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If You Give A Mouse a Cookie

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STUDY GUIDE!

Table of Contents!



Pg. 3 - Orlando Shakespeare Theater

Pg. 4 - Theater Etiquette Guidelines

**Pg. 5 - Meet the Characters
Plot**

**Pg. 7 - Standards and Benchmarks
Discussion Topics**

Pg. 8 - Activities and Lesson Plans

Pg.14 - Constructing a Critique



About the Show

A mouse shows up at a little boy's house and asks for a cookie. The mouse receives the cookie and wants a glass of milk. He receives the glass of milk and wants a straw. He receives the straw... The rest becomes a chain of never-ending events!

About the Theater and Our New Name

We've got a new name and a new logo! We are proud to announce that, thanks to you, our patrons and donors, we have grown from an initial one-month "festival" 19 years ago, to a regional "theater" that features a year-round schedule of nine main-stage productions, three workshops, twelve staged readings, special events and fundraisers, a thriving partnership with UCF and robust educational programming with classes and seminars for pre-K through seniors. Also, thanks to you, three of this past season's productions broke all attendance records at the Lowndes Shakespeare Center.

We are 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.

Scholarships

Through the generosity of a few Central Florida businesses and foundations, Orlando Shakes 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 Director of Education at 407-447-1700 x 208.



Theater Etiquette Guidelines for If You Give a Mouse a Cookie

(Please read aloud before the performance)

- 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.
- Leave any refreshments, including gum and candy outside of the theatre.
- Once the show has begun, please keep your focus onstage. Unlike a recorded television show or film, the actors onstage can hear you!
- **You are very important!** The magic created in a theater depends on the audience and the performers working together. In live theater, each performance holds different possibilities and outcomes. Challenge yourself to focus on what is happening onstage. **The play you see is special – just for you!** No show is ever the same twice.
- **Let yourself be a part of the magic!** Have fun. Everyone needs to hear the performance, but 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.
- 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.
- There are ideas and messages that are in the play. Ask yourself how they relate to your life – have you learned anything from the mouse?
- **If you had a good time, share your theater experience with a parent or friend!**



Meet the Characters

The Boy – A ten-year-old boy who is left home alone for the day while his mother visits his Aunt Rose.

The Mouse – small, gray/brown. Absolutely adorable. He is a bundle of energy, only barely contained and eager to talk and talk and talk and talk...

Plot

The Boy begins by telling the audience about his most eventful day. His mother is visiting his Aunt Rose, and asks if he would like to come along. The boy has just received a new comic book that he is very excited to read, and besides, his aunt usually asks him all kinds of questions – even embarrassing ones, so he decides to stay home.

He finds a cool spot to lie in the yard, and brings a bag of cookies with him, ready to read his new comic. It is here that he meets...the mouse. The mouse speaks very quickly and has a lot of energy. He states that he is hungry. The boy offers him a cookie. Then the mouse decides that he would like to have a glass of milk, but the milk glass is very tall and he cannot reach the top. So, he asks for a straw and the boy gets him one. The mouse is finally able to drink up the milk, but now he has a milk moustache. The boy gets him a napkin, and then a mirror after the mouse decides he cannot see to make sure he cleaned up every last spot. In the mirror he sees his reflection, and the mouse and the reflection play a game – each one trying to fool the other.

While looking at himself in the mirror, the mouse sees a hair that is longer than all the rest. He asks for scissors, and once he gets them, begins cutting. By the time he is through, there are hairs everywhere! The house is becoming a mess. The mouse says that he is really good at cleaning, and offers to sweep up the mess. But, the broom ends up sweeping him around the room, and hairs fly everywhere. Once a bit of the floor is clear, the mouse notices a sticky spot. He offers to wash the floor so that the boy's mother won't be mad when she comes home. But, when washing the floor, the mouse ends up getting water all over the boy, and skating around the room on scrub brushes.

The mouse says that all of that commotion made him tired. The boy loves to hear this. Maybe he can finally get the mouse to be quiet and stop making a mess! He gets the mouse a mousebed made out of a dusting box, a mattress made out of cotton balls, and a pillow that is a powder puff. It looks like the mouse might drift off to sleep!

