

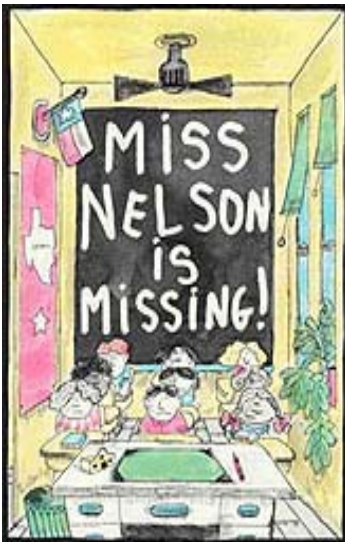


Miss Nelson is Missing!

Adapted by
Joan Cushing

Book, Music, &
Lyrics by
Joan Cushing

Based on the
books
*Miss Nelson is
Missing*
and
*Miss Nelson is
Back*
By Harry Allard &
James Marshall



Presents the Darden
Theater for Young
Audiences Series

Miss Nelson is Missing!

About the Show

Based upon the popular Miss Nelson series, a classroom of unruly students treat their caring and lovely teacher with complete disrespect. They throw spitballs during story-time and refuse to sit in their seats during math. She retaliates by dressing up as a substitute teacher named Miss Viola Swamp and terrorizes them with piles and piles of homework. In the end the students write a letter of apology to Miss Nelson and she "returns" to find a classroom full of well-behaved students.

About the Festival

Now in our 17th season, the Orlando-UCF Shakespeare Festival is a non-profit, professional theater that presents productions of Shakespeare, classic and contemporary plays, as well as the Darden Theater for Young Audiences Series. The Festival also cultivates new scripts and playwrights through the annual Harriet Lake Festival of New Plays and fosters innovative educational programs to serve the community.

Our Name

Our company began 17 years ago as an offshoot of UCF. Though we are currently a separate organization, located in Loch Haven Park, and employing professional actors, directors and designers (not students), we keep the UCF in our name in respect to our history.

Scholarships

Through the generosity of a few Central Florida businesses and foundations, the Festival is able to visit a number of schools every year to present our unique workshops FOR FREE! To find out if you qualify for a scholarship please call the Education Director at 407-447-1700 x208.

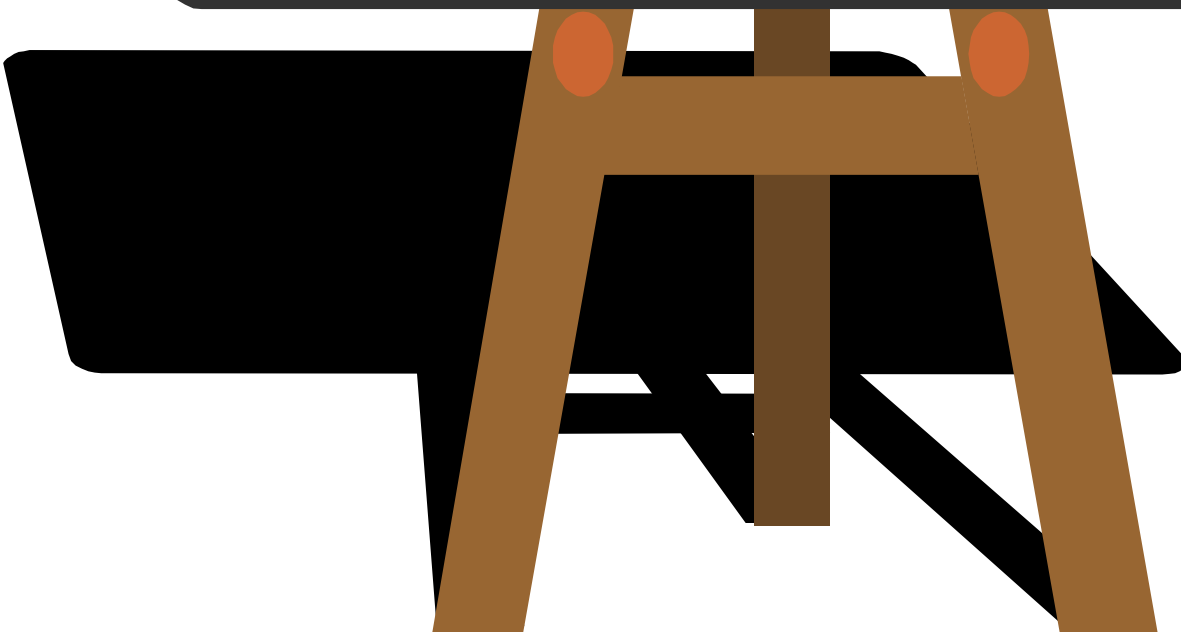
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Theater Etiquette Guidelines

