snapping, jangly jewelry, cellophane wrappers, cell phones, and pagers are all examples of un-warranted and un-welcome sounds during the play.
2. Never use flash cameras. They are strictly forbidden. Their blinding lights can be an actual danger to the actors.
3. Finally, when the play is over, show your appreciation with hearty applause. These are the sounds that warm the hearts of the actors.

Before the Show Activities

1. Have students make a list: "What do we do when we watch television or go to a movie?" Compare the results to the theatre audience etiquette list above. How are they similar? How are they different?
2. Take some time to practice being an audience member. Turn down lights to darken the room. Have a student tell or read a story. When the speaker is done, have the audience applaud. Ask the speaker how the quiet listening and the applause made him or her feel? How did it make the audience feel?
3. Before the play, discuss the elements that go into a theatrical production. Scenery, make-up, costumes, lighting, properties, and sound effects each has a unique design and a unique designer. In consultation with the director, each of these designs is coordinated to produce an overall design concept. By making students aware of these production aspects, you can then ask them to comment on their observations of specific design elements after viewing the play.

Our study guide is designed to be a resource for teachers and students before and after they attend a production here at Stages Theatre Company.

We are always interested in how we can improve this resource to be the most effective for you and your students. We would like to you to share with us what activities or discussions from this guide that were the most useful for you.

You can email your responses to Jeannine Coulombe at jcoulombe@stages theatre.com

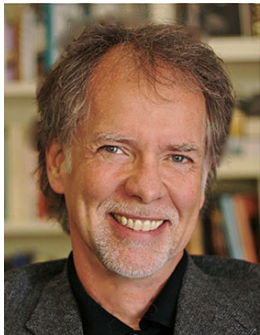
Thank you for attending Stages Theatre Company!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR, COMPOSERS & PLAYWRIGHTS



MARY POPE OSBORNE - AUTHOR

Mary Pope Osborne was born into adventure. Her dad was in the army, so every year or two her family would move to a different state, or even a different country! By the time she was fifteen, Mary had lived in thirteen different house and gone to eight different schools! Writing children's books was a perfect career for Mary because she could still travel all over the world—but be back home in time for dinner. She has written almost a hundred books, including biographies, mysteries, picture books, novels, and retellings of fairy tales and world mythology. The books that have taken Mary to the most places are the Magic Tree House series. With Jack and Annie, she has traveled through time—from the prehistoric land of dinosaurs to the imaginary world of Camelot. But one of the greatest adventures of Mary's writing life is the creative journey she takes with her readers, meeting them in person, in schools and bookstores and reading the wonderful stories and letters they send. This, Mary says, is true magic. --Taken from www.magictreehouse.com



WILL OSBORNE - COMPOSER/PLAYWRIGHT

When **Will Osborne** was a boy, his imagination was full of characters from his favorite books. Pretending to be Robin Hood, Tarzan, and Peter Pan, Will and his friends had many incredible adventures in the woods behind his house.

Will's love of pretending led him into his first career, as an actor. Traveling the country with theater companies and acting on television.

In 2000, Will started co-writing the Magic Tree House Research Guides with his wife, Mary Pope Osborne. These nonfiction compilations to the Magic Tree House books give readers a fun and easy way to find out more about their favorite places, time periods, and subjects.

In 2005, Will collaborated with Randy Courts in writing *The Magic Tree House: The Musical*. It premiered in the fall of 2007 at the Warner Theatre in Torrington, Connecticut and followed with a 55-city tour in the 2008-09 Season. In 2011, Will began collaboration with Murray Horowitz and the legendary Jazz musician Allen Toussaint on the adaptation of *A Good Night for Ghosts*. The

resulting musical, *A Night in New Orleans* was first produced in 2013 at the Orlando Shakespeare Theatre. --Taken in part from http://www.magictreehouse.com/ip_about_the_authors.php



MURRAY HORWITZ - PLAYWRIGHT

Murray Horwitz is a playwright, lyricist, NPR broadcaster, and arts administrator. Horwitz graduated from Kenyon College with a Bachelor of Arts degree, with a dual major, in English and Drama. Horwitz began his career working as a clown for three years with Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus.

