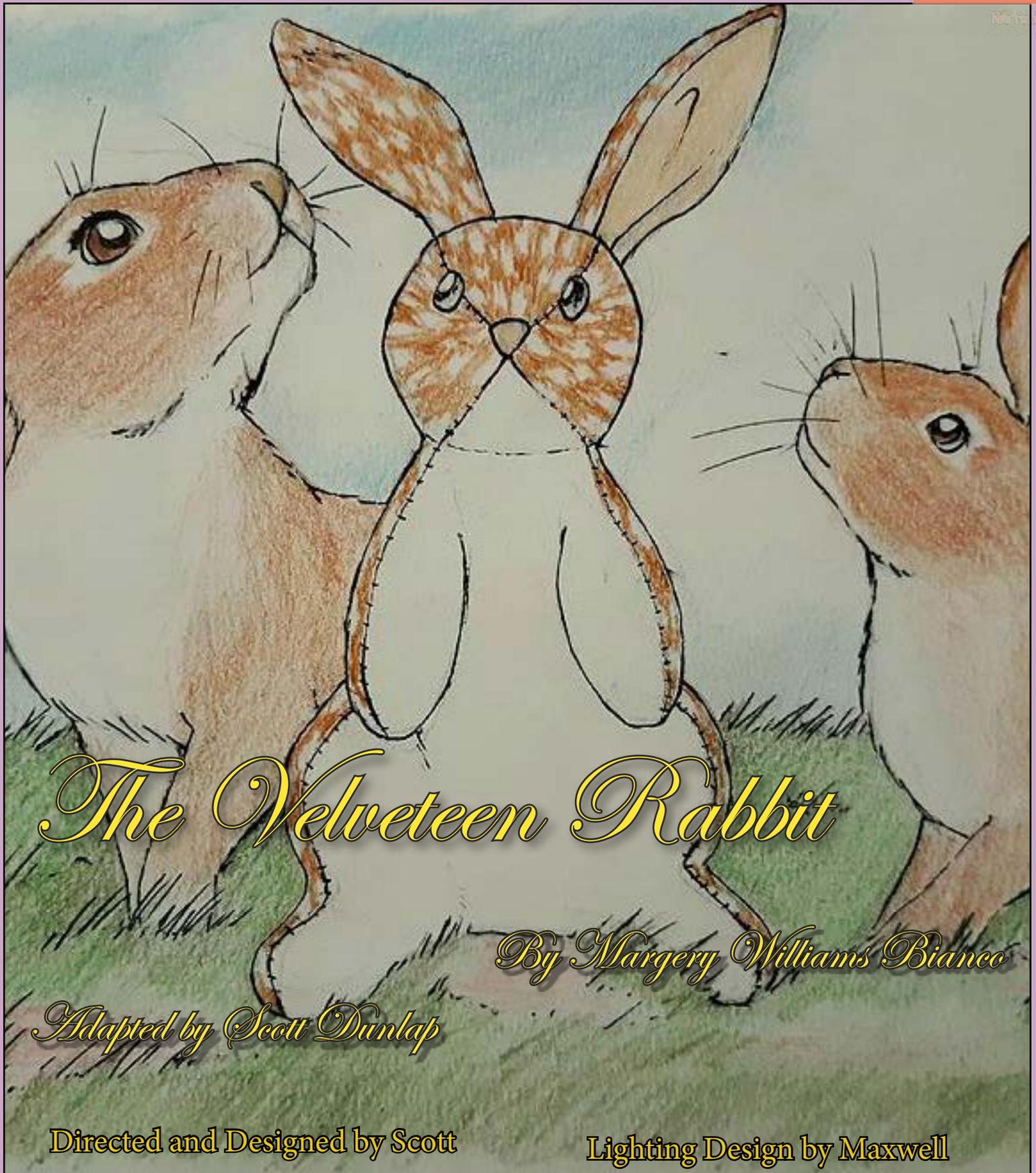


# A Guide for Teachers

May, 2022

Chattanooga  
YOUTH THEATRE  
Centre



## *The Velveteen Rabbit*

*By Margery Williams Bianco*

*Adapted by Scott Dunlap*

Directed and Designed by Scott

Lighting Design by Maxwell

# *The Velveteen Rabbit - Cast & Crew*

## **Benjamin Bunny Cast**

Actress-	Libbie Weaver
Actor-	Ethan Johnson
Nana-	Christiana Russell
The Velveteen Rabbit-	Will James
The Boy-	Henry James
Stage Managers-	Claire James and Ephraim James