Theater Etiquette Guidelines for *Miss Nelson is Missing*:

- ◆ Once inside the theater, please turn off all cell phones, beepers, video games, and alarms. These sounds could disrupt your neighbors and the actors onstage.
- ◆ Don't bring any refreshments into the theater, including gum and candy.
- ◆ Once the show has begun, please keep your focus onstage and don't talk to your neighbors. Unlike a recorded television show or film, the actors onstage can hear you!
- ◆ The magic created in a theater depends on the audience and the performers working together, so it's important to pay attention to everything that's happening onstage. In live theater, each performance holds different possibilities and outcomes. If you went to see a play twice, you would notice certain things were different each time, even though you were seeing the same play!
- ◆ Let yourself be a part of the magic! Even though you shouldn't discuss the show with your neighbors during the performance, please feel free to have fun. You can laugh if you see something funny, or even cry if you see something sad. You can also clap or sing along with the music (if you know the words).
- ◆ At the end of the show, please show the actors your appreciation for performing for you by cheers and applause. Remember, the actors onstage can hear you, and they would love to have your support and encouragement.
- ◆ Pay attention to the show's "message" or themes, and ask yourself how they relate to your life.
- ◆ If you had a good time, share your theater experience with a parent or friend!



Before the Performance (Grades Pre-K-Kindergarten)

Airplane Antics

In *Miss Nelson is Missing*, the children in room 207 are “the worst kids of all.” When you see the show, watch out for Adam’s airplane antics. Color the following picture of Adam and his paper airplanes. Then, use your math skills to count the number of paper airplanes in the picture. How many airplanes would there be if Adam had five more in his backpack?



Before the Performance (Grades 1-2)

Sense of Family

In *Miss Nelson is Missing*, the children of Room 207 ask Detective McSmogg to help them find Miss Nelson. There are many different ways to solve mysteries. Sometimes detectives have to use their senses to help them gather clues. How could you guess what something is by using your senses? Develop a sensory experiment for a member of your family (for example your mom, dad, or older brother/sister). Set up a secret senses station without the other family member seeing the objects that you have chosen. Then, compare your family results with the rest of the class. Who had the most accurate predictions?

Materials Needed For Secret Senses Station:

Scent objects: crayons, cinnamon, pepper, soap

Taste objects: peanut butter, mustard, chocolate, cheese

Touch objects: calculator, rubber eraser, unlit birthday candle, DVD case



Directions:

Set out all of the objects for your secret sense station. For the scent objects, place each object in a separate plastic bag. For the taste objects, place each item on a separate plate. Place each touch object side by side so that you can easily put each individual item in your family member's hand. After you have set up your secret sense station, make some predictions and write them down. Which objects do you think will be easily identified? Which objects will be harder to recognize? Use the scientific process* to make your predictions. Once you have finished making your predictions, blindfold your family member and bring them to the secret senses station. Have them test each object separately, and let them guess what each object is before they try a new object, and write down the results. You may wish to have a glass of water on hand for the taste objects. Let your family member take a drink of water before trying each new taste. After the tests are done, compare your results to your predictions. How was your family member's sense skills? Did things happen the way you thought they would?

*The Scientific Process

- A. **Question**—What is your experiment about? What do you want to prove?
- B. **Hypothesis**—What do you predict will happen in your experiment?
- C. **Procedure**—What steps do you need to take in your experiment?
- D. **Results**—What happened during your experiment?
- E. **Conclusion**—What did you learn about your topic, and how did you answer your initial question?

Before the Performance (Grades 3-5)

Science of Laughter

Miss Nelson is Missing has plenty of comedy for the audience to enjoy. What makes you laugh? Do you laugh when your friend tells you a joke, or when your little brother spills ice cream on his shirt? Believe it or not, there is a science of laughter. The study of laughter is called gelotology. Strictly defined, laughter is comprised of short vowel-like notes that occur every 210 milliseconds. Laughter involves 15 facial muscles, and breathing is interrupted by the epiglottis (located at the back of the throat). This interruption causes the larynx to close halfway, and thus we gasp for air. In some cases, laughter even involves the tear ducts—causing us to “cry.”

Did you know?

- Laughing naturally can incorporate sounds of “ha ha” or “ho ho”, but not a mixture of both together.
- Laughter is the most common emotion that people share together.
- Almost 80% of laughter is not in response to jokes.
- Women laugh 126% more than men.
- A child in pre-school will laugh about 300 times a day, while adults laugh about 17 times a day.