In 1973, after moving to New York City, Horwitz appeared in the one-man show, *An Evening of Sholom Aleichem*, in which he continues to perform at The Kennedy Center, The Manhattan Theatre Club, and The New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater. In 1978, Horwitz co-created the Broadway musical *Ain't Misbehavin'*, which won Tony, Obie, Emmy, Grammy, and New York Drama Critics' Circle awards.

In 1987, he became the assistant director of Opera-Musical Theater at the National Endowment for the Arts. In 1989, he began his career at NPR, where he created several series, including *Wait, Wait...Don't Tell Me*, *Wynton Marsalis: Making the Music*, and *The NPR Basic Jazz Record Library*. Horwitz received three Peabody awards for his work at NPR. Since 1998, Horwitz has been creative consultant to the annual Mark Twain Prize ceremonies at the Kennedy Center.

From 2002-2009, Horwitz was the founding director of the AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center, in Silver Spring, Maryland. He later served in fundraising positions at Washington National Opera and the Washington Performing Arts Society. In 2016, Horowitz took over as host of the WAMU's *The Big Broadcast* old-time radio show. --Taken in part from <https://en.wikipedia.org>

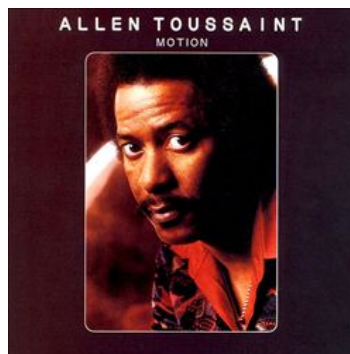
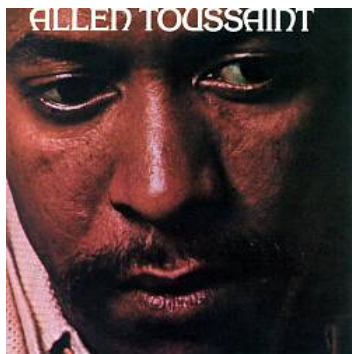
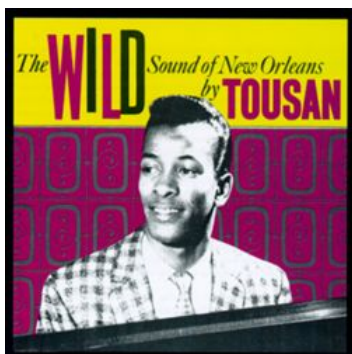


ALLEN TOUSSAINT - COMPOSER

Allen Toussaint was born in New Orleans in January, 1938 and died while on tour in Madrid, Spain in November 2015. Producer, songwriter, arranger, session pianist, solo artist –Allen Toussaint wore all these hats over the course of his lengthy and prolific career, and his behind-the-scenes work alone would have been enough to make him a legend of New Orleans R&B. Thanks to his work with numerous other artists, Toussaint bore an enormous amount of responsibility for the

sound of R&B in the Crescent City from the '60s on into the '70s. His productions kept with the times, moving from rollicking, earthy soul in the '60s to gritty, rambunctious funk in the '70s. As a composer, Toussaint proved himself a consistent hit maker, penning more than a few gems that have since become R&B standards and been covered by countless artists working in many different styles. In keeping with that across-the-board appeal, Toussaint worked in some supporting capacity for a wide variety of rock and blues legends, particularly from the '70s on. On top of all that, Toussaint waxed his own records from time to time, enjoying a creative peak in the '70s with several albums that highlighted his laid-back vocals and elegantly funky piano work. Even if he wasn't always the most visible figure, Toussaint's contributions to New Orleans music -- and to rock & roll in general -- were such that he earned induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1998.

