

Shake, Rattle & Read !

Written by Jane Noble and Laurie Brazzill

Based on selected children's books

PRIMARY BOOK TITLES

GEORGE SPEAKS by Dick King-Smith
ISBN 014032397X Puffin Books

THE QUILTMAKER'S GIFT by Jeff Brumbeau & Gail de Marcken
ISBN 1570251991 Scholastic Press

BRADY BRADY AND THE BIG MISTAKE by Mary Shaw & Chuck Temple
ISBN 077376304X Fitzhenry & Whiteside

PIGMALION by Glenda Leznoff
ISBN 1896580203 Tradewind Books

INTERMEDIATE BOOK TITLES

THE 13TH FLOOR by Sid Fleischman
ISBN 0440412439 Bantam Doubleday Dell

MY DOG IS A CARROT by John Hegley
ISBN 0763619329 Candlewick Press

BEHIND THE BEDROOM WALL by Laura E. Williams
ISBN 15713160613 Milkweed Editions

CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS & THE WRATH OF THE WICKED WEDGIE WOMAN
by Dav Pilkey
ISBN 0439050006 Scholastic Inc

THE COMPANY

HOOKED ON BOOKS THEATRE FOR CHILDREN is committed to creating quality children's entertainment that educates, engages the imagination and above all, inspires children to WANT to read.

Since its creation in 1996, HOOKED ON BOOKS has established an outstanding reputation throughout Western Canada and the Pacific Northwest United States for its highly original and unique blend of educational theatre that inspires children to read by introducing them to a series of "booktrailers" or mini plays. These mini plays stimulate and excite the children without giving everything away so there is still lots to discover when they read the books for themselves afterwards.

SHAKE, RATTLE & READ is the company's tenth show. Their other nine hit shows have been enjoyed by over 500,000 children in elementary schools and theatres throughout the country.

Creators Jane Noble and Laurie Brazzill both have a strong background in education, writing, directing and all aspects of professional acting – film, television, radio and theatre. They organize workshops for teachers on Bringing Books to Life in the Classroom and for actors on the art of performing for children.

COSTUMES & PROPS by Jane Noble & Laurie Brazzill

GENERAL IDEAS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. If the children have enjoyed a particular story, they can be encouraged to look for other books by the same author.
2. The idea of leaving a story unfinished is to inspire the children to find out what happens next. As an instructor, you may choose to complete the story in the classroom, or to encourage the children to find out for themselves. If the book is too advanced for their reading skills, then parent/teacher assistance may be required.
3. All the stories can lend themselves to creative writing activities and the open-ended stories allow the child to create his or her own ending, before reading the author's version. The books also serve as a stimulus for a wealth of related art and craft activities.
4. Children at different levels of development and reading skills can still work together on the same project, e.g. the more advanced child could be the director or scriptwriter, while another child could be involved in providing illustrations or making props and costumes.
5. The advantage of using the stories presented by HOOKED ON BOOKS as a springboard for creative writing assignments in the classroom is that even children who have difficulty with aural visualization will have been able to establish a clear understanding of the characters and their relationships through watching the show. This gives them a concrete image to relate to while writing.
6. Television, an integral part of many children's lives, takes away the need to be personally engaged in the creative process and is a passive activity. Reading can be too challenging for some children. If they do not meet with instant success, they often give up. HOOKED ON BOOKS provides a stepping-stone between passivity and engagement.

7. During the performance, some of the stories utilize a high degree of interaction between the characters and the audience. Children have the opportunity to play a variety of roles. A teacher may choose to re-enact any of these stories in the classroom so that different children may have an opportunity to play the central characters.

PRIMARY PROGRAM

GEORGE SPEAKS by Dick King-Smith

Laura's baby brother George was four weeks old when it happened. George looks like an ordinary baby, with his round face and squishy nose, but Laura soon discovers that he is absolutely *extraordinary* and everyone's life is turned upside down when George starts to speak!

Dick King-Smith, who is perhaps best known for his book *Babe, the Sheep-Pig* that was turned into the movie *Babe* is a superb storyteller whose characters are delightful and entertaining. If children enjoy this story, there are many other titles by this author to choose from.

WRITING

Write a conversation between you and a baby.

Create a family tree for your imaginary baby. Discussion of family relationships – aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents etc.

SOCIAL

Many children of this age group will have baby brothers and sisters at home. This book can stimulate discussion on a baby's needs, how to care for a baby, what are the different stages they go through – crawling, walking, talking, teething etc.

