



Study Guide 2021- 2022

Every Brilliant Thing

By Duncan Macmillan
with Jonny Donahoe

Florida Standards

Language Arts

LAFS.910.RL.1: Key Ideas and Details
LAFS.910.W.1: Text Types and Purposes
LAFS.1112.RL.1: Key Ideas and Details
LAFS.1112.SL.1: Comprehension and Collaboration
LAFS.910.RL.3: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Theater

TH.912.F.2: Careers in and related to the arts
TH.68.S.1: The arts are inherently experiential.

PG-13

Mild Language, Frightening Content, Discussion of Suicide

Most appropriate for Grade 8 and up. Children under 5 will not be admitted to the theater.

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Every Brilliant Thing An Introduction

Educators:

Welcome back to what we hope will be a return to a more normal school year! The past year has been difficult for all who love arts education, and we are eager to meet your needs for the 2021-2022 school year in whatever format works best for you and your students.

We understand that Field Trips may not be possible this school year, due to social distancing and bus scheduling; however, for those of you able to come see a show, we intend to continue live Signature Series performances. We are also looking into streaming or recording options, for those of you unable to leave the school.

We hope to be able to return to your classrooms this year for live workshops, but we will continue to offer Virtual versions of our popular workshops, Shakespeare Alive and Books Alive, as well. Also, we have live, interactive performances of *Aesop's Fables* which can stream into your classroom using whatever platform works best for you and your school.

Our hope is that Orlando Shakes will continue to meet your needs and become an essential partner in bringing theatre arts to your students for years to come.

If you have an idea for a program or delivery system that would make our partnership easier, please let us know. We now know that anything is possible, and that we as arts educators inherently bring our talent and creativity to every challenge we face.

We look forward to working with you this year and learning how we can serve you and your students.

Thank you for your tremendous work in nurturing our audiences of tomorrow.

Anne Hering
Director of Education

Brandon Yagel
Education Coordinator



Every Brilliant Thing Enjoying Live Theater

Theater is a Team Sport

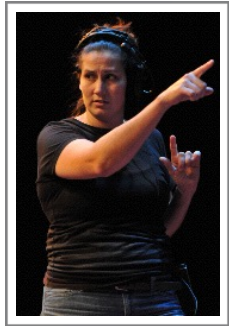
The **Playwright** writes the script. Sometimes it is from an original idea and sometimes it is adapted from a book or story. The Playwright decides what the characters say, and gives the Designers guidelines on how the play should look.

The **Director** creates the vision for the production and works closely with the actors, costume, set and lighting designers to make sure everyone tells the same story.



Sound Designer -
Britt Sanducky
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Actors** use their bodies and voices to bring the author's words and the director's ideas to life on the stage.



Stage Manager -
Stacey Renee
Norwood
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Designers** imagine and create the lights, scenery, props, costumes and sound that will compliment and complete the director's vision.

The **Stage Manager** assists the director during rehearsals by recording their instructions and making sure the actors and designers understand these ideas. The Stage Manager then runs the show during each performance by calling cues for lights and sound, as well as entrances and exits.



Costume Designer -
Denise Warner
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Shop** and **Stage Crew** builds the set, props and costumes according to the designer's plans. The Stage Crew sets the stage with props and furniture, assists the actors with costume changes and operates sound, lighting and stage machinery during each performance.



Creative Team of The Merry Wives of
Windsor
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Front of House Staff** welcomes you to the theater, takes your tickets, helps you find your seat and answers any question you may have on the day of performance.

The **Theater** is where it all takes place. Orlando Shakespeare Theater In Partnership with UCF is the only professional, classical theater company in Central Florida, reaching students and audiences in the surrounding eight counties.

Mission:

To enrich our community with engaging professional theater, inspiring educational experiences, and thought-provoking new plays.

Every Brilliant Thing Enjoying Live Theater

The Actor/Audience Relationship

The Audience is the reason Live Theater exists. At Orlando Shakes, we cherish the Actor/Audience relationship, the unique give and take that exists during a performance which makes the audience an ACTIVE participant in the event. The actors see the audience just as the audience sees the actors, and every, laugh, snuffle, chuckle and gasp the audience makes effects the way the actor plays his next moment. We want you to be engaged, and to live the story with us!



Photo: Rob Jones

There are certain Conventions of the Theatrical Event, like, when the lights go down you know that the show is about to start, and that the audience isn't encouraged to come and go during a performance. Here are some other tips to help you and your classmates be top notch audience members:

- Please make sure to turn off your cell phones. And NO TEXTING!
- Please stay in your seat. Use the restroom before you take your seat and stay in your seat unless there is an emergency.
- Please do not eat or drink in the theater.

