

# Overture

A Performing Arts Series  
for Students

# *Onstage*



**The Snow Dragon**  
**Monday, October 23, 2006**



## Overture Center FOR THE ARTS

# ABOUT OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Overture Center for the Arts fills a city block in downtown Madison with world-class venues for the performing and visual arts. Made possible by an extraordinary gift from Madison businessperson W. Jerome Frautschi, the center presents the highest-quality arts and entertainment programming in a wide variety of disciplines for diverse audiences. Offerings include performances by acclaimed classical, jazz, pop, and folk performers; touring Broadway musicals; quality children's entertainment; and world-class ballet, modern and jazz dance. Overture Center's extensive outreach and educational programs serve thousands of Madison-area residents annually, including youth, older adults, people with limited financial resources and people with disabilities. The center is also home to nine independent resident organizations.

Internationally renowned architect Cesar Pelli designed the center to provide the best possible environment for artists and audiences, as well as to complement Madison's urban environment. Performance spaces range from the spectacular 2,250-seat Overture Hall to the casual and intimate Rotunda Stage. The renovated Capitol Theater seats approximately 1,100 and The Playhouse, designed for live theater, seats 350. In addition, three multi-purpose spaces provide flexible performance, meeting and rehearsal facilities. Overture also features several art exhibit spaces. Overture Galleries I, II, III display works by Dane County artists. The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters' Watrous Gallery displays works by Wisconsin artists, and the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art offers national and international artists.

### **Resident organizations**

Kanopy Dance Company

Madison Ballet

CTM-Madison Family Theatre

Madison Museum of Contemporary Art

Madison Opera

Madison Repertory Theatre

Madison Symphony Orchestra

Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters

Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

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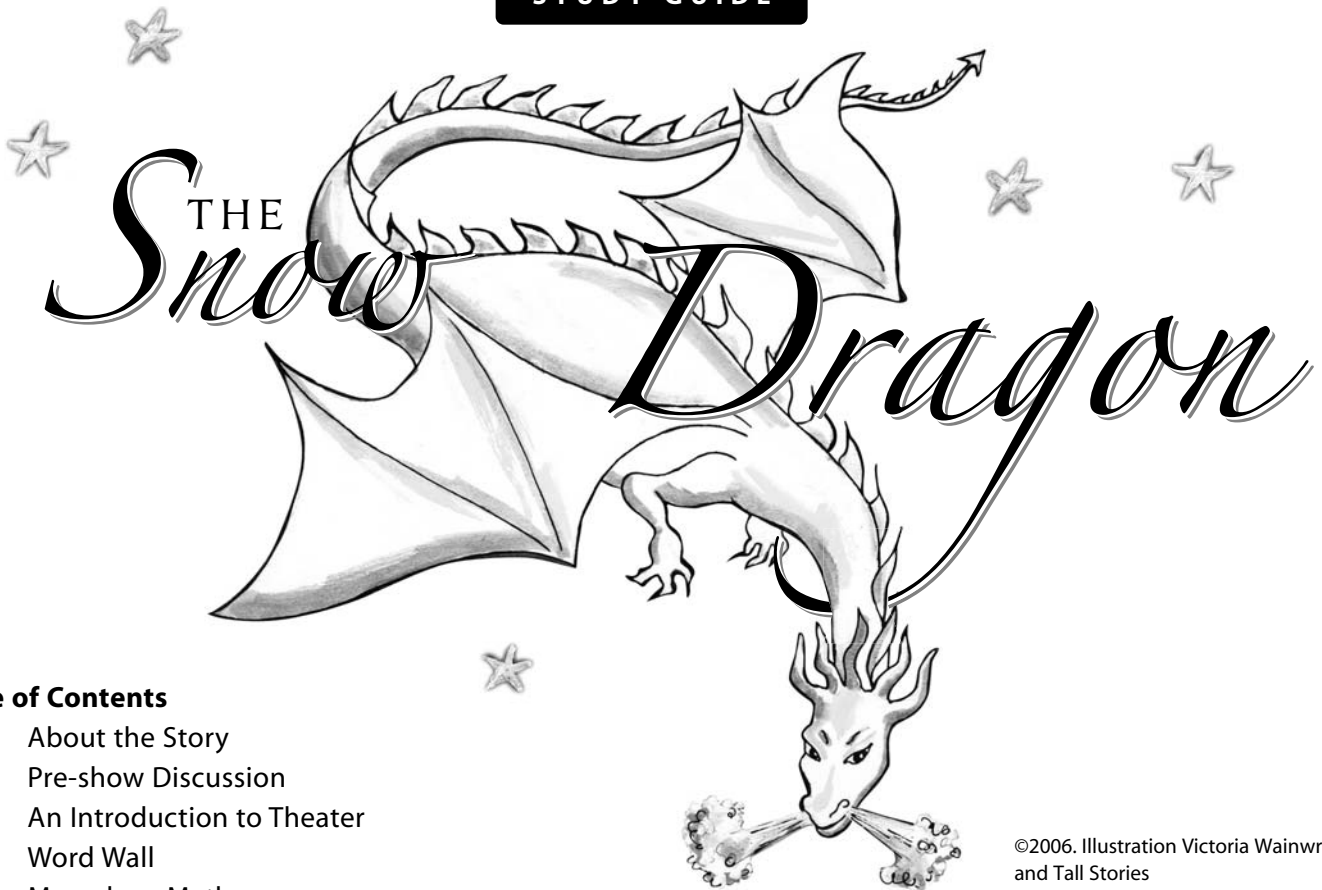
Design: Ross Cattelan

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Spotlight on Learning: Educator's Resource Guides are available online at

[www.overturecenter.com/guides.htm](http://www.overturecenter.com/guides.htm)



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### Welcome!