--Written by Steve Huey for www.allmusic.com



THE STORY



PLAY SYNOPSIS

Jump into the Magic Tree House and venture back to New Orleans, 1915! The streets are alive with the sounds of the Jazz Age as Jack and Annie meet a 14-year old Louis Armstrong and help set him on the path to becoming the “King of Jazz.” Based on the beloved Magic Tree House books by Mary Pope Osborne this inspiring tale of big dreams is filled with music to stir the soul.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE MAGIC TREE HOUSE SERIES

The first of the *Magic Tree House* books, *Dinosaurs Before Dark*, was published in 1992. It introduces the main characters of Jack and Annie, a brother and sister duo of adventurers who discover a magical tree house filled with books. In the first book of the series the brother and sister team journey to prehistoric times and since then, the magic tree house has whisked Jack and Annie on many more adventures through time to different places around the world. They have even gone to mythical places not found in this world! With the help of their friends from the kingdom of Camelot, Jack and Annie use research books, riddles, codes, and courage to solve problems, complete missions, and help those in need. --Taken in part from

http://www.magictreehouse.com/#about_the_series



A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE PLAY AND ITS HISTORY

Based on *Magic Tree House Book #45, A Good Night for Ghosts, A Night in New Orleans* is a musical that celebrates the life of Louis Armstrong and features music by legendary New Orleans composer, Allen Toussaint. Written by Will Osborne and Murray Horwitz, the production features an ensemble cast and original jazz compositions. The adaptation was started in 2011 and was first produced in 2013 at the Orlando Shakespeare Theatre and has since been produced at theatres and universities across the country, including Chicago’s Emerald City Theatre, Texas’s Magik Theatre, Houston’s Main Street Theatre and the Oregon Children’s Theatre.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT



Canal Street, Circa 1915

As Jack and Annie, the main characters in *The Magic Tree House* series by Mary Pope Osborne, travel through time in each book each of the stories has an historical context. In *A Good Night for Ghosts*, which the musical *A Night in New Orleans* is based on, Jack and Annie travel back to 1915 New Orleans and meet a young Louis Armstrong. The historical references to the city of New Orleans; Jim Crow laws and segregation; the cultural significance to the birth of jazz and the biography of Louis Armstrong all figure prominently in the storytelling. Below are some resources to assist in teaching these historical references to your students.



New Orleans and Mississippi River from Hotel Grunewald.
Circa 1915.

BIOGRAPHY OF LOUIS ARMSTRONG



Louis Armstrong was born in New Orleans, the "Birthplace of Jazz." Soon after Louis was born Louis' father abandoned the family. Louis and his little sister, Beatrice were sent to live with their grandmother. At the age of five, Louis and his sister returned to live with their mother. Later Louis was enrolled in the Fisk School for Boys and worked to help his mother by delivering newspapers and hauling coal.

At the age of eleven, to help his family, Louis dropped out of school and joined a quartet of boys that sang on the street to earn money. It was also around this time that Louis started getting in trouble. In 1913, the police took him to a home for troubled boys. It was there that Louis talked the band director into letting him join the band and he quickly learned to play the cornet.

At thirteen, Louis was released from the boys' home and spent the next few years supporting his family by selling newspapers and unloading bananas from boats. In his free time Louis would listen to local bands and perform when he had the opportunity.

Louis' talent and enthusiasm was recognized and admired by Joe "King" Oliver, a famous cornet player. Oliver decided to mentor young Louis. In return, Louis did small jobs and ran errands for "King" Oliver. When King Oliver left for Chicago, Louis began performing on steamboats, which toured up and down the Mississippi River. For the next three summers, Louis toured on the steamboats, improving his playing skills and learning how to read music.

In 1922, King Oliver invited Louis to perform with his band in Chicago. Louis was excited to perform with such talented musicians and he played with King Oliver's Creole Band for the next two years.

New York City was the place where many jazz artists built their careers. So in 1924 Louis moved to New York at the request of famous New York bandleader Fletcher Henderson. It was also then that Louis switched to the trumpet to blend his sound better with the other members of the trumpet section. His energetic and creative playing style captured the attention of the New York jazz scene. No one else could play like Louis!

