



# CLASS SHOW GUIDE

## THE MEANING OF MAGGIE



### Pre-Show Activities

#### Theater Etiquette

IN-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 10-15 MINUTES

**Objective:** To actively explore proper theater behavior.

**Discussion:** "Etiquette is a word we use to describe the way people behave when they are in social situations with other people. What is the proper etiquette when you see a play? How should you behave during the show? Is it the same way you should act when watching a movie at home or playing outside? Is it okay to laugh during a play if you think it is funny? Is it okay to talk to your neighbor during the performance?"

**Brainstorming:** As a class, create a list of ways that audience members might behave, good and bad, while in the theater. Write these behaviors on the board in two different columns: one for "Good Theater Etiquette" and one for "Bad Theater Etiquette."

**Modeling:** Pick two students to come and sit in chairs in front of the class. Ask them to act out one of the "Bad Theater Etiquette" behaviors (with the teacher if desired) for ten seconds. Then have the class discuss why the behaviors were inappropriate and how they could be fixed. Now have the two students act out one of the behaviors under "Good Theater Etiquette" and discuss why this behavior is better.

**Activity:** Give the entire class one of the scenarios from their list of bad behaviors, like talking to their neighbor or not paying attention. Have the class act out this behavior for ten seconds then ask the students how they think this behavior makes the actors or the other audience members feel. Have them fix the behavior and act out this new scenario for twenty seconds. Repeat with a few other bad behaviors from the list.

#### Frozen Family Portrait

IN-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 20-30 MINUTES

**Objective:** Students will explore different family structures through frozen pictures.

**Discussion:** "We are going to see a play at The Rose Theater called *The Meaning of Maggie*. This play is about a family. What does it mean to be a family? What are traits many families have? Families can look many different ways. Today we're going to create frozen pictures of different kinds of families."

**Activity:** Divide the class into groups of about 5-8 students. One group stands in the front of the class. "I will call out a family type and you will work together to show us a frozen picture of that family portrait with your bodies." Call out a wide range of families, such as a family of ghosts, lions, dinosaur hunters, Little Red Riding Hood's family, Dr. Seuss characters, and so on.

**Side Coaching:** Remind students that not all families have two parents: some have grandparents, aunts, and other adults or children that aren't biologically related.

**Extension:** While students are frozen in their family portraits, tap them on the shoulder and encourage them to say aloud what their character might be thinking in that moment.

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# UPCOMING SHOWS



## Seedfolks

BEST FOR 2nd - 8th GRADE  
STUNNING TAPESTRY OF HUMANITY  
60 MINUTES

By Paul Fleischman

Produced by Children's Theatre Company, Minneapolis, MN

When Kim decides to turn the rat-infested lot next to her apartment into a place to plant some beans, she activates each and every member of the community around her. Unflinchingly honest and unabashedly heart-warming, Seedfolks is filled with raw, inspiring stories you'll never forget. Projections and animation bring Fleischman's world to life.



## ALICE'S ROCK & ROLL ADVENTURE

Based on Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There

### Wonderland: Alice's Rock & Roll Adventure

BEST FOR K - 8th GRADE  
ROCK & ROLL EXTRAVAGANZA  
60 MINUTES

Book by Rachel Rockwell. Music by Michael Mahler.

Lyrics by Michael Mahler and Rachel Rockwell.

Join Alice as she encounters the familiar faces of Wonderland whirled together with a wild wide range of modern music styles, from glam rock glitter and pop-hook punk to jangly guitar grinds and stadium anthem swagger.

## Want to book a workshop?

### Workshops at Your School

The Rose offers several workshops that can take place AT YOUR SCHOOL. A professional Rose teaching artist can visit your classroom for one to five days in a one week time period to explore, through drama, a curriculum topic of your choice.

To register your class for a workshop that will take place at your school, please contact Melissa Richter at (402) 502-4625 or [melissar@rosetheater.org](mailto:melissar@rosetheater.org).

### Workshops at The Rose

A workshop AT THE ROSE is the perfect way to explore themes from a school field trip show or learn about the profession of theater. A professional teaching artist with a college degree in dramatic arts education will lead your class. To register your class for a Workshop at The Rose, please contact Melissa Richter at (402) 502-4625 or [melissar@rosetheater.org](mailto:melissar@rosetheater.org).

Visit [www.rosetheater.org](http://www.rosetheater.org) for more information!