Overture Center for the Arts is pleased to welcome you to this performance of *The Snow Dragon*. *The Snow Dragon* is sure to delight and entertain your students as they are introduced to and experience the joys of live theater. We have created this resource guide in order to help you prepare your students for the performance. We have included activities that you can use before and after the production to extend and enrich the performance. We know that your instructional time is valuable. In order to help you better meet your curricular goals, we have included Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for each activity. Pick and choose the activities that are most suited to your classroom and the goals of your curriculum.

Overture Center for the Arts



## TALL STORIES THEATRE COMPANY

Tall Stories Theatre Company returns to Madison after a successful engagement with *The Gruffalo* in 2004. Tall Stories was founded by Toby Mitchell and Olivia Jacobs in London in 1996. The company presents old, new and timeless stories in fresh and exciting ways. The goal of the company is to create lively theater including original music, physical movement and laughter, all while engaging the audience. Tall Stories Theatre has presented works at festivals, schools and theaters and toured internationally.

For more information, visit Tall Stories at their web site:  
[www.tallstories.org.uk](http://www.tallstories.org.uk)

# ABOUT THE *Story...*

Credit: Anna Lewenhaupt and Toby Mitchell



**B**illy is *the* kid. He has everything a young goat could need – and more besides. When New Year’s Eve approaches, Billy’s parents tell him about the legendary Snow Dragon, who will bring him even more goodies. All he has to do is to collect berries to leave out for the Snow Dragon when he visits.

On his way to collect berries, Billy bumps into his friends Spike the hedgehog (who is collecting mushrooms for the Snow Unicorn) and Rosie the piglet (who is collecting acorns for the Snow Goblin). Billy is almost certain that it’s actually the Snow Dragon who visits, and that he likes berries – but he’s not taking any chances where presents are concerned and so ‘borrows’ the mushrooms and acorns from his friends.

But Billy is spending too much time in the woods and it’s getting dark. *There are wolves in the darkness, and every kid has to start growing up one day...*

An encounter with wolves teaches Billy that he should do the right thing and return the acorns and mushrooms to their rightful owners. He returns home, a bit dejected for he had not collected any berries for the Snow Dragon. After being sent to his room, he remembers he has an “emergency” rhubarb and apple pie. He leaves the pie for the Snow Dragon.

In the morning, Billy awakens to find a gift. All is right with the world and he has learned a powerful lesson about the golden rule.



The show is an adventure story, following the progress of naughty protagonist Billy on a New Year's adventure. The show examines a Santa Claus-type myth in a non culture-specific (and non season-specific) way, while asking the underlying question: Is it more important to pay lip service to mythology and rituals or to behave well towards others?

The production combines Tall Stories' unique physical storytelling style with new songs, humor and a touch of magic. In addition, puppetry is used to depict the legendary Snow Dragon. Two narrators in the form of wolves lead us through the tale – and Billy also talks directly to the audience.

This production of *The Snow Dragon* uses a variety of physical theater techniques to create lots of different characters with three actors and a minimal set.

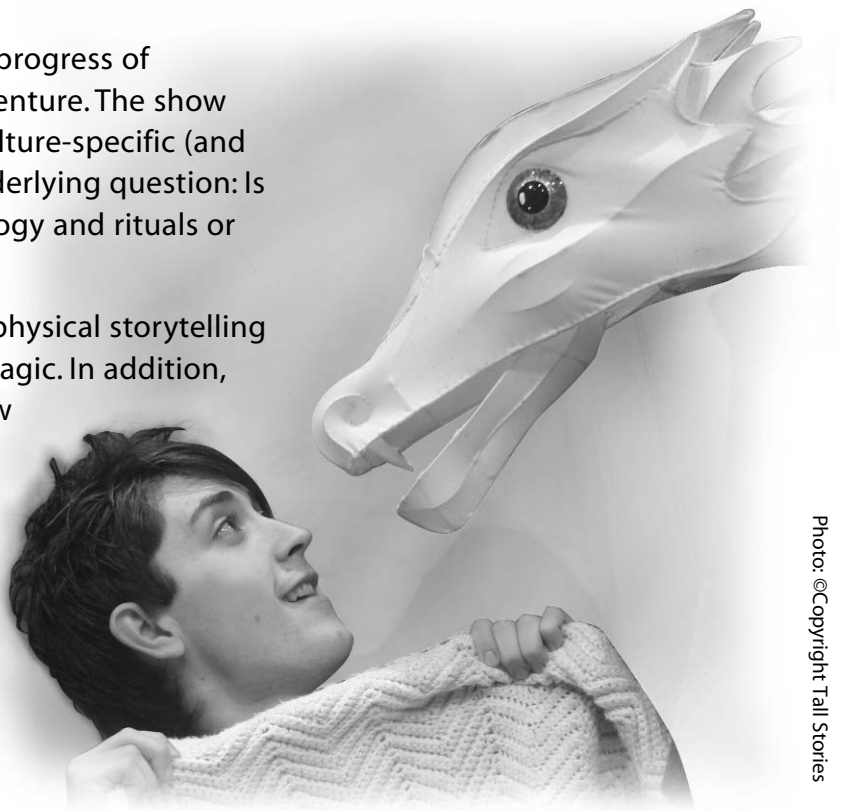


Photo: ©Copyright Tall Stories



Photo: ©Copyright Tall Stories

## EVOLUTION OF A PLAY

*The Snow Dragon* is based on an original story by Toby Mitchell. With his initial story in hand, Toby worked with six actors, a composer, a designer, a lighting designer and a puppeteer to develop the story and the characters that are now in the show. Very often, companies adapt classic or modern stories for the stage, but in this case, Tall Stories worked the other way round. Once the story was developed a book was created to accompany the stage show.