After one year in New York, Louis returned to Chicago. It was there that Louis made the first recording with his own band "The Hot Five". During the recording session, Louis dropped his lyric sheet on the floor. Rather than stopping, the record producer encouraged Louis to keep on singing without the lyrics. Louis sang the chorus in nonsense syllables. The unpredictable rhythms of Louis' voice have inspired other musicians ever since!

Louis Armstrong became one of the most famous jazz musicians of the 20th century. He was a singer since his childhood, master of the trumpet, and even a dancer in musicals. He devoted his life to bringing joy to people through his music. Despite the challenges in the early days of his life, Armstrong rarely viewed his youth as the worst of times but instead drew inspiration from it, "Every time I close my eyes blowing that trumpet of mine - I look right in the heart of good old New Orleans...It has given me something to live for."

(Taken from— http://makingmusicfun.net/html/f_mmf_music_library/hey-kids-meet-louis-armstrong.htm)

LINKS to FURTHER Kid-Friendly Resources on Louis Armstrong:

- <http://www.louisarmstronghouse.org/> - The official website of the Louis Armstrong museum in New York City. Contains biographies, timelines, multi-media musical recordings, a discography and a filmography
- <http://kidsmusiccorner.co.uk/composers/jazz/louis-armstrong/> - a kid-friendly biography, fun-facts and timeline
- <http://www.facts-about.org.uk/famous-people-facts-starting-with-l/louis-armstrong.htm> - contains fun-facts for kids about Louis Armstrong
- http://www.ducksters.com/biography/entertainers/louis_armstrong.php - very fun and kid-friendly site about the life of Louis Armstrong
- <http://www.fun-facts.org.uk/black-americans/louis-armstrong.htm> - fun, kid-friendly facts about the jazz great

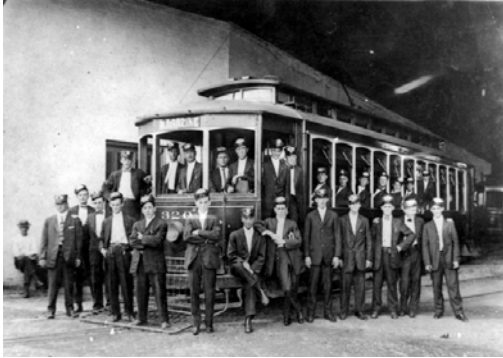
VIDEO LINKS

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIILBeUrYLk> – a kid-friendly, short biography on Louis Armstrong (about 4 minutes), includes music, images & commentary.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sWf2jRYT9Q> – A kid-friendly story about Louis Armstrong (2 minutes)



NEW ORLEANS 1915

New Orleans is one of the most culturally rich cities in the United States with a long, storied history and of course, it is the birthplace of Jazz. Both the book and play draw heavily on this rich cultural history. Introducing your students to the history of New Orleans will add context and value to the story of Jack and Annie in New Orleans, 1915.



STREETCAR 1915, New Orleans



Along the Sunset Route, circa 1915

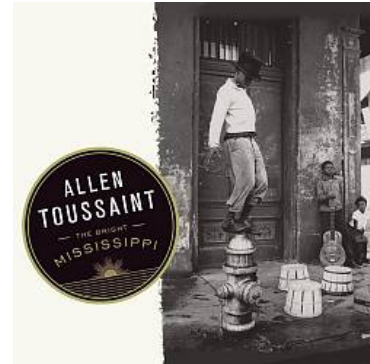
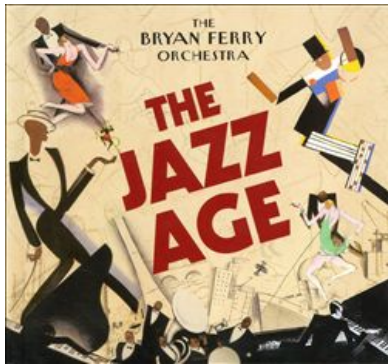
LINKS TO BRIEF HISTORIES AND TIMELINES ON THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS:

- <http://goneworleans.about.com/od/tours/a/historyofno.htm> - Gives brief descriptions to the history of the city (including the French founding, Spanish Creole rule and the incorporation into the United States and up to the 21st Century.
- <http://www.history.com/topics/new-orleans> - Gives brief facts and summaries on the city's history.
- <http://www.venere.com/blog/top-15-fun-facts-new-orleans/> - Lists some fun facts about the city.
- <http://www.loyno.edu/~webquest/Hors%20d'Oeuvres/intro.htm> - A comprehensive timeline of the city's history.