## **Roger Rabbit Cast**

Actress-	Nyla Jacks
Actor-	Hillman Weathers
Nana –	Mariana Perez Lopez Tello
The Velveteen Rabbit –	Olivia Williams
The Boy -	Benjamin Williams
Stage Managers-	Lily Obal

## **Stage Crew**

LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR-	Lily Obal
BACKSTAGE CREW-	Audrey DeCredico Will James

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANTS

Kylen Bailey  
Annie Collins  
Brook Tinsley

## *Special Thanks to*

**Jesse Headrick and Cris King**

### *About the Director*

**R. SCOTT DUNLAP (Director/Director of Productions)** is an alumnus of CTC's Youth Theatre program, graduated from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in 1996, and was a member of their 1997 Acting Company. This season marks his 23th with the CTC. He was Youth Theatre Designer from 1997 until 2000. He has been onstage in numerous CTC productions, including Miss Hannigan in *Annie*, Roger DeBris in, *The Producers*, and the Baker in *Into the Woods*. In 2008, he received the Best Actor award for Estrogon in *Waiting for Godot* at the Tennessee Theatre Association Community Theatre, Competition. He would later return to receive the 2012 Best Director and Best Production awards for, *The 39 Steps*. His long history of directing CTC shows often includes designing his own productions. Some of his favorites include *Almost Maine*, *The Best Man*, *Bloody, Bloody Andrew Jackson*, *Camelot*, *Dark of the Moon*, *Dividing the Estate*, *Hair*, *Love/Sick*, *Mr. & Mrs. M*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Pig, Farm*, *Ring Round the Moon*, *A Room with a View*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Xanadu*, and *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* in 2005, 2009, and 2018.

## Chattanooga Theatre Centre Staff

Executive Director.....	Rodney Van Valkenburg	Box Office Manager.....	Katey Dailey
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Director of Productions.....	Scott Dunlap	Box Office Assistants.....	Kitty Murakami
Education Director.....	Chuck Tuttle	Technical Assistants.....	Annie Collins
Costume Shop Manager.....	Cris King		Kylen Bailey

# Margery Williams Bianco: 1881-1944

Born July 22 1881, the younger of two daughters by six years, Margery Williams was taught from an early age the virtues of reading. Her father believed that children should be taught to read early and have no other regular teaching until the age of ten. But her father died when she was seven and, within two years, her family moved to Pennsylvania. There she attended school, interrupted by visits back to England.

At seventeen she began writing. She collected many rejection slips then, in 1902, she published her first novel, *The Late Returning*. She published more works for adults for the next few years, then met and married Francesco Bianco. The couple moved to Italy, had two children, Cecco and Pamela. War broke out and, in 1914, Francesco joined the Italian army. Williams stayed home with her children, consoling herself by reading the poetry of Walter de la Mare.

After the war, they returned to London. Pamela, at age eleven had already shown talent as an artist, and exhibited in London (Pamela would later illustrate some of her mother's books). Williams wanted to write again, but disliked all she had written before. She was looking for something new. In 1922 she published *The Velveteen Rabbit* and it became the be turning point of her work there after. She would go on to write books about other toys. She lived out the rest of her life in New York City's Greenwich Village with her husband Captain Francesco Bianco, an expert on rare books. In her autobiographical entry in "The Junior Book of Authors," Williams says of her life a few years before her death:

*...Once you get to the point where your characters begin to become alive, as the must in any real story, they become so engrossing that they crowd out other things.*

Margery Williams Bianco, after a brief illness, died at the age of 63, leaving a legacy of books that brought toys to life.



## Books of Margery Williams Bianco

1902 *The Late Returning*

1904 *The Price of Youth*

1906 *The Bar*

1914 *The Thing in the Woods*

(Republished in 1924 as *by Harper Williams*)

1922 *The Velveteen Rabbit*

1925 *Poor Cecco*

1925 *The Little Wooden Doll*

1926 *The Apple Tree*

1927 *The Skin Horse*

1927 *The Adventures of Andy*

1929 *All About Pets*

1929 *The Candlestick*

1931 *The House That Grew Smaller*

1932 *The Street of Little Shops*

1933 *The Hurdy-Gurdy Man*

1934 *The Good Friends*

1934 *More About Animals*

1936 *Green Grows the Garden*

1936 *Winterbound*

1939 *Other People's Houses*

1941 *Franzi and Gizi*

1942 *Bright Morning*

1942 *Penny and the White Horse*

1944 *Forward, Commandos!*

### Source

"The Junior Book of Authors : Kunitz, Stanley, 1905-2006, Ed : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming." Internet Archive, New York, Wilson, 1 Jan. 1970, <https://archive.org/details/juniorbookofaut000kuni/page/34/mode/2up?q=Margery%2BWilliams&view=theater>.