But, then the mouse tells the boy that he needs a bedtime story to fall asleep. The boy tells him that he could read him his comic book. The mouse says that will have to do, even if it doesn't have mice in it. But, instead of sleeping, the mouse can't help himself, and he acts out the story of the comic, unknown to the boy.

The mouse discovers that the book has pictures and says that he can draw great pictures. He asks the boy for paper and crayons. Realizing that the mouse won't be going to sleep, he gets them. After drawing his picture, the mouse wants to sign it for real – with a real pen. And then he wants to hang it up. The boy says that he could hang it on the refrigerator. Not knowing what to hang it up with, he heads to the garage to find some nails, and manages to make a big mess. While the boy is cleaning the mess, the mouse finds tape and gets tangled up. The boy comes in and unravels him, and tells him to sit still and that he will hang up the picture as soon as he is finished cleaning up the mess on his dad's tool bench.

But, the mouse can't sit still. He decides he will hang up the picture. And, because he is not tall enough, he builds a mountain out of items he finds in the kitchen. While he scales his mountain, he stumbles, creating the biggest mess yet. The boy is pretty upset when he comes back into the kitchen, but still is concerned about the mouse. The mouse looks at the refrigerator and suddenly feels thirsty. He asks the boy for a glass of milk. And while the boy is on his way to get the milk, the mouse asks for a cookie.

At this moment, the boy's mother comes home and sees the mess. The mouse walks up to her and begins chattering away...

THE END



Standards and Benchmarks for Study Guides–2007-2008:

Participation in the Shakespeare Alive experience and attendance at a live performance of a Shakespearean play can aid student's development toward meeting the following Sunshine State Standards:

Theatre Arts Standards TH.D.1.3 & 4

Theatre Arts Standards TH.E.1.3 & 4

And

Language Arts Standards LA 8.2.1.1-5

Language Arts Standards LA910.2.1.1-5

Language Arts Standards LA 1112.2.1.1-5

Discussion Topics

Politeness, Manners - What does it mean to be polite? What does it mean to have good manners? When have you been polite or used good manners? When is it difficult to be polite? Has someone ever not been polite to you? How did that make you feel?

Hospitality - What is hospitality? What does the word Hospitality make you think of? What makes you feel welcome and at home? How do you make others feel welcome? Do you look forward to having guests? When was your favorite time you had a guest, or were a guest of someone else? How did you welcome your guest, or how did they welcome you?

Patience – What does it mean to be patient? Name some examples of situations when someone would need to be patient. (Waiting for your birthday to come, Your little brother or sister using a toy you want, When something doesn't go like you thought it might, Putting together a puzzle...) When have you had to be patient? When has someone not been patient with you? How did that make you feel? Is being patient easy or hard? Why? What are some things you can do to help with being patient?

Dealing with frustration - Have you ever been frustrated? What does it mean to be frustrated? What other emotions does frustration feel like? Is it a good feeling or a negative feeling? What makes you frustrated? How do you handle frustration? What might prevent feelings of frustration?



Activities and Lesson Plans

If...Then... / Cause and Effect

1. Ask students if they have heard sentences like these:
If you finish your dinner, you may have dessert.
If you behave, you may go outside and play.
2. Demonstrate that each part of the sentence has a purpose. The first part of the sentence states something that could potentially happen. The second part of the sentence states the result of what will happen if the first part actually occurs.
3. Explain that these two parts have names. The first, the **cause** is the statement of something that could potentially happen. The **effect** is the result.
4. Ask students to identify the **cause** and **effect** of the sample sentences. Explain that finishing the dinner and behaving were things that could potentially happen. The result of those things actually occurring would be having dessert and going outside to play.

It is important that the lesson of cause and effect not strictly be limited to threat and reward. However, often it is easy to give examples that fit into this theme. Other examples of cause and effect statements might include:

If we plant a seed and take care of it, it will grow.

If I mix the colors blue and yellow, then I will have the color green.

Another way to approach cause and effect statements is to think of them as “***If.../Then...***” Statements. ***If*** I (potentially do something), ***then*** (something) will happen.

5. Often we know the effect something may have. Ask students to predict how this sentence might end: "If you clean your room, you may..." Use student responses to reinforce the cause/effect relationship. Because we have been trained to know that cleaning our rooms yields positive rewards, we can likely respond with what the effect might be.