There is often a lot of jealousy when a new baby is born. Suddenly the baby is the centre of attention and the older siblings can be ignored. Discuss the role of the big brother or sister, emphasizing how important and special it is. Discuss how they can help mom perhaps by playing with the baby or helping with feeding and diaper changing or doing little chores such as tidying up their toys.

ART

Bring in a photo of you as a baby. Find and cut out pictures from magazines of all the different items a newborn baby will need. Stick these around the baby picture.

THE QUILTMAKERS GIFT by Jeff Brumbeau

Exquisitely illustrated by Gail de Marcken, this charming fable celebrates the joy of giving. A generous quilt maker, with magic in her fingers, sews the most beautiful quilts in the world. She then gives them away to the poor and the homeless. She will not make them for the rich and will not sell them at any price. A cruel, greedy, unhappy king tries unsuccessfully to force the quiltmaker into giving him one of her magical quilts but before she will, he must become worthy of receiving one.

This book has a very powerful message that material wealth cannot ensure happiness and that concern and caring for others will bring real joy into your life.

ART & CRAFTS

The book has superb illustrations showing many different types of quilt. Make a collage of a quilt fit for a king using squares of different coloured and textured fabric.

The king trades his treasures for smiles around the world. Create a frieze showing different cultures and countries where the king shares his gifts.

WRITING

Make a list of the 10 things you would find it hardest to part with. What is your favourite possession? List five countries and choose a very special gift you would give to a child in that country.

Write a poem about sharing and giving.

GLOBAL SHARING

Decorate a shoebox and fill it with goodies and donate to a children's charity,

MUSIC

"Loving and living, sharing and giving

The King brings joy to each girl and boy"

Sing as a round in the classroom. The melody is the chorus from Frère Jacques.

DRAMA

This story provides an excellent starting point for teachers to introduce drama in the classroom. The children now know the main story line and the characters are simple and clearly drawn. The story can be brought to life using very simple props and costumes, such as a crown for the king; a shawl and quilt for the quiltmaker; a hat for the guard.

The teacher can retell the story with children acting out the main roles. The rest of the class can be birds and join in the chorus as they did during the show.

"Fly little birds, in the air we'll soar
And carry the quiltmaker safely to shore."

BRADY BRADY AND THE BIG MISTAKE by Mary Shaw & Chuck Temple

Brady Brady's friends are coming over to play shinny and he wants everything to be perfect. To impress them, he takes his father's special autographed puck without permission. The plan backfires when he loses the puck in the snow. He is worried about what his father will say but plucks up the courage to admit his mistake.

The importance of honesty and owning up to one's mistakes is emphasised in this simple and appealing story through a medium that all Canadian children can relate to – hockey.

There are several other titles in the Brady Brady series, all of which are linked to hockey. Brady Brady is an excellent role model for children since positive values are promoted in his stories such as sportsmanship, teamwork and fair play.

POETRY

Write a hockey poem, using ours as a starting point.

Shovel the snow to and fro,
Let's pile it up some more
Till the rink is clear and ready to go
And we can shoot and score.

Slide, glide, side to side,

Breakaway once more
Race the rink and in a blink,
Aim, shoot, score!

Sticks down, twizzle round,
Shoot across the ice
Dodge and weave, can you believe,
Another goal, that's twice!

If you log on to the Brady Brady website at www.bradybrady.com there are pictures to colour, posters to download, hockey tips and other activities.

PIGMALION by Glenda Leznoff

Juliet Hogsworth is a shy little piglet who can sing and dance and tap her little toes off at home, but gets stage fright whenever she has to perform in public. This tale follows Juliet's quest to win the title role of Eliza Piglittle in George Barnyard Shaw's *Pigmalion* – with apologies from the author to the great playwright! In the end Juliet's stout heart wins out as she triumphs against tremendous odds.

Glenda Leznoff is a local Vancouver writer and screenwriter. Her advice to young piglets everywhere is :

Face your fears and follow your dreams. Be the best that you can be.

Life is full of challenges and for young children even simple tasks can seem to be quite daunting. This book shows how important it is to face up to any fears that may hold you back and prevent you from achieving your goals. Many famous actors are in fact very shy yet can transform themselves when they take on a role. Drama helps enormously in overcoming shyness since children can hide behind a character and therefore feel safer.

VIDEO

Rent the video of *My Fair Lady* and watch selected scenes from this with the class. Choose scenes that are represented in the book e.g. the rain in Spain. Talk a little about George Bernard Shaw.