VIDEO LINKS ON THE HISTORY OF NEW ORLEANS

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7q6wXY2Jm0> - A brief documentary on the history of the city of New Orleans (about 17 minutes)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g73Lbb-NHlw> - A brief collection of images (about 4 minutes) of old New Orleans, may give visual context to the play and book.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zv-sX-J_2Po - a silent 9 minute video of film images of old New Orleans, may give some visual context to the play and book, especially architecture.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lINAsg42-o> - a rare, old historic silent movie from 1923 of New Orleans. Close to what New Orleans would have looked like in 1915. (about 9 minutes)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Osr7WedqNLY> - short film clips from New Orleans in the 1920s. Close to what New Orleans would have looked like in 1915. (about 3 minutes)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnpumWzsPI> - A 10-minute video on The Second Line (Historical Documentary of New Orleans Music & Culture) Gives a brief feel of the streets of New Orleans.

HISTORY OF JAZZ MUSIC



It is difficult to give context to the life of Louis Armstrong or the world of 1915 New Orleans without at least a short history of Jazz music. The origins of jazz can be traced back to the slave trade of the 1600's and spans more than a century of music and musicians. Below are kid-friendly links to lesson plans, historical summaries and videos to help give a living context to the history of jazz music.

VIDEO LINKS ON THE HISTORY OF JAZZ

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWZ5b5PjJo> - a short video (less than 2 minutes) by PBS Kids that helps explain Jazz rhythms
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whN5PXsrP6E> - a short documentary (about 13 minutes) that traces the origins of jazz to the slave trade and cultural history of New Orleans
- <http://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=history+of+jazz+pt+1&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8> - a short documentary (about 23 minutes) on the history and origins Jazz music.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GE7k9D5I5a0> - A 48 minute You-Tube video from an Excerpt on the documentary *Jazz* by Ken Burns. It covers New Orleans Jazz from 1914-1935.

LESSON PLANS ON JAZZ

- http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/history_of_jazz.htm - comprehensive lesson plan with links and audio clips, adapted from the curriculum developed by Wynton Marsalis. This one is more appropriate and can be adapted for younger grades.
- <http://wyntonmarsalis.org/news/entry/jazz-for-young-people-curriculum> - Full curriculum developed by Wynton Marsalis, appropriate for upper elementary and middle school grades. It “explores core concepts and major figures in jazz through accessible, interactive lessons that demonstrate the exuberant, rich cultural heritage and definitive musical elements inherent in jazz.”
- <http://www.jazzinamerica.org/lessonplan> - contains three distinct lesson plans for grades 5, 8 & 11. Each lesson plan contains “eight age-appropriate class lessons to be taught as an integral component of American history and social studies courses; they can also be used as supplemental material for courses in music history and

appreciation. Each lesson is aligned with the National Standards in the areas of American History, Social Science, and the Arts.”