# *On Becoming Real*

*"What is REAL?" Asked the Rabbit one day, when they were lying side by side near the nursery fender, before Nana came to tidy the room. "Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?"*

*"Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real."*

Being real has long been a hot topic among the self-help books and groups populating the internet and libraries. People often say, "Be real," or, "she's the real thing." But does anyone really know what that means?

Some define real as authenticity. We are told to embrace our true inner self, to find happiness, to accept who we really are. But in the Velveteen Rabbit, we are given a simpler, yet more elusive way of how to we become real. To be real you have to be loved by someone else. We're told this takes time and can hurt.

But, there is a bigger message in *The Velveteen Rabbit* that might get missed. Consider this small passage between the boy and his nanny:

*"You must have your old Bunny!" She said. "Fancy all that fuss for a toy!"*

*The Boy sat up in bed and stretched out his hands.*

*"Give me my Bunny!" He said. "You mustn't say that. He isn't a toy. He's REAL!"*

*When the little Rabbit heard that he was happy, for he knew that what the Skin Horse had said was true at last.*

Most readers identify themselves with the velveteen rabbit, a toy made of sawdust and velveteen. But we are humans, made of bone and blood and flesh. Our power is that of the boy's: to make others real through our love, as the boy made the velveteen rabbit real.

As teachers, you make your students real every day by believing in them and striving to help them be good, kind, authentic humans, true to themselves and all others.

William Shakespeare wrote this in *Hamlet*:

*This above all, to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not be false to any man.*

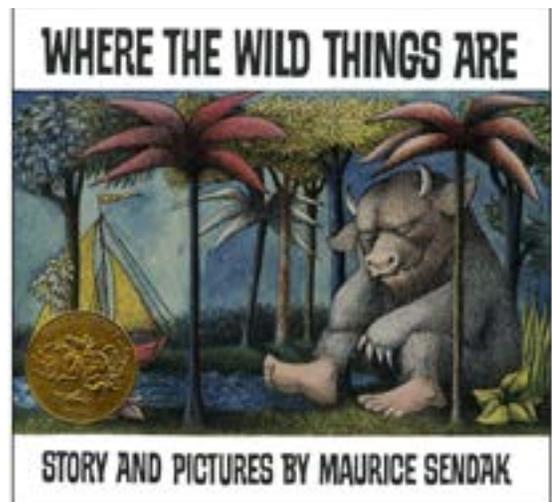
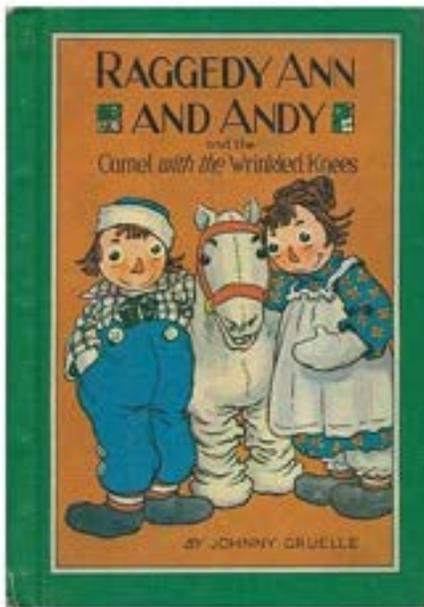
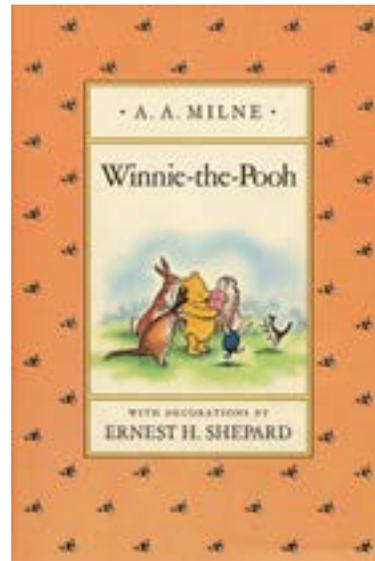
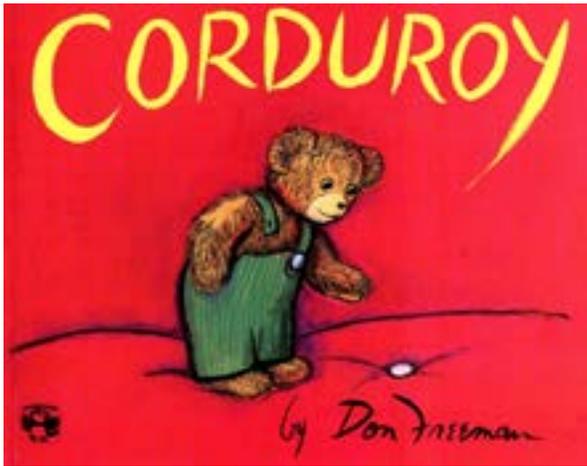
Maybe the best way to become real is make someone else real.