Credit: Anna Lewenhaupt and Toby Mitchell



# PRE-SHOW DISCUSSION

- What is a play? Have you ever been to a play? What was it like?
- The play we are going to see is about a goat named Billy. What kind of animal is a goat? Have you seen a goat? In the play, there isn't a real goat. A person will be pretending to be a goat. How could you move if you wanted to pretend that you were a goat?
- In the play, the characters are going to be celebrating New Year's Day. What are some holidays that your family celebrates? What are some of the special holiday things you do?
- Billy the goat has to learn about being good and not being naughty. What are some things you could do to be good? Sometimes it isn't easy to be good. Can you think of times when it was hard to be good?
- Billy learns about the golden rule. What is the golden rule? The golden rule means to treat other people the way you would like to be treated. How would you like to be treated? What are some things you can do to treat others in the way you would like them to treat you?
- *The Snow Dragon* is a live show. This means the actors are in the same room with us, acting out the show as we watch. How is this different from television? Explain that television is filmed or taped before we see it. We can't interact with the actors on T.V. They can't hear us or respond to us in any way. In a live performance, the actors can hear us laugh or clap. They can respond to the audience and might talk to the audience. For example, if we laugh loudly they might "ham it up" or repeat a trick.

## English Language Arts Standards

**C.4.3** Participate effectively in discussion

**C.8.1** Identify similarities and differences between various artistic mediums such as film, video or television

## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE



# Theater

Young children may experience their first theatrical performance with *The Snow Dragon*. Students will be less fearful and more likely to enjoy the show if they know what to expect. Students should be familiar with some basic theater conventions. Discuss the following:

- An usher will seat you. An usher is a person who works at the theater and helps the visitors find their way.
- The lights will flicker and then it will get dark. Special theater lights will come on and light up the stage so that you can see the show.
- People attending a theater performance should be quiet and listen during the show. It is OK to laugh if something is funny. It is not OK to talk during the show. Talking makes it difficult for others to hear what the actors are saying.
- When the show is over, you can clap your hands if you liked the show. This is called applause and the actors like applause. They will bow when you applaud.
- The lights will come back on. The usher will help your class leave the theater to go back to school.



## GOING TO THE THEATER

Explain that the children will be going to Overture Center for the Arts to see the play. What kinds of rules would be helpful for the class? Write the rules for a field trip on chart paper and practice reading them together.

Discuss with the children how they will get to the theater. Explain any special rules for riding in buses or cars. Send home permission slips. Copy the permission slip onto an overhead and read the text of the permission slip with the children as a guided or shared reading activity.

## DEMONSTRATE A THEATER

Use a theater in your school or set up chairs to make a pretend theater in your room. Practice walking in, sitting down, and turning out the lights. Children can take turns being the usher and turning the lights out.

Have the children draw a picture of a theater, showing themselves sitting in a theater.

## DEMONSTRATE THEATER MUSIC

The show we are going to see is a musical. What kind of play do you think a musical play will be? Have you seen movies or television shows where people sing and tell a story? Can you think of any songs that tell a story? How could music help to tell a story? For example, very soft and slow music might be played when someone is sleeping. Loud noisy music might be played when there is a storm in the story.

Play several different selections from classical music. Ask the children to think about and suggest ideas that the music reminds them of. Is it happy or sad? Does it sound like nature? A party? A chase scene? Does it make them feel like dancing or sleeping? Some music selections to try: Handel's "Water Music"; Tchaikovsky's "Trepak" (the Russian Dance from the *Nutcracker Ballet*) and Mozart's "Alla Turca" from Sonata No. 11.

## DEMONSTRATE THEATER LIGHTS

Draw solid spots of different colors on transparencies with different colored markers. Shine a flashlight through the transparency. What happens to the color of the light? How could different kinds of light help to tell a story? What would you do to the lights if you wanted to tell a scary story? What about a thunder storm? A sunny day?

## DEMONSTRATE THEATER COSTUMES

In the theater, people use costumes to help create a character. In the play, the animals are suggested by different costumes. Spike the hedgehog wears a bobble hat, glasses and a tank top, Rosie the pig wears a very dirty pink dress and the wolves are suggested with capes. Discuss how people dress up on Halloween to look like different characters. How might actors dress up to pretend they were different people or animals? What could you wear if you wanted to pretend you were a baby? A football player? What about a cow? A princess?

Bring in different articles of clothing and costume pieces and let the children pretend to be different characters.