Talkback

After the performance, the actors will stay on stage for about 10 minutes to hear your comments and answer any questions you have about the play, the production and what it means to be a professional actor. We'd love to hear what you felt about the play, what things were clear or unclear to you, and hear your opinions about what the play means. This last portion of the Actor/Audience Relationship is so important to help us better serve you!

Every Brilliant Thing About the Play Summary

You're six years old. Mum's in hospital. Dad says she's "done something stupid." She finds it hard to be happy. So you start to make a list of everything that's brilliant about the world. Everything that's worth living for. 1. Ice cream. 2. Kung Fu movies. 3. Burning things. 4. Laughing so hard you shoot milk out your nose. 5. Construction cranes. 6. Me. You leave it on her pillow. You know she's read it because she's corrected your spelling. Soon, the list will take on a life of its own. A play about depression told by a single performer and the lengths we will go to for those we love. (from Dramatist Play Service).



Every Brilliant Thing Meet the Characters

Narrator

The only performer in the play who tells the powerful story of mental illness.

Played by Various Audience Members

Vet, Dad, Sock, Lecturer, Sam, Mrs. Peterson



Every Brilliant Thing

Meet the Playwrights

Duncan Macmillan is an English playwright and director. Most of his work focuses on modern socio-political issues.

Macmillan won two awards in the inaugural year of the Brentwood Playwriting Competition at Manchester's Royal Exchange Theatre for his play, *Monster*. *Monster* also received nominations for the TMA and Manchester Evening News Awards for Best New Play.

Lungs, an exploration of Parenthood, premiered at the Studio Theatre in Washington DC. The British production, starring Kate O'Flynn and directed by Richard Wilson, debuted on the West End and won the 2013 Off West End Award for Best New Play. It has since been produced all over the world.

His next play, *People, Places and Things* opened at the National Theatre in co-production with Headlong Theatre Company in 2015. The play centers around one woman's experience with addiction and attempts at recovery. The show was nominated for the Olivier Award for Best New Play and Denise Gough won the Olivier for Best Actress. It transferred to the Wyndham Theatre in the West End in 2016 and premiered in New York City at St. Ann's Warehouse in 2017.

Every Brilliant Thing, an interactive monologue, was performed for three years at the Edinburgh Festivals and has toured worldwide. It was filmed by HBO during its run at the Barrow Street Theatre in New York City.

Synopsis courtesy of stageagent.com

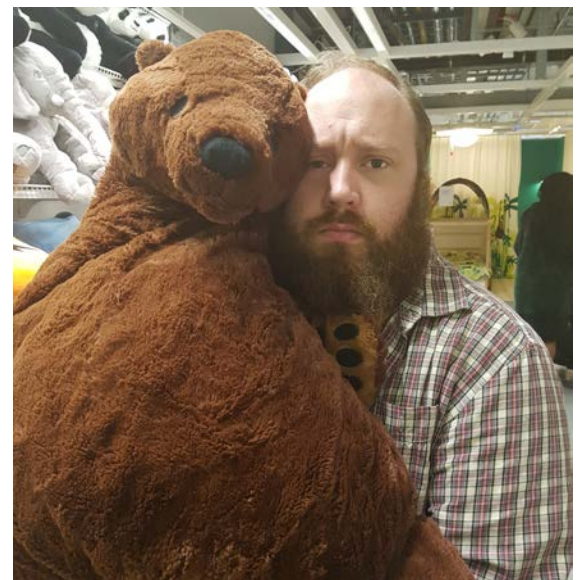


Jonny Donahoe is an actor, comedian, playwright, screenwriter, broadcaster, musician, orthodox off-spinner, decent slip-catcher and frustrating lower-order batsman.

His one-man show *Every Brilliant Thing*, (which he co-wrote and originally performed), has played more than six hundred times over four continents, including five months off-Broadway at The Barrow Street Theatre. The show was filmed by World of Wonder and screened as a special on HBO. He was nominated for a Drama Desk Award, Lucille Lortel Award and an Off-Broadway Alliance Award for his performance.

He is the frontman of musical-comedy-satirists, Jonny and The Baptists, as well regularly performing stand-up in his own right. His play *30 Christmases* (starring himself and Rachel Parris), premiered at The Old Fire Station in Oxford, before transferring to the New Diorama Theatre in London. He has also created a twelve-part series on parenthood with real-life partner Josie Long called *Josie and Jonny Are Having a Baby (With You)* for American Podcast Network, MidRoll and more recently has written the acclaimed new play *Forgiveness* that he will bring to the fringe this year.