- <http://www.monikaherzig.com/JazzMasters/pdf/Elementary%20Jazz%20Curriculum.pdf> - Lesson plans and activities designed for grades K-5, includes further links and clips.
- <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/jazz-month-resources-matt-davis> - contains seven links to free, comprehensive education plans for teaching jazz in the classroom. Well worth a look! Includes:
LEARNING JAZZ CHANTS – bring jazz chants to your classroom -
<http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/2011/07/28/the-best-sites-videos-for-learning-about-jazz-chants/>



PLAYLISTS

Link to 100 songs by Louis Armstrong

- <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL9FC836A421FE23B0>

Link to New Orleans Jazz (1915-1934) (21 songs)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GE7k9D5I5a0&list=PLfAjLunq4BHVzL5vLptO9vnBMT3HWjMkU>

Link to Old Jazz Swing 1920-1930 New Orleans (11 jazz instrumentals songs, includes several King Oliver tunes)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gf75oZK51CY&list=PLTzV5FVhSuHUfYqwlFQ2oZZh2zcmSLhCK>

Louis Armstrong & King Oliver (Full album, 1 hour of music)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=314sTL43zAI>

Stages Theatre Company's Spotify playlist of Louis Armstrong songs

- <http://www.stagestheatre.org/2016-2017-season/magic-tree-house-a-night-in-new-orleans/>

SEGREGATION IN THE SOUTH

Segregation in the South, which New Orleans is a part of, was a way of life for African Americans like Louis Armstrong in 1915, when the book and musical are set. Mary Pope Osborne does bring the reality of segregation into the story in her Magic Tree House book, *A Good Night for Ghosts* and the musical adaptation, *A Night in New Orleans* also touches on the subject. Helping your students gain insight or some level of understanding of this difficult reality of 20th Century America may give them additional context to the story.

HELPFUL LINKS TO TEACHING SEGREGATION:

- <http://www.bringinghistoryhome.org/third/unit-2> – Resources and links about teaching the history and impact of segregation.
- https://www.nps.gov/malu/learn/education/jim_crow_laws.htm – An understandable run down of Jim Crow laws and their effects.

GRADES 1-3

For younger grades, Dr. Seuss' book, *The Sneeches* is a simple, child friendly example of segregation and discrimination. Reading the book and discussing the themes can be a window into the concept of segregation for younger students.

LINK to a video of *The Sneeches*: <http://www.schooltube.com/video/76b6524fff684197c2c3/>

EXERCISE – GRADES 2-5 – Frogs & Snakes

Have children put on a play with the theme of segregation. Download the play *Why Frogs and Snakes Never Play Together* (link below.) The play tells the story of a forbidden friendship and helps teach that segregation is the result of learned behavior. A part of the exercise is for the children to write their own ending in which the snake and frog remain friends

LINK TO THE PLAY & LESSON PLAN

http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/r&r_pourquoiplay.pdf

EXERCISE – GRADES 3-5 - Segregation Tic-Tac-Toe

Draw a grid containing 64 numbered squares on a large piece of paper and tape it to the floor. Place 25 pennies and 30 paper clips randomly on the grid. Have the students gather around to watch. Explain that the grid represents a neighborhood and the paper clips and pennies symbolize families. Each penny wants to live near -- touching -- at least two other pennies, while each paper clip wants most of its neighbors to be paper clips. Have students suggest moves to make, such as "Move the penny on square 2 to square 24." Move each piece according to the students' directions. As students try to make every piece happy, they start to create a pattern of extreme segregation. Take the pennies and paper clips from the board and tell the students to try to create a more integrated "neighborhood." Move the pennies and paper clips according to their instructions. Discuss how an individual's social race preferences can lead to segregation.

GRADES 6-8

<https://www.teachervision.com/desegregation/lesson-plan/4758.html> - A lesson plan that centers on the Little Rock Nine, but contains useful exercises and resources to teach the history of segregation as well.

POINTS OF DISCUSSION

The ideas and questions in this section are designed as a springboard for student discussion after attending the play.



BIG IDEAS

- ❖ Pursuing your dreams
- ❖ Inspiration
- ❖ Composers and Musicians
- ❖ Cooperation and Teamwork
- ❖ Ghosts

WHO? WHAT? WHERE? WHEN?

1. Who do Jack and Annie need to find when they get to New Orleans, 1915? (Louis Armstrong/Dipper)
2. What is the first job Jack and Annie help Dipper with? (Shoveling Coal)
3. Where do Dipper, Jack and Annie go to get out of the rain? (A haunted blacksmith shop)
4. When do Jack and Annie use the magic trumpet? (To reveal Dipper's friends in the blacksmith shop)

WHY?