Have you ever heard the saying that “laughter is the best medicine?” Laughter does indeed have health benefits. In general, laughter is a cathartic (or cleansing; purifying) experience for human beings. Laughter can help to cope with pain, suffering, embarrassment, and stress. In fact, significant amounts of laughter reduce and block the production of stress hormones. This blocking of hormones helps to strengthen the body’s immune system, and lower blood pressure. Laughter also produces oxygen in the blood, which accelerates healing. In many ways, laughter can really act as a “medicine.”



Activity– Laugh Chain

Try this activity with your class or a group of friends, and make sure that you have plenty of room. Have the first person lay on his/her back on the floor. The next person does the same, only placing their head on the first person’s stomach (diaphragm). The chain continues with each student placing their head on the previous student’s stomach. When everyone is in place, the first student says “ha” in a controlled voice. When the second person feels/hears the vibration of the first “ha,” they also say “ha.” This continues down the chain until “ha” reaches the last person. If laughter erupts before the “ha” completes the chain, the game starts over. If one “ha” is mastered by the group, the game starts again with a repeated “ha, ha.” The game precedes with the goal of passing two “ha’s” down the line without laughing. For practical math practice, students can time their activity, or produce statistics (Ex: which order in line was most likely to laugh; how often was the chain completed).

After the Performance (Grades Pre-K-Kindergarten)

What's in a Name?

In *Miss Nelson is Missing*, we meet the unique characters of Viola Swamp and Detective McSmogg. How do those names describe the characters' personalities? Sometimes authors and playwrights choose descriptive names for their characters so that the actors and audience have clues to their personalities. Look at the list of names below. Using these names, (and others that you create on your own in your classroom), decide what kind of personalities these people might have. Choose a "character" to become, and present your character to the class with a short monologue, or speech (spoken "in character").

First, choose a character name. Draw a picture of what your character might look like, and what kind of clothes he/she might wear. Then, think about how your character moves. Does your character walk slowly or quickly, or does he/she hop on one foot or have a limp? Next, think about how your character talks. Does he/she speak in a high voice or a low voice? After you've decided how your character walks and talks, think about what your character's favorite hobbies are. What does he/she like to do for fun? Don't forget to use your character's name as a guide to his/her movement, voice, and hobbies. After you've made your decisions, introduce yourself to the class as your new character, and tell five fun things about yourself. Most importantly, use your imagination and have fun! You can't go wrong!

Character Name Suggestions

Kylie Kickstop	Sir Strudels
Billy O'Burger	Lefty Larue
Petunia Posey	Victoria DuShop
Baron von Hopalong	Dr. Fishsticks
Jessie Joggy	Desiree Richmond
Bartholomew Patch	Franklin Snackstone
Norma Curbswabble	Shoshanna Shush



After the Performance (Grades 1-2)

Responsibility for our Actions

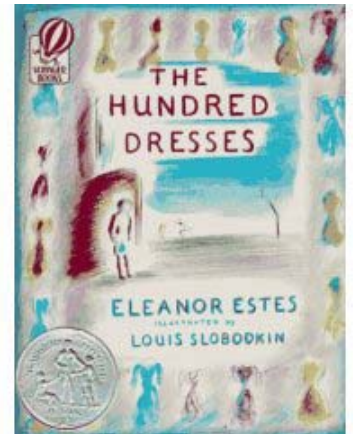
In *Miss Nelson is Missing*, the children treat Miss Nelson terribly. They ignore her when she asks them questions, they interrupt her stories, and they make a mess of their classroom. When Miss Nelson fails to come to class, however, the children meet the meanest substitute teacher they've ever seen—Miss Viola Swamp. After one day with Miss Swamp, the children realize how badly they mistreated Miss Nelson. In order to apologize, the children write a letter to Miss Nelson. In the letter, they promise to be better children and respect their teacher if she'll only come back to Room 207. Upon receiving their apology, Miss Nelson returns to a well-behaved and grateful class.

Sincerely Yours

At some point in our lives, we have all made a mistake or done something that we wish we could take back. Maybe we've called our brothers or sisters names or taken their favorite toys without asking. Maybe we've talked back to our parents or teachers, or ignored them when they've asked us to do something for them. Maybe we've said mean things about someone at school that we don't know very well, or told someone else's secrets that we promised to keep. Write a letter to someone that you offended, telling them what you did, why you did it, and how you realized that what you did was wrong. Make sure that you end the letter with a sincere apology for your actions and decisions.