Synopsis courtesy of avalonuk.com



Every Brilliant Thing Talking to a Friend about Depression

With the transition into adulthood, many teens and young adults begin to seek and rely on help from friends. When it comes to mental health matters, it is no different. If you think that a friend may be having thoughts of suicide, don't be afraid to say something. Talking about suicide does not increase the risk of it happening. Instead, it helps someone know that you care and are willing to listen.

What to do if a friend comes to you for help

- Don't panic! Remain calm and remember that you can help.
- Listen carefully. Let your friend know that you care. Be supportive and don't judge them.
- Take it seriously.
- Seek help. Get a trusted adult to help you.
- Ask if they are thinking about suicide.
- Do not leave your friend alone. If you cannot stay with them, find someone you trust.

What NOT to do if a friend comes to you for help

- Don't promise to keep it a secret. It is important to get help.
- Don't be afraid to ask them directly.
- Don't say "I know how you feel". Listen openly to what they have to say. Make it about them.
- Don't suggest that something is "wrong" with them because they feel this way.
- Don't ignore your friend. It takes courage to ask for help and they chose you.

How to start the conversation

- Ask if you can talk with them alone in private.
- Ask questions to get them to open up.
 - "I'm worried about you. How are you doing?"
 - "You haven't been acting like yourself lately. Is everything okay?"
 - "You seem really down. Are you okay?"
- Listen to their story and allow them to talk freely.
- Express concern and caring. Ask if they have thought about ending their life.
 - "Are you thinking about suicide?"
 - "Do you want to kill yourself?"
- Have resources available and encourage them to seek mental health services.
 - "Seeking help can take courage, but it's the smart thing to do."
 - "I know reaching out for help can be scary, but I want to help you."



NEED TO TALK NOW?

TEXT "IN" TO 741741 OR CALL 800.273.8255

Courtesy of havehope.com

Every Brilliant Thing Soundtrack of Our Life

Playwright Duncan MacMillan:

Music is integral . . . I like the fact that it's American [music], predominantly black music, which is being listened to in rainy England by a white man and his son--in this incarnation of the play [the English premiere]. Two English men who don't necessarily express their emotions with much articulacy. Some of it is incredibly upbeat and sexy and some of it is heart wrenchingly sad. It was a useful way of building a sense of the father and son's relationship and how they communicate to each other.

Songs and Artists from the Original Production:

- "Gloomy Sunday" by Billie Holiday
- Cab Calloway
- John Coltrane/Bill Evans
- "Free Jazz" by Ornette Coleman
- "Drown in my Own Tears" by Ray Charles
- "My Melancholy Baby" by Ella Fitzgerald
- "At Last" by Etta James
- "Move on Up" by Curtis Mayfield
- "I'm a Man" by Chicago
- "That's Life"
- "Wake my Up Before you "Go-Go"
- "My Way"
- "Some Things Last a Long Time" by Daniel Johnston
- "Into Each Life some Rain Must Fall" By Ella Fitzgerald and the Ink Spots

If your life had a soundtrack, what songs would there be? Why did you pick these songs?

Every Brilliant Thing

Write your own list.

What makes life brilliant for you?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Ask a family member or friend. What makes life brilliant for them?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Were your lists similar or different? Why do you think your lists ended up being that way?

***Every Brilliant Thing
Spectrum of Difference***

Answer each question by making a mark on the line between disagree and agree. The closer you are to either side, the more certain you are. Have friends and family also make marks.

Being happy is easy.

Disagree

Unsure

Agree

Depression can be cured.

Disagree

Unsure

Agree

Our imaginations are what make life bearable.

Disagree

Unsure

Agree

Depression affects everyone.

Disagree

Unsure

Agree

Add your own: _____

Disagree

Unsure

Agree

Add your own: _____

Disagree

Unsure

Agree

Analyze your results. Did your family and friends feel the same way as you or did they feel differently. What does that say about the statement being investigated?

Every Brilliant Thing Discussion & Themes

Discuss the quotes from the play below. Can you relate to these ideas? In what way?

SURVIVAL

"When something bad happens, your body feels it before your brain can know what's happening"

DEPRESSION

"She can't see anything worth living for"

IMAGINATION

"If you were able to know everything then life would be unlivable...we'd have no need to use our imaginations and our imaginations are what make life bearable."

GROWING UP

"As a little boy, I dealt with this so much better."

INFLUENCE OF OTHERS

"We are preconditioned to follow the behavior of our peers."