MUSIC

Learn one of the songs from *My Fair Lady*.

THEATRE

Juliet is performing in the theatre. Explain the process of putting on a play. List some theatre terms and make sure the children know what they mean – auditions, props, costumes, actors, understudy, director, assistant director, producer, stage manager, lighting designer, wings, backstage, rehearsals, blocking, dress rehearsal, curtain up, black out, opening night, bravo, encore.

ARTS & CRAFTS

Make pig finger puppets from felt. Create a puppet theatre. Re-enact the story.
Draw Grandma Hogsworth's garden. What different flowers and vegetables does she grow?

TONGUE TWISTERS

The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain.
I want hot coffee in a proper copper coffee pot.
They play ping-pong in Hong Kong in the evenings.
There are many different phrases designed to improve pronunciation.
Practice some of these with the class. What other tongue twisters do they know?

INTERMEDIATE PROGRAM

THE 13TH FLOOR by Sid Fleischman

The wild adventures of newly orphaned Buddy and his lawyer sister Liz begin when they receive a message on their answering machine from an ancestor named Abigail who has been dead for over 300 years. She is about to be tried for witchcraft. Buddy and Liz find themselves on the 13th floor of an old building and are soon transported back in time to the pirate ship of another ancestor, Captain Crackstone. Buddy hopes to find treasure to pay their mounting bills while Liz hopes to save Abigail from being hanged as a witch. Can Buddy and Liz change the past and find a way back to the future?

The historical context of this story is based on the author's own family history. His wife was descended from a Massachusetts woman who was tried as a witch in the 17th century. Children find magic and witchcraft endlessly fascinating. This novel provides an excellent lead in to study of this period.

RESEARCH AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Research the witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts, the most infamous in American history, that sent dozens of innocent people to their deaths on absurd charges.

Find out what some of the charges were – some examples :

- ◆ A man offered as evidence that his feet suddenly went hot in the presence of a villager accused of witchcraft.
- ◆ A woman claimed under oath that she had seen a neighbour turn herself into a bear.
- ◆ A man said his spurs came jingling after him through the woods.

Examine the historical facts that lead up to the witch trials and look at some of the laws from that time that have now changed. e.g. It was indeed against the law for a man to kiss his wife on a Sunday.

Some useful websites :

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft>

<http://www.salemwitchmuseum.com/learn.html>

<http://www.school.discovery.com/schooladventures/salemwitchtrials/story/story.html>

(Flash movie presentation)

<http://www.school.discovery.com/conversations/getthefacts/salemfacts.html>

(Features further novel based on the trials called *Beyond the Burning Time* by Kathryn Lasky)

DISCUSSION

Discuss the difference between the "witchcraft" featured in the Harry Potter novels and the witchcraft of Salem.

DRAMA

Using the examples in the book as a starting point, work in pairs, one as the defendant and one as the lawyer, and act out a cross examination.

ART

Using fabric and different textures for the rigging etc, paint a pirate ship complete with skull and crossbones.

MY DOG IS A CARROT by John Hegley

John Hegley is a highly original stand-up comedian, poet, singer, songwriter and glasses wearer. He was given his first pair of glasses when he was twelve and was delighted since he had wanted a pair since he was five. They often feature in his poetry. He was born in London and went to school in Luton where he liked to do rhymes and cartoons in the birthday cards he made for his dad. *My Dog is a Carrot* is John's first children's poetry collection.

The poems are all very short. They are witty and sometimes weird and odd and all deceptively simple. John helps to bring out the poet in all children by making them feel "I could do that!" PS. He has no dog.

POETRY

This book is an excellent introduction to poetry and its different forms. The wacky humour and simplicity of the poems make them very accessible to children. Some of the poems are just plain silly, some show a different way of looking at simple things, others are more serious and sophisticated.

Create your own poetry book. Design the cover and give your collection a title.

Study examples of different types of poem then write your own. Include illustrations to go with your poems.

Some types to include :

Alphabet poem

Alliteration poem

Free verse

Onomatopoeic poem

Limerick

Haiku

My favorite poem by an author

If poem – If I were a, I'd.....

I am.....poem

Hyperbole poem

Rhyming couplets

Cinquain

ARTS & CRAFTS

Create a Poe-tree and attach your own acrostic LEAF poems and "bark" (dog pictures).