Before reading the book...

Introduce the book, *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, by reading the first line of the story, "If you give a mouse a cookie..." and ask students to predict what the effect might be. For every **if** statement you read, have the class predict what the **then** portion would be.

Or, if you have read the book, look to other Laura Numeroff books, such as:

If You Give a Mouse a Cookie

If You Give a Moose a Muffin

If You Give a Pig a Pancake

If You Take a Mouse to the Movies

If You Take a Mouse to School

If You Give a Bunny a Birthday Cake

If You Give a Pig a Party

Have the class predict what might occur throughout these books as well.

Circular story

If you Give a Mouse a Cookie is a circular story, ending in the same way in which it began. It also suggests that the story could continue going and going and going.

- Together as a class, create a story of unlimited desires (using cause and effect/ If...Then statements) and end it in the same way it began.
- Set a goal of a manageable amount of sentences – 10 or 12 for example.
- Brainstorm a solid starting point that the class can agree on together. Then continue to brainstorm different effects each new idea brings.
- Try to have the class reach a unified favorite each time, and remind them that the story is going in a circle, that it must end where it began.
- After your story is complete, have the class illustrate each scene. Assign one sentence or scene to a student, and have them illustrate its contents. You may need to assign one sentence to more than one student. Encourage those students with the circular sentence (the first and last) to think about and illustrate the difference from beginning to end. How is the scene different in the end after everything happens?
- Then, have a reading of your story, with each student presenting their illustration. Have the students compare their drawings. What did each choose to highlight in the scene? How did they do it? Examine the difference between beginning scenes and end scenes. How does the world of the story change from beginning to end?

Discuss why a story such as this is good to end where it began? Even though it moves in a circle, does it feel like it ends? How else could it end?

Activities

Chocolate Mouse Cookies

You can make cookies just like the mouse and boy eats in *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie!*
Ask your mom or dad for help!

Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter flavored shortening
- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups milk chocolate chips

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease cookie sheets.
2. In a large bowl, cream together the butter flavored shortening, brown sugar and white sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well with each addition, then stir in the vanilla. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually stir into the creamed mixture. Finally, fold in the chocolate chips. Drop by rounded spoonfuls onto the prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven, until light brown. Allow cookies to cool on baking sheet for 5 minutes before removing to a wire rack to cool completely.

Then Enjoy with your favorite mouse, or book!



Make Your Own Mouse!

Finger Puppet Mouse

Materials

- ¼ plain white paper
- Stickers or “eye” attachments
- Beads, pompons
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils
- Yarn or string
- Holepunch
- Scissors
- Glue or Gluestick

Instructions

1. Fold the ¼ sheet of paper again so you have a piece about the size of an index card
2. Turn the fold toward your stomach and draw a curving line from the left corner (which will be the nose) to the right side almost to the corner (about 2.5” up from the fold).
3. Do not unfold the paper. With scissors, cut on the curved line. You may want to have a parent or teacher help with this step.
4. Glue the curved sides together.
5. The straight side (on the right) should be left open. This is where your finger will go.
6. Punch a hole near the top corner of the straight side (the top being opposite of the fold).
7. Tie the string in the hole for the tail. You could even braid the string for added effect.
8. Glue a pompon or bead for the nose (the point), or draw on a nose and add eyes (another bead or drawn on) near the nose (or point).
9. From the remaining paper, draw a circle, or ear and cut out. You will need two shapes that are the same to glue on each side of the mouse.
10. Glue the two circles or ear shapes on each side of the mouse, so that half of the shape is on the body of the mouse, and half of the shape is sticking out. The backs of the ears will be pressed together.
11. Color your mouse however you wish!

Mirror Mouse

Within the play, The Mouse looks at himself in a mirror, and notices that his reflection is not exactly mimicking his movements. In our production, the mirror image is played by an actor. What would it be like to have a person as a mirror – someone to follow your movements just like a reflection?

Try it out!

- Divide the class into manageable groups (6-8).
- Have the students form a line shoulder to shoulder.
- Have one student stand before the group, facing them. This student will be the Mouse. The rest of the students in the group will be the reflection.
- Have the Mouse student begin with simple movement. Encourage them to be very specific with their movements.
- Have the group follow the Mouse for a few minutes.
- Have the other students in the group act as the mouse. Each student should get a chance to lead and follow.