**Free Funding Is Available for Field Trips!** We understand that budgets are tight. That's why we're offering two great solutions to help pay for your school's field trip expenses. Both Nebraska Arts Council and Target Stores are offering financial assistance to help underwrite the cost of providing your students with experiences such as those provided by The Rose Theater. For more information, please visit [www.nebraskaartscouncil.org](http://www.nebraskaartscouncil.org) (click "Grants" to see all categories) or [www.target.com/fieldtrips](http://www.target.com/fieldtrips).

## Write To Us!

Letters may be written to:  
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Facebook: Rose Theater – Omaha  
Twitter: @RoseTheaterCo



Performing Arts  
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

# THE MEANING OF MAGGIE



## Post-Show Activities

### Relationship Portraits

OUT-OF-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 15-20 MINUTES

**Objective:** Students will use their bodies to create frozen statues of different relationships from the play.

**Discussion:** "We saw a lot of different relationships in the play *The Meaning of Maggie*. Let's think about the characters in the play and the way they feel towards one another."

**Brainstorming:** Brainstorm a list of different kinds of relationships the characters had in the play *The Meaning of Maggie*. Examples include Maggie and Dad; Layla and Maggie; Tiffany and Maggie; Grandmother and Dad; Clyde and Maggie; Mom and Dad; Tiffany and Dad.

**Modeling:** Invite two volunteers to create a statue that represents one of the relationships brainstormed together. Encourage them to use their bodies to show how the characters feel about each other.

**Activity:** Invite students to get into pairs and find their own spaces in the classroom. Call out different relationships from the brainstormed list. Add details to the relationships from the play, like "Tiffany has just yelled at Maggie;" or "Dad trying to confront Grandmother."

**Side Coaching:** Encourage students to think how they can use just their bodies to show they are feeling. Remind students to be mindful when portraying the character of Dad to avoid unpleasant or inappropriate stereotypes?

**Extension:** Encourage students to improvise [or make up on the spot] 3-line scenes as their characters by adding dialogue to their statues.

### Maggie's Monologue

IN-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 20-30 MINUTES

**Objective:** Students will use their imaginations and write a monologue as Maggie, the narrator and main character of our play.

**Materials:** Paper and writing utensils

**Discussion:** "A monologue is a speech presented by one character. Maggie narrated our entire play and told the story from her perspective. She let us know about her family and what her everyday life was like as she learned about her father's Multiple Sclerosis."

**Brainstorming:** "This play is a year in review for Maggie, but what happens after the play? If Maggie just turned twelve what might happen in the next school year? How do you think her sisters, mother, or father are doing?"

**Modeling:** Select an event to focus on and say a few sentences as the character of Maggie as an example in front of the class. For example, "Grandma visited again this Christmas. She was much nicer this year."

**Activity:** Encourage students to write a short monologue about something that happens when Maggie is twelve. Remind students that a monologue is written in first person. When students are finished writing, invite volunteers to come to the front of the class and act out their monologues.

**Extension:** Generate a list of other characters from the story and details about each of them. Have students write monologues as other characters.

## Points of View

OUT-OF-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 20-30 MINUTES

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate understanding of different points of views of various characters.

**Discussion:** “*The Meaning of Maggie* was narrated by Maggie, an eleven year old girl. What if another character, like Tiffany, Layla or Dad, was the narrator? How would our story change? Do you think would we still see the same events throughout the play?”

**Brainstorming:** Brainstorm a list of characters from the play. Assign several adjectives to describe each character and their personality. How do they compare to Maggie’s personality?

**Activity:** In small groups, invite each group to choose a different character from the play. Then, invite small groups to each act out the same group scene, like the Christmas scene, but from their chosen character’s point of view. Invite the audience to guess which character each group chose.

**Side Coaching:** Encourage empathetic choices. Discourage students from acting like they are in a wheelchair.



## Behind the Scenes Spotlight: The Playwright! Meet the Artist, Victoria Stewart!

**Victoria Stewart** graduated from the University of Iowa Playwrights' Workshop. Her plays include *Mercy Watson to the Rescue*, *Rich Girl*, *800 Words: The Transmigration of Philip K. Dick* and others and she is working in TV and film in Los Angeles. She has had a terrific time developing *The Meaning of Maggie* with the company of the Rose Theater.