### Social Studies Standards

**C.4.3** Explain how families, schools, and other groups develop, enforce, and change rules of behavior and explain how various behaviors promote or hinder cooperation

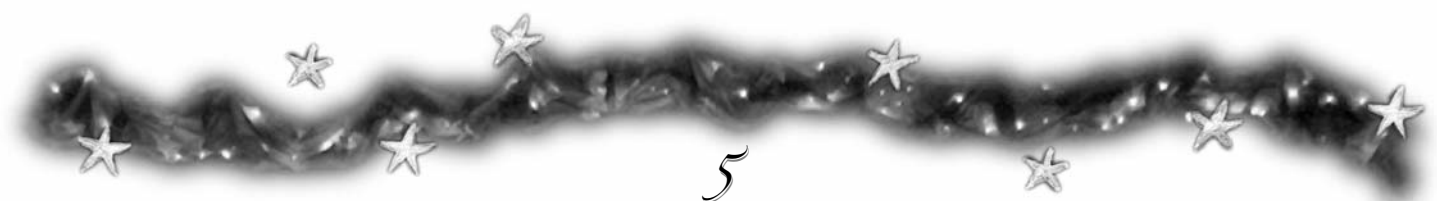
**E.4.6** Give examples of group and institutional influences such as laws, rules, and peer pressure on people, events, and culture

**Theater and Performance Standard B.4.1** Pretend to be someone else, creating a character based on scripted material or through improvisation, using props, costume pieces, and ideas

### Dance Motor Learning Standards

**C.4.1** Use improvisation to explore, discover, and invent movement

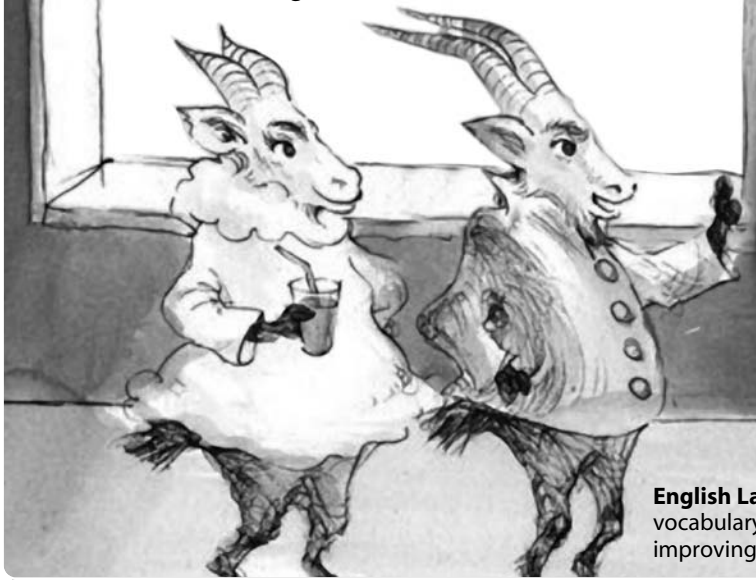
**F.4.1** Discover their potential for communicating through movement



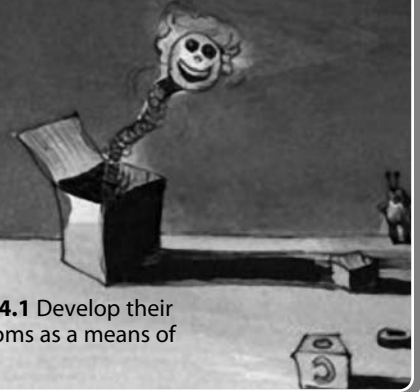
# WORD WALL

Posting these words on your word wall or in your room will help the children to read, write, and talk about the things they have read about, done in class or seen at the performance of *The Snow Dragon*.

goat  
wolves  
hedgehog  
piglet  
New Year's Day  
berries  
mushroom  
acorn  
snow  
dragon  
unicorn  
goblin  
presents  
emergency  
pie



**English Language Arts Standard D.4.1** Develop their vocabulary of words, phrases and idioms as a means of improving communication



Credit: Anna Lewenhaupt and Toby Mitchell

## MARVELOUS

# Math

Billy and his family like to eat berries. Set up a berry taste testing and graphing opportunity. Provide several different types of berries such as strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries. Allow children to taste a berry of each type and determine their favorite berry. Create a bar graph showing how many children prefer each type of berry.

Use the graph for simple math. Discuss concepts such as largest, smallest, most, fewest, least, more than, less than etc. Which berry has the biggest number of fans? The smallest? How many more people choose blueberry than strawberries?

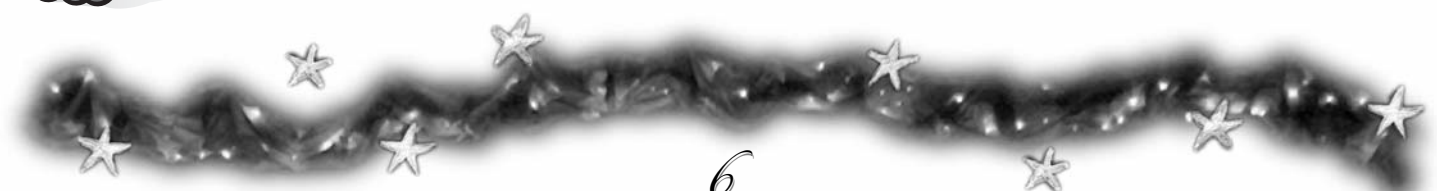
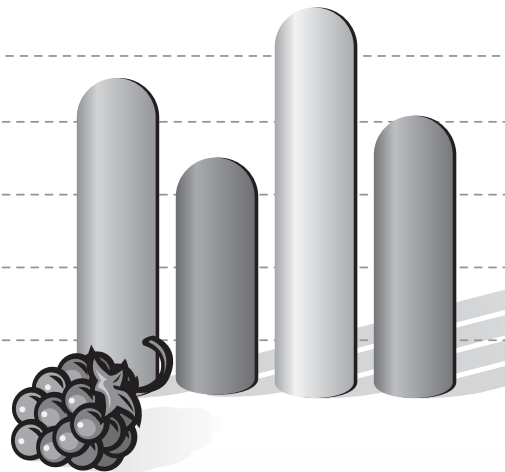
Note: Check for food allergies before giving children berries