Questions for Discussion:

1. How did it feel to lead? To follow?
2. Could you tell if you were moving together?
3. Was it difficult to do the same movements as the leader? Were you ever opposite of them?
4. When did you feel most connected to your reflection or your Mouse?

Version 2

- Divide the class in half, or in pairs. It may work best to pair the students off rather than have them choose their own partner.
- Have the students begin by sitting facing each other.
- Choose one student to be the leader, the Mouse. The other student will be the reflection.
- After a few minutes, have the partners switch who is the leader.

Questions for Discussion:

1. How did it feel to lead? To follow?
2. After awhile, could you still tell who was leading? Did it seem you were moving together?
3. Was it easier to go faster or slower?
4. When was it easy to follow and why was it easier?

If both exercises were completed, have the class talk back about which they liked better and why. Have them explain the challenges of each, and how they were different.

The Mouse Machine

The events that occur in *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* all affect each other. The whole story is a **Chain Reaction**. A Chain Reaction is a series of events in which each event is inspired by a previous event. All the events are linked, like a chain.

What would it be like to have a Chain Reaction of people?

Try it out!

What you will need – a large space such as an activity area or the classroom with desks pushed to the center and open imaginations!

- Begin by explaining what a chain reaction is and how it relates to the story. Then explain that the class will be creating a Mouse Machine that will be based on a chain reaction.
- Set up rules for the machine. State that the machine must maintain all safety standards so no one gets hurt. Also, be sure to guide the students carefully and help them to make safe choices about their additions to the machine.
- Begin by having one student begin a simple movement. It could be anything from waving a hand, to tapping a foot. Remind the students to choose their movement carefully as they could be performing the movement for a long time.
- The next student links onto the first student. They could place a hand on the previous student's elbow or back. Then, they begin their own movement, separate or joining with the first student. Encourage the class to create pictures and movements that are reactions to each other.
- The rest of the students continue to fit into the mouse machine. Remind them that they are all working together to create a unit, and that all of their movements affect the new piece – they are a working chain reaction. And, just like a machine, all parts must remain in good, working order so that whole product will work efficiently. Each movement inspires a new movement and is connected to the group
- Try to have the final students circle to connect to the beginning students so that the whole class is one working, unified machine.
- If you would like to have the students view the working machine, have them step out one at a time. But, also stress the change that the machine has to incur. How does the missing link affect the whole? Are the two open links able to connect?

Discussion Questions:

1. What was it like to be one of the first to go? Was it hard to keep doing the same motion? Could you see how your motion affected other motions?
2. What was a time that one motion seemed to be particularly affected by another?
3. Those that went towards the end – how did the machine look to you? Could you clearly see and understand all of the working parts?

4. When did a motion seem to be really successful? Why is that?
5. If the class did view the working machine one at a time after it was complete, discuss that. Use the prompts in the directions to encourage class response.



The Mouse in If You Give a Mouse a Cookie always expresses what is on his mind! Now it's your turn!

Creating a Critique

In order to have any kind of art, the artist creating the work must have some intent, or purpose, and there must be an audience. As an audience member, a person may experience a different reaction than other audience members. All of these reactions are very important. They are responses to what the artist originally intended, and are necessary to complete the circle of the artistic experience!

What thoughts, feelings, or observations did you experience during *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*? How have those feelings changed since you saw it?

You be the critic...

Write or draw a critique of the show, and present your thoughts to the rest of the class. 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. Not only is a **critique** an expression of a particular person's opinion, it also helps inform other people of what a particular work of art is like. Of course, the best way of experiencing a piece of art is first-hand. The individual expressing their opinion is the author of the **critique**, and they are called **Critics**. **Critics** are relied upon to be honest and fair about their thoughts feelings, likes and dislikes.

So...what did you think? What is your honest opinion of *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*? What elements of the show did you like or dislike and WHY? Don't forget to consider all of the elements of the show, as theatre is a collaborative art form, and all of its aspects must work together to make it successful. Did the lighting, costumes, scenery, sound, or acting have a particular influence on you? WHY? Would you recommend this production to someone else? Why or why not?

How do your thoughts compare to your friends??