When Jack and Annie reveal to Louis Armstrong the picture of his older self in the research guide, Dipper tells them that he recognizes the picture because it is the picture he's had in his heart and that playing music is his dream. What are your dreams? What picture do you have in your heart of what you want to be and do in your life? Why are dreams important? What does it mean to "dream big" or "follow your heart?"

The book, *A Good Night for Ghosts* is a part of the "inspiration" series within the Magic Tree House collection of books. What does the word "inspiration" mean? Have you ever been inspired by someone? What was it about the person that inspired you? Did you do something because of this inspiration? What characteristics "inspire" us? Why? Have you ever inspired someone else? How?

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

The possibilities are numerous for using the Magic Tree House series and the musical *A Night in New Orleans* (based on *A Good Night for Ghosts*, Magic Tree House book #42) as a jumping off point for cross-curriculum and interdisciplinary study in your classroom. From units on adaptation and jazz music to lessons on ghost stories this best-selling book series offers a platform for reaching any number of educational goals.

Below are a few suggestions for curriculum incorporating the *Magic Tree House* series and/or the musical *A Night in New Orleans* into your classroom studies.

Please also refer to the **ADDITIONAL RESOURCE** section at the end of this guide for links and resources to more curriculum ideas and lesson plans.

THEATRE ARTS

ACTIVITY

Predictions and Expectations (Grades K-6)

BEFORE THE PLAY: Read the book the Musical is based on—*A Good Night for Ghosts*. With student input, establish the expectations for the upcoming play. What **actions** or **events** might be seen on stage? What **characters** might the play include from the book? Students may draw or write about what they anticipate seeing.

AFTER THE PLAY: Revisit the expectations to see how many were realized. Discuss the similarities and differences from the book to the play, in terms of plot, characters, and action. Were the characters as portrayed on the stage faithful to the characters in the book? How or why? How would you describe the main “**message**” of the play? How was it similar or different from the book?

ACTIVITY

Compare and Contrast (Grades 3-6)

The Musical is an original adaptation of the Magic Tree House book *A Good Night for Ghosts*. After seeing the play, it is a good opportunity to discuss the elements of adaptation with your students. Discuss the definition of adaptation—the rewriting of a work written in a different genre or medium than it was originally written—and analyzing how the playwright/lyricist/composer achieved this with the musical *A Night in New Orleans*. Why do you think the playwright/lyricist and composer made the decisions they did in order to turn the story into a Musical? Why do you think they changed the title from *A Good Night for Ghosts* to *A Night in New Orleans*?

Students could then create a comparison chart or a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences of the book to the musical.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Reading Guides for Magic Tree House #42, A Good Night for Ghosts

- <http://www.risetoreading.com/2012/12/13/comprehension-questions-42-a-good-night-for-ghosts/>
- <http://www.mthclassroomadventures.org/pdf/mth-42-cross-curriculum-night-for-ghosts.pdf>

Book Report Form for A Good Night for Ghosts

- <http://www.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/books/AGOODNIGHTFORGHOSTS.pdf>

ACTIVITY - GHOST STORY GALLERY

Ghosts figure prominently in the book, *A Good Night for Ghosts* as well as in the play adaptation, *A Night in New Orleans*. The ghost story genre is a popular and classic story structure.

In this lesson plan students will create a ghost story gallery in the classroom. Students will—

- become experts in a ghost story of their choosing;
- learn to evaluate the story;
- develop an understanding of the genre of ghost stories;
- and prepare a fluent, expressive reading performance for the class.