### Math Standards

**A.4.1** Use reasoning abilities to perceive patterns, identify relationships, formulate questions for further exploration

**A.4.2** Communicate mathematical ideas in a variety of ways, including words, numbers, symbols, pictures, charts, graphs, tables, diagrams and models

**B.4.2** Determine the number of things in a set by grouping and counting, combining and arranging, and estimation



# SIMPLE SCIENCE

In the play, Billy, Spike the hedgehog and Rosie the piglet are trying to collect and carry bags of berries, mushrooms and acorns. Ask the students if they think it would be hard to carry around bags of these items. Have students guess which would be the easiest to carry. Which would be the heaviest? Place a small amount (perhaps ten) of berries in a bag. Repeat with the same number of mushrooms and acorns in different bags. Weigh the bags and compare the results. Which is heaviest? Lightest? Which would they rather carry around? Make a chart showing the items from lightest to heaviest.



Credit: Anna Lewenhaupt and Toby Mitchell

## Science Standards

- A.4.1** When conducting science investigations, ask and answer questions that will help decide the general areas of science being addressed
- C.4.6** Communicate the results of their investigations in ways their audiences will understand by using charts, graphs, drawings, written descriptions and various other means, to display their answers

# IDEAS FOR WRITING

Billy's father asks him to get up in the morning so they can have family time. What kinds of things do you like to do with your family?

- Pre-writers: Draw a picture of you and your family enjoying a favorite activity.
- Beginning writers: Draw a picture of you and your family enjoying a favorite activity. Write three sentences telling about your family time.
- Experienced writers: Write a story about a time when you did something fun with your family. Use lots of descriptive words.

## English language Arts Standards

- B.4.1** Create or produce writing to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes
- B.4.2** Plan, revise, edit, and publish clear and effective writing
- B.4.3** Understand the function of various forms, structures, and punctuation marks of standard American English and use them appropriately in communications

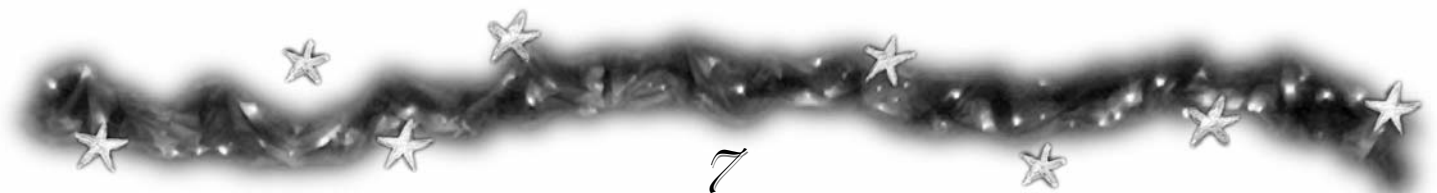
# LOTS OF LISTS

One way to enrich students' vocabularies is to create and discuss lists. As a class, discuss the topic and write the lists on chart paper. After rereading them post them around the room. Some ideas for lists related to *The Snow Dragon* include:

Things we like to do  
Ways to celebrate a special day  
Friends we have  
Animals we know  
Presents we would like to get  
Scary things

## English Language Arts Standards

- C.4.3** Participate effectively in discussion
- D.4.1** Develop their vocabulary of words, phrases, and idioms as a means of improving communication.



# CREATE A Monster



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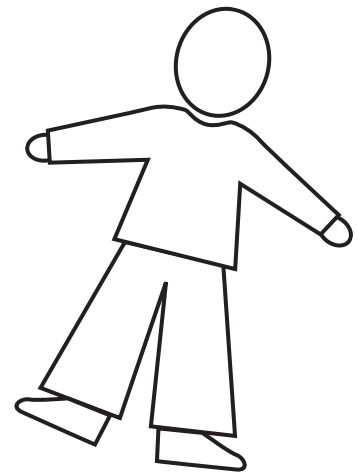
*'The fire-breathing,  
wing-flapping,  
high-flying  
Snow Dragon...'*

In *The Snow Dragon*, Billy imagines the Snow Dragon his parents told him about, Spike describes the Snow Unicorn and Rosie tells us about the Snow Goblin. Ask the children to imagine their own invented monsters. Provide a collection of art materials such as construction paper, feathers, cotton balls, yarn, noodles, fabric scraps, ribbons, pipe cleaners, crayons and markers etc. Encourage children to use their imaginations to create their very own monster or imaginary creature. Display the creations prominently.

#### **Visual Art Standards**

**C.4.7** Develop basic skills to produce quality art

**K.4.3** Use what they are learning about life, nature, the physical world and people to create art



## THIS KID ROCKS!

Billy and his parents sing a song describing why he is a cool kid. Encourage individualization and develop self esteem by completing the following.

Have each child lie down on a large piece of bulletin board paper or butcher paper. Have another child trace around the child's body creating an outline. In the center of the paper write the child's name in large letters. Underneath, label it: This kid rocks because \_\_\_\_\_. Have each child think of something special or unique about themselves and label their "bodies." Allow children to finish the portraits by coloring them in with the appropriate clothes, hair and facial features. Have them fill in the body by drawing things they like to do, favorite hobbies, sports, etc. Older children can add a written description or essay about themselves and their talents and abilities. Display in a hallway.