Consequences of Decisions

Sometimes, we make hasty decisions without thinking about what might come of these decisions. Have you ever watched something happen that you thought was wrong, but you didn't say anything or tell an adult about what happened? Sometimes watching someone being bullied and not speaking up can make you as responsible as the bully him/herself. As a class, read the Newbery Honor book *The Hundred Dresses* by Eleanor Estes, and answer the following questions.



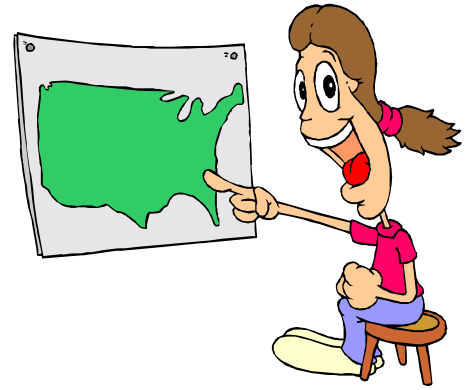
1. Which character did you relate to the most in the production? Why?
2. How did you feel about Peggy's treatment of Wanda? What about Maddie's actions? How did they make you feel?
3. Did you like the book's ending? Why or why not? How might have you changed the ending?

For further exploration, continue the story of *The Hundred Dresses*. Tell the class a short story about the further adventures of Maddie, Peggy, or Wanda. Use your imagination and have fun!

After the Performance (Grades 3-5)

Map it Out!

In *Miss Nelson is Missing*, Detective McSmogg gets so carried away with his geography, that he can't remember for whom he needed to "comb the ancient ruins of Peru." Using a classroom atlas, locate McSmogg's geography destinations on a map. After you've done this, answer the questions following the "destination calculator." To go the "extra mile," research the "Seven Wonders of the World." What are they? Where are they located?



McSmogg's Geography Destinations

Siberia	Egypt	Tibet
Peru	Rome (Italy)	Botswana
Timbuktu	Bavaria	English Channel (England)

Destination Calculator

Botswana to Bavaria—4962 miles	Timbuktu to Egypt—2222 miles
Siberia to Tibet—1573 miles	Bavaria to Rome—493 miles
Botswana to Peru—6205 miles	Tibet to Rome—4187 miles

1. You've been planning a trip to the catacombs of Rome, and you'd like to stop at some Bavarian castles on your way. If you start your journey in the jungles of Botswana, how many miles is it from Botswana to Rome?
2. Equipped with a car that can drive over every surface, you've chosen to drive from Timbuktu to Egypt. If your magical car can safely drive at only 11 miles per hour, how many hours will it take you to reach the Egyptian pyramids?
3. While you were planning your trip to the catacombs of Rome (question #1), your friend has planned to travel from Siberia through Tibet to Rome. Who will arrive in Rome first? What is the difference in miles between the two trips?
4. Now that you've been such an accomplished explorer, you're ready to lead a tour group from Rome to Peru, passing through Bavaria and Botswana. How many miles is this journey?

Constructing a Critique

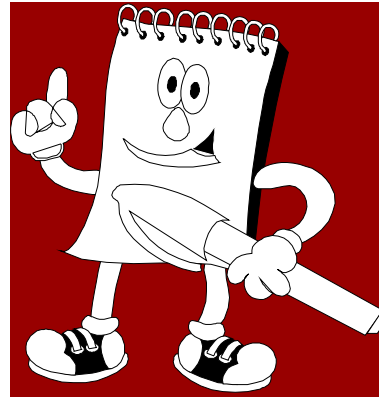
After seeing a play, we are often filled with emotional reactions based on what we've experienced. What thoughts and feelings did you have after viewing *Miss Nelson is Missing*? Write or draw (for younger students) a critique of the show, and present your thoughts to the rest of the class.

What is a critique?

A critique is an essay or article that expresses an individual's opinion of an artist's work, such as a painting, play or book.

What is a critic?

A critic is the individual expressing their opinion, or the author of the critique. Critics are relied upon to be honest and fair about their thoughts, feelings, likes and dislikes.



What did you think?

What is your honest opinion of *Miss Nelson is Missing*? What elements of the show did you like or dislike and why? Don't forget to consider all of the elements of the show (ex: lighting, costuming, music, acting, etc.) Would you recommend this production to someone else? Why or why not?

The Orlando-UCF Shakespeare Festival would like to thank the following sponsors:



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Further Reading

If you liked *Miss Nelson is Missing*, look for these other books by Harry Allard and James Marshall in the library, your local bookstore or online bookseller*:

Miss Nelson is Back

Miss Nelson Has a Field Day

I Will Not Go to Market Today

Bumps in the Night

There's a Party at Mona's Tonight

The Tutti-Frutti Case: Starring the Four Doctors of Goodge

* don't forget to ask for permission before using the internet