### **Q: What does it mean to be a playwright? How did you become a playwright?**

A: I was a theater geek from the get-go, but not necessarily a writer. I staged a theatrical version of *The Giving Tree* in my garage when I was about 7 or 8, but I'm not sure I had ever seen a play before! I worked as a stage-manager for years out of college and then started writing plays and never stopped.

### **Q: You wrote the script for this adaptation of *The Meaning of Maggie*. Why did you want to create a play of this book?**

A: The book is so sweet and smart and moving. It deals with a difficult topic but never loses its sense of humor. There should be more art about endurance and bravery in a domestic, family setting. I love the characters, especially Maggie, who is a joy to write.

### **Q: What is one challenging thing about adapting a book like *The Meaning of Maggie*?**

A: One challenging thing is what to leave in and what to cut. The author packed a lot of events into one year of Maggie's life so I had to choose which experiences were essential. (Maggie has a great friend Mary who I wanted to keep in the play but I couldn't!) Using holidays as a framework was really helpful because it helps the audience track where Maggie is but also holidays are also a time that families come together.

### **Q: What is your favorite thing about being a playwright?**

A: On road trips, during math class, on the school bus, I would spend the whole time creating stories in my head. I love that my life allows me to share those stories with other people. Also, as a theater geek, I love the nitty gritty process of making theater – rehearsals, tech, performance.

### **Q: What is one of your favorite plays you've written?**

A: One of my favorite plays that I've written is *800 Words: The Transmigration of Philip K. Dick* about the science fiction writer who wrote the book that *Blade-Runner* is based on. It's a wild play with puppets and God shows up at the end. Maybe because it's about a writer, I feel very close to the main character.

### **Q: What do you hope the audience takes away from the play, *The Meaning of Maggie*?**

A: I hope Maggie's journey in the play makes people appreciate their own family. Maggie's family is going through something very specific, but most people can understand certain universal aspects of family life, like how frustrating it is when your parents keep a secret from you or when you get fed up with your siblings. Through it all, Maggie's family sticks together even when things get hard.

### **Q: Do you have any advice for a young person who is interested in writing plays?**

A: It's very easy to get overwhelmed by writing a play (or anything really!) But even if you write in fragments (like I do), if you put enough fragments together, you often have done more than you realize. So just start, you can always rewrite!

## Thank you for sharing your work with us, Ms. Stewart!

# Explore More!

If you enjoyed *The Meaning of Maggie*, be sure to check out these other great resources!

## Books You Might Enjoy!

1. *The Meaning of Maggie* by Megan Jean Souern

Read the book the play is inspired by! Author Megan Jean Souern, herself the daughter of a dad with multiple sclerosis, writes with funny grace and assured prose!

2. *See Ya, Simon* by David Hill

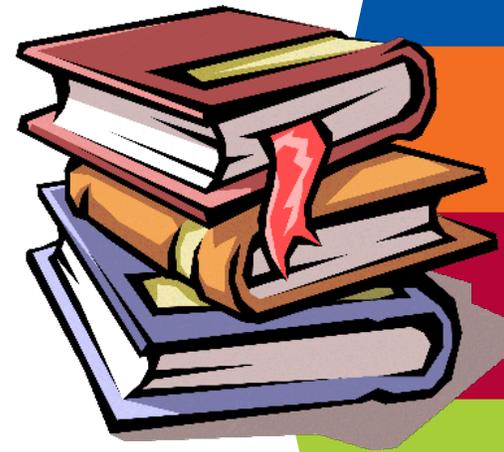
Simon is a typical teenager - in every way except one. Simon has MS: he is in a wheelchair and may not have long to live. The book is told from Simon's best friend, Nathan's point of view.

3) *Half a Chance* by Cynthia Lord

When Lucy's family moves to an old house on a lake, Lucy tries to see her new home through her camera's lens, as her father has taught her -- he's a famous photographer, away on a shoot. Will her photos ever meet his high standards? When she discovers that he's judging a photo contest, Lucy decides to enter anonymously.

4) *Courage for Beginners* by Karen Harrington

Twelve-year-old Mysti Murphy wishes she were a character in a book. If her life were fictional, she'd magically know how to deal with the fact that her best friend, Anibal Gomez, has abandoned her in favor of being a "hipster." She'd be able to take care of everyone when her dad has to spend time in the hospital. And she'd certainly be able to change her family's secret.



# THE MEANING OF MAGGIE



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