**Art and Design Standard L. 4** Use their knowledge, intuition, and personal experiences to develop ideas for artwork

**English Language Arts Standard B.4.1** Write expressive pieces in response to reading, viewing and life experiences (narratives, reflections, and letters) employing descriptive detail and a personal voice

# DEVELOP LISTENING SKILLS

Rosie, the piglet, sings a song in which she describes a goblin. Read the lyrics to the right, and have students listen carefully. Read them again, and have students listen for words that describe the goblin. Discuss how words can help an audience or a reader visualize a character or setting. After several readings and discussion, have the students draw the goblin as Rosie described it. Were they able to visualize the monster Rosie describes?

## English Language Arts Standards

**C.4.2** Listen to and comprehend oral communications

**C.4.3** Participate effectively in discussion

## *Snow Goblin*

If you meet a little fellow  
With his teeth all gnarled and yellow  
He's a goblin  
With two eyes that burn bright red  
And a pointy little head and stinky feet  
If his beard is full of bogeys  
Well that sure would go to show he's  
Just a goblin  
Snow goblin  
He's got warts and yucky pimples  
And his hair that sprouts from dimples  
on his chin

# PREDATORS AND PREY

In the play, Billy, a goat, is threatened by two wolves. He is threatening to two smaller characters, a pig and a hedgehog. Discuss abilities animals must have in order to survive. Consider eyesight, claws, camouflage, hearing, ability to move fast and adapting to the environment.

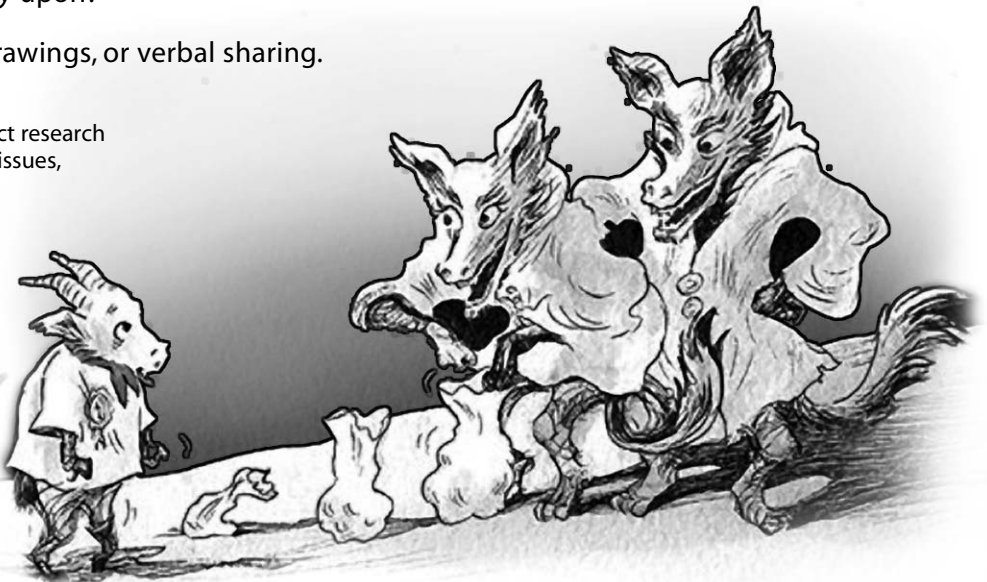
Allow children to choose an animal and investigate its abilities to become a predator or prey. What does the animal look like? Where does it live? Does the animal have any characteristics that help it to survive? Who are its enemies? Who does it prey upon?

Share results in the form of reports, drawings, or verbal sharing.

**English Language Arts Standard F.4.1** Conduct research and inquiry on self-selected or assigned topics, issues, or problems and use an appropriate form to communicate findings

**Science Standard C.4.2** Use the science content being learned to ask questions, plan investigations, make observations, make predictions, and offer explanations

**Theater and Performance Standard B.4.2** Create a human or animal character through physical movement with sounds and/or speech, using facial expressions



Credit: Anna Lewenhaupt and Toby Mitchell

# WHAT IS FAIR?

One of the themes of *The Snow Dragon* is developing a sense of fairness and doing what's right.

Read aloud the children's book, *Give Me Half* by Stuart Murphy. Discuss the concept of fairness. The following types of questions will explore the concept.

- What does it mean to be fair?
- If two children want to play with the same toy, how could you decide what is fair?
- If everyone is thirsty and wants to get a drink, what is fair?
- If everyone in the class plays with the toys and leaves them out, who should put them away? What would be fair?
- What kinds of rules do we have so that things are fair at school? At home? In the community?

Provide a small treat for the class, such as animal crackers or stickers. Let the children decide on a way to distribute them fairly.

## Social Studies Standards

**C.4.1** Identify and explain the individual's responsibilities to family, peers, and the community, including the need for civility and respect for diversity

**C.4.3** Explain how families, schools, and other groups develop, enforce, and change rules of behavior and explain how various behaviors promote or hinder cooperation

# LET'S LEARN ABOUT ACTING

Actors use their bodies, faces and voices to pretend to be different people or animals. Help children to understand how actors work by exploring some of the following exercises:

## Standing still, use your face to show that you are...

happy            scared            surprised  
excited            tired

## Use your voice to show different meanings. Try saying these sentences:

I am very sleepy.  
You have a present for me?  
Leave this room now.  
Where are you?  
Have you seen my teddy bear?