BEHIND THE BEDROOM WALL by Laura E. Williams

In 1942, thirteen year old Korinna Rehme is an active member of her local Jungmädel, a Nazi youth group, along with many of her friends. She believes that Hitler is helping Germany by dealing with what he calls "the Jewish problem", a program that she witnesses as her Jewish neighbours are attacked and taken from their homes. Korinna's parents, however, are secretly members of an underground group that is sheltering Jews and helping them to escape. Korinna is shocked to discover that her parents are hiding a Jewish family behind the wall of her bedroom. As she gets to know the family, her sympathies begin to turn and when someone tips off the Gestapo, her loyalties are put to the test. Korinna must decide what she really believes and whom she can trust.

This is an extremely powerful book that raises many issues that are still so relevant today, through an exciting story filled with adventure and tension. It also helps us understand

the madness that drove so many people to turn on their neighbours during World War II and the courage that so many people found to resist.

From our point in history, it is clear that Hitler was an evil fanatic, but it is easy to forget just how powerful his propaganda machine was during the 1930's and 1940's. Germany was in a deep depression when he came to power. So many people were poor and out of work that they desperately wanted to believe in his vision of a powerful, prosperous future and thus followed him blindly.

The children were all encouraged to join Hitler youth groups where there had lots of fun – singing, hiking, playing sports, helping the elderly, raising money by baking, marching in parades. They were also bombarded with speeches and images of Hitler and his glorious plans for the future. Since Hitler controlled all the newspapers, books and radio broadcasts, most of these children truly believed that what they were doing was for a good cause and would help Hitler create a strong and wonderful Fatherland.

During the second World War, Hitler's followers murdered over six million Jews and millions of others who were considered different – Eastern Europeans, mentally and physically challenged people, gypsies and homosexuals – to name a few. It is estimated that by the end of the war, over two-thirds of the Jews in Europe had been murdered. Well over one million of them were children.

To quote Lois Lowry, Newbery award winning author of The Giver :

“For the sake of my own – and everyone's grandchildren, I hope there will never be an end to the flow of stories that speak of history and to the human heart. May *Behind the Bedroom Wall* find its way onto the shelf of favorites and into the hands of young people who will shape our future by listening to our past.”

PROJECTS & DISCUSSION

- ◆ Discuss the general history of World War Two. Which countries were involved? On a world map, highlight the countries involved. Who were the leaders of these countries? Which countries were allied? When did different countries join the war? Flags of the countries involved. Date war declared and peace celebrated.
- ◆ What role did Canada play in World War II?
- ◆ Make a list of vocabulary specific to the war. In the book we hear of the Jungmädel and the Führer.
- ◆ Discuss comparisons between World War II and the recent war in Iraq.
- ◆ Other examples of extreme racism – Klu Klux Klan, War in Bosnia, present crisis in the Middle East.
- ◆ Write an essay on an example of prejudice that you have witnessed or that has happened to you. What can we do in our everyday lives to dispel prejudice and racism?
- ◆ Write a positive slogan that promotes tolerance.

CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS AND THE WRATH OF THE WICKED WEDGIE WOMAN ***The Fifth Epic Novel by Dav Pilkey***

George and Harold have really done it this time. They've created a monster. She's faster, smarter and more evil than anything the world has seen before – she's Wedgie Woman! With the help of her horrible robots and her horrendous hairdo, Wedgie Woman is on a mission to take over the world and destroy Captain Underpants.

Dav Pilkey admits to having endured a difficult time at school, since he had reading problems and was severely hyperactive. He frequently felt discouraged and a failure because he did not get good grades. He is an inspiration to children who experience similar problems that he is now so successful. Dav Pilkey understands "kid humour" and draws in even the most reluctant reader with his silly and funny action packed stories.

COMIC STRIP

Create your own super hero with amazing powers. What are his/her strengths and weaknesses? Either on your own or with a partner, write and illustrate your own comic strip.

RESEARCH

Look at a variety of established comic strip heroes. What do they have in common? What makes them successful or unsuccessful in your eyes? How important is humour?

SELF DISCOVERY

When Dav Pilkey was in elementary school, he was always getting into trouble for pulling pranks, cracking jokes, and making silly comic books. In second grade, he invented his most famous (or infamous) character CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS! Dav's teacher told him, " You'd better straighten up young man, because you can't spend the rest of your life making silly books".

Do you have any character traits or talents, which are not presently appreciated which might turn into a passion or occupation later in life?

WEBSITE

www.pilkey.com

To quote Einstein : " Imagination is more important than knowledge."