Link to full unit plan using the book, *A Good Night for Ghosts* (includes the Ghost Story Gallery lesson plan):

<http://www.mthclassroomadventures.org/pdf/mth-42-cross-curriculum-night-for-ghosts.pdf>

ACTIVITY - SCAT-A DAT-DO

In both the book, *A Good Night for Ghosts* and musical adaption, *A Night in New Orleans*, scat singing plays a role in the storytelling. In this lesson, students explore this fun and interesting aspect of jazz music. Students will:

- Learn the definition and musical style of scat singing.
- Practice scat singing.
- Write and perform an original line of scat singing.
- Comprehend the vocabulary of solo, duo, trio, and quartet.
- Study the biography of Louis Armstrong.
- Record a main event and supporting details of Louis Armstrong's life.
- Present a project to the class

LINK TO FULL LESSON PLAN:

<http://www.mthclassroomadventures.org/pdf/mth-42-lesson-plan-scat-a-dat-do.pdf>

ANOTHER MUSIC BASED LESSON PLAN USING THE BOOK:

Musical Vocabulary - <http://www.mthclassroomadventures.org/pdf/mth-42-lesson-plan-musical-vocabulary.pdf>

DOOR OPEN ON...

THE STANDARDS

Here is a listing of Academic Standards that can be met by attending a performance at Stages Theatre Company and using this resource guide for pre and post performance activities.

THEATRE ARTS (K-3)

0.1.1.4.1

0.1.2.4.1

0.2.1.4.1

0.4.1.4.1

THEATRE ARTS (4-5)

4.1.1.4.1

4.1.3.4.2

4.2.1.4.1

4.3.1.4.1

4.4.1.4.1

THEATRE ARTS (6-8)

6.1.1.4.1

6.1.2.4.1

6.1.3.4.1

6.1.3.4.2

6.2.1.4.1

6.3.1.4.1

6.4.1.4.1

LANGUAGE ARTS

Reading and Literature (Comprehension/Literature)

Speaking, Listening and Viewing

Writing

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Please review all links below before sharing with students.

<http://www.magictreehouse.com/#> - The official Magic Tree House website

<http://marypopeosborne.com/> - Mary Pope Osborne's official website

<http://www.randomhousekids.com/brand/magic-tree-house/activities/> - Section of Random House's website dedicated to The Magic Tree House book series.

http://www.edhelper.com/teach/teach_Magic.htm - Magic Treehouse printables maker on Ed Helper. Need to register email to use the site.

FURTHER READING

MAGIC TREE HOUSE BOOKS BY MARY POPE OSBORNE

Use the link below for a full reading list of Mary Pope Osborne's Magic Tree House Series:

http://www.magictreehouse.com/teachersclub/resource_center/pdfs/MTHBooklist.pdf

BOOKS ABOUT LOUIS ARMSTRONG

- *If I Only Had a Horn: Young Louis Armstrong* by Roxanne Orgill and Leonard Jenkins
- *When Louis Armstrong Taught Me Scat* by Muriel Harris Weinstein and R. Gregory Christie
- *Satchmo's Blues* by Alan Schroeder
- *Who Was Louis Armstrong?* By Yona Zeldis McDonough and John O'Brien
- *What a Wonderful World* by George David Weiss and Bob Thiele
- *Louis Armstrong: A Short Biography for Kids* by James Madden
- *Louis Armstrong (Graphic Biography)* by Kerri O'Hern and Gini Holland

BOOKS ABOUT JAZZ

- *Charlie Parker Played Be Bop* by Chris Raschka
- *Max Found Two Sticks* by Brian Pinkney
- *Ben's Trumpet* by Rachel Isadora
- *The Jazz Fly* by Matthew Gollub and Karen Hanke
- *Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuoso* by Andrea Pickney and Brian Pickney
- *Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra* by Andrea Pickney and Brina Pickney
- *Piano Starts Here: The Young Art Tatum* by Robert Andrew Parker
- *Mr. Big* by Ed Vere
- *Jazz: My Music, My People* by Morgan Monceaux

Our study guide is designed to be a resource for teachers and students before and after they attend a production here at Stages Theatre Company.

We are always interested in how we can improve this resource to be the most effective for you and your students. We would like to you to share with us what activities or discussions from this guide that were the most useful for you.

You can email your responses to Jeannine Coulombe at jcoulombe@stages theatre.com

Thank you for attending Stages Theatre Company!