## Use your body to show that...

you are a snowman...slowly melting  
you are a sunflower, growing from a tiny seed  
you are a balloon floating across the sky  
you are a monkey playing in the trees  
you are a baby just learning how to walk

**Theater and Performance Standard B.4.1** Pretend to be someone else, creating a character based on scripted material or through improvisation, using props, costume pieces, and ideas



Photo: ©Copyright Tall Stories

AFTER THE

# Performance

## MAKE A BOOK

After viewing the performance, invite children to make an ABC book. Make a large chart with the alphabet written out one letter per line. As a class, identify characters, things or actions from the play for each letter. For example, "A" could be actors or acorns, "D" could be dragon, "G" could be goat or goblin. Assign a different letter or letters for each student to illustrate. Collect the pages into an ABC book. Bind with rings, brass fasteners, yarn or a spiral binding machine. Read and enjoy!

### English Language Arts Standards

**A.4.1** Discern how written texts and accompanying illustrations connect to convey meaning

**B.4.1** Create or produce writing to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes

## THROUGH NEW EYES

*The Snow Dragon* is told from Billy's point of view. Discuss what happens if you tell a story from different points of view. For example – what would the story be like if told from the point of view of Spike the hedgehog? Or from the Snow Dragon's point of view? Ask different students to tell the story using the first person from different perspectives. Do all the characters have the same version? Are there things that a particular character doesn't know? Write a new version of the story told from a different point of view.

### English language Arts Standards

**B.4.1** Create or produce writing to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes

**A.8.2** Identify the defining features and structures of literary texts such as conflict, representation of character and point of view

## POST-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION

- Allow students the opportunity to retell the story in their own words. Which part did you like best? Which parts were funny? Which part was scary?
- Why do you think Billy took his friends' mushrooms and acorns? Why do you think he gave them back? What do you think he learned?
- What kinds of costumes did you notice that the actors wore?
- The same actors played different parts. How could you tell when they were different characters?
- What did you notice about the lights in the theater and during the show? Did they turn on and off or change colors?
- What will you tell your families about the performance of *The Snow Dragon*?



Photo: ©Copyright Tall Stories

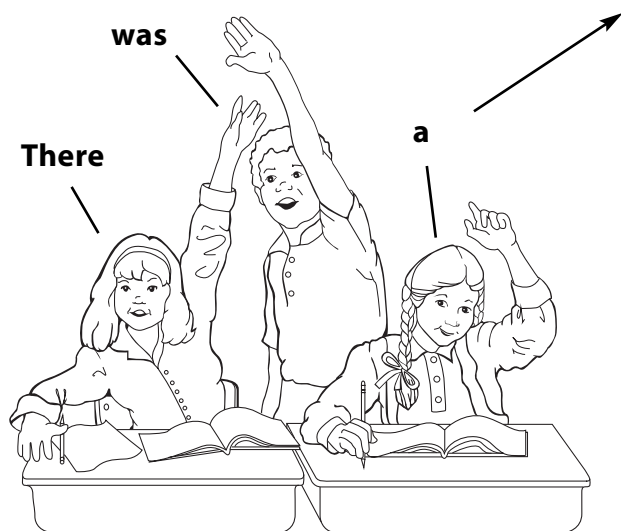
### Theater and Performance Standards

**A.4.1** Attend a live performance and discuss the experience

**D.4.1** Explain strengths and weakness of their own work and that of others

# TELLING TALES

The story of *The Snow Dragon* was created from an idea formed by one person. Sometimes, playwrights use an existing story as a starting point – but sometimes they start with nothing. Encourage students to try coming up with their own story to act out. Go around the class, asking each student to tell one word of a story. For example:



- |             |                    |             |                  |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Student 4:  | <b>big</b>         | Student 5:  | <b>green</b>     |
| Student 6:  | <b>giant</b>       | Student 7:  | <b>who</b>       |
| Student 8:  | <b>went</b>        | Student 9:  | <b>to</b>        |
| Student 10: | <b>buy</b>         | Student 11: | <b>a hundred</b> |
| Student 12: | <b>sausages...</b> |             |                  |

... and so on. Once everyone has added a word, split the class into groups of five or six and tell them that they have five minutes to show the other groups their version of the story. See what they come up with! It will be interesting to see how different their renditions of the same story may be.

**Theater and Performance Standard E.4.1** Create a scene or play based on a story, another piece of literature, or an idea with a beginning, middle and end

**Media and Technology Standard D.4.1** Participate productively in workgroups or collaborative learning environments

## IT'S A HUNT!

How do you find something you are looking for? Billy was looking for berries. How could you have looked for berries? How could Spike find mushrooms? How might Rosie find acorns?

Scientists use all of their senses in their investigations. Take a field trip around the school in order to find the following items. You will need to use all of your senses. Find the following:

**a brown triangle**  
**three things that make a loud noise**  
**one thing that makes a soft noise**  
**a person with red hair**  
**something with ridges on it**  
**something that you would like to eat**  
**the name of a large river in Africa**  
**a circle with black in it or on it**  
**something that feels scratchy**  
**a picture of an insect**

**something that is warm to the touch**  
**a piece of colorful fabric**  
**a newspaper**  
**an object that is smooth and cold**  
**something that is in a place where it shouldn't be**  
**an object that makes music**  
**the name of a person who was born before 1960**  
**something you could drink**  
**something smaller than a dime**

### Science Standards

**A. 4.1** When conducting science investigations ask and answer questions that will help decide the general areas of science being addressed

**C.4.3** Select multiple sources of information to help answer questions selected for classroom investigations

# GOOD CITIZEN AWARD

*The Snow Dragon* offers opportunities to discuss issues of good citizenship, including friendliness, fairness, and the golden rule. Encourage and reward good citizenship in your students by “catching them being good.” Over the course of several days, “catch” students who exhibit good citizenship and reward them with the following certificate. Be sure to watch and “catch” all students, especially those whose behaviors are often challenging.

\_\_\_\_\_

*has demonstrated good citizenship for*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

*Good Citizen Award*

**Family and Consumer Education Standard D.5** Apply citizenship values

**Social Studies Standard C.4.1** Identify and explain the individual's responsibilities to family, peers, and community, including the need for civility and respect for diversity



# TAKE A MOVEMENT BREAK

In the play, Billy runs home from the woods, where there are wolves, in order to be safe. Play this version of the children's game known as "Squirrel in the Tree" or "Rabbit Without a House." We'll call this version "Billy Goat in the House."

- Choose a person to be Billy (the goat without a house) and a person to be the caller.
- Divide the rest of the children into groups of three. Two children face each other and stand about a foot apart, holding hands and raising them to form a house. The third person is a goat, and goes inside the house.
- The caller yells out "find a new house." All the children, including Billy, run to find a house. The child without a house becomes the caller. The caller becomes the new "Billy."



Credit: Anna Lewenhaupt and Toby Mitchell

## Physical Education Standards

**A.4.1** Select and participate regularly in physical activities for the purpose of improving skill and maintaining good health

**D.4.1** Experience the opportunity for enjoyment while participating in physical activity

# FOCUSING ACTIVITIES

Following are activities that help students control, redirect, and focus their energy. These activities can be used by students individually or as a group. Focusing exercises are particularly useful during transition times or times when students are disruptive, bored or tired and can be adapted to any age group.

**Listening Partnerships** give people the opportunity to think, notice feelings and be thoughtfully listened to. Students pair up and each student has several minutes of uninterrupted time to talk about a topic or question. When "time" is called the other partner has the same amount of uninterrupted time to talk. Encourage students to listen to each other with appreciation and respect.

**Wet Noodle.** Encourage students to notice the tension in their bodies—start with back, shoulders and neck. Ask them to go completely limp as they relax their muscles. "Think of yourself as a wet noodle." After 10 seconds tell students to come back to their normal state... and then become a wet noodle again. Repeat a few times.

**Stretch.** Ask students to gently stretch. Students may lift their arms high over their heads while bending side to side, touch their toes, gently swing their arms from side to side. As students stretch, ask them to breathe deep, close their eyes and notice how good it feels as the tension turns to relaxation in their bodies.

**Shaking.** Encourage students to stand up and shake all parts of their body (without touching anyone). Students can shake gently or vigorously. When appropriate, ask students to slowly let their bodies become still again.

**Deep Breathing.** Invite students to sit quietly and comfortably. Tell them to take a deep breath and completely fill their lungs. Exhale slowly. Encourage students to concentrate on their breathing. "Visualize clean air coming into your lungs....The air you are exhaling is filled with any negative emotions you may have." Repeat several times.



# Resources

For another great goat story read:

***G is for Goat*** by Patricia Polacco

***The Three Billy Goats Gruff*** (many versions)

For some stories about pigs read:

***Pigs*** by Robert Munsch

***The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*** by Jon Scieszka

For more wolves' adventures read:

***Beware of Storybook Wolves*** by Lauren Child

***The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig*** by Eugene Trivizas

Checkout hedgehogs in these books:

***Hedgie's Surprise*** by Jan Brett

***Farmer George and the Hedgehog*** by Nick Ward



Photo: ©Copyright Tall Stories

# THEATER ETIQUETTE AND EXPERIENCES

We have a wonderful opportunity at this performance to help youth learn about attending live performances.

Please discuss the following with your students:

1. Sometimes young people do not realize how a live performance differs from watching a movie or television show. A live presentation has not been pre-recorded with the mistakes edited out. This makes it riskier for the performer and more exciting for the audience. It also means the audience has a real contribution to make to the overall event. Each audience member affects those around him/her as well as the performer. Concentrate to help the performers. The audience gives energy to the performer who uses that energy to give life to the performance.
2. An usher will show you where to sit. Walk slowly and talk quietly as you enter the theater.
3. For safety's sake, do not lean over or sit on the balcony railings or box ledges. Please be careful on the stairs, avoid horseplay and running throughout the building.
4. If necessary, use the restroom before the performance begins. Adults need to accompany young students.
5. You may talk quietly to the people next to you until the performance begins.
6. When the lights in the theater begin to dim, it is the signal that the performance is about to begin. Stop talking and turn your attention to the stage.
7. Stay in your seat throughout the entire performance.
8. During the performance, listen quietly and watch closely. Talking during the performance will distract other audience members and performers. Try not to wiggle too much and don't kick the seat in front of you. These disruptions make it hard for others around you to concentrate on the show.
9. Sometimes during a performance you may respond by laughing, crying, or sighing. By all means feel free to do so! LAUGHING IS APPROPRIATE. (Teachers, please do not hush the students while they are laughing.) If something is funny, it's good to laugh. If you like something a lot, applaud. This will let the performers know that you are enjoying the show.
10. At the end of the show, applaud to say thank you to the performers. The performers will bow to acknowledge your appreciation and say thank you for coming.
11. When the lights get brighter in the theater, the show is over. Stay in your seats until the Onstage Coordinator dismisses your school.
  - Taking photographs and using recording devices are strictly prohibited
  - Beverages and food, including gum, or candy are not allowed in the theater
  - You are only one person among several hundred in the audience
  - Please respect the performers and your fellow audience members

Please inform your adult chaperons that ushers will be available throughout the performance if there are any difficulties.



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