Here are some other thoughts on *The Velveteen Rabbit* and becoming real:

This from "5 Lessons in Authenticity from *The Velveteen Rabbit*." (Warning: one bad word used)  
<https://mindtripblog.com/index.php/2019/11/30/5-lessons-in-authenticity-from-the-velveteen-rabbit/>

From NPR on *The Velveteen Rabbit's* 100th Anniversary  
<https://www.npr.org/2022/04/12/1092065211/as-the-velveteen-rabbit-turns-100-its-message-continues-to-resonate>

*Other classic books about toys we love*



Here is a list of more books about toys from Good Reads:

[https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/77448.Picture\\_Books\\_About\\_Toys](https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/77448.Picture_Books_About_Toys)

# About Scarlet Fever

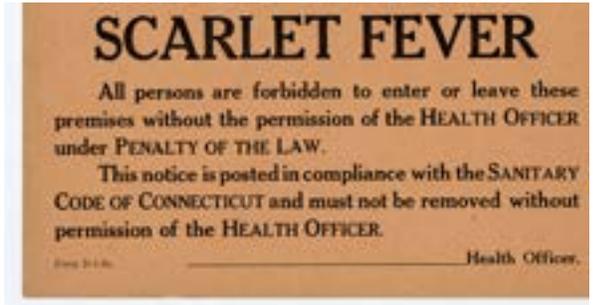
In *The Velveteen Rabbit*, the boy is stricken by an illness. Given the time, this was likely scarlett fever. Scarlet fever was once a deadly scourge throughout the world. It is most common in children, aged six to twelve. Today we now know it better as strep throat with a rash caused by the streptococci bacteria.

The symptoms include:

- Fever
- Sore Throat
- Vomiting
- A red rash on torso and extremities

It has been with humans for thousands of years, being described by Hippocrates around 400 BC. Its first association with the streptococci bacteria was in 1874. There were and series of scarlett fever pandemics during the 19th, and into the 20th century. One in four children stricken with the disease died. Fatality could come within as little as 48 hours. With the discovery and wide use of antibiotics, the death rate plummeted. Today, the disease is making a comeback in places like England and South Korea.

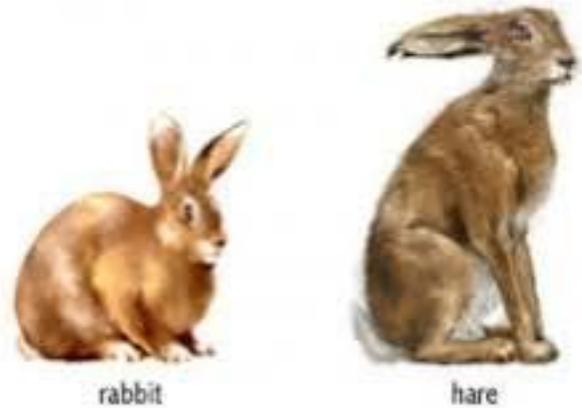
The fatality rate of scarlet fever during the time in which the *Velveteen Rabbit* is set explains why the doctor orders all the bedsheets, and the velveteen rabbit, to be burned.



# Of Rabbits and Hares

Rabbits are fast-moving, big-eared mammals. There are about 25 different species of rabbits. Most rabbits live for about a year in the wild. Rabbits generally have shorter ears than hares, and smaller bodies, averaging between one and two feet in length. Their young are born without fur, with eyes closed. They prefer to hide from predators, making burrows in the ground.

Hares are long-eared mammals with strong legs. They are closely related to rabbits (both belong to the family Leporidae), but hares are born fully haired, with open eyes and can hop about only a few minutes after birth. They hop at great speeds on their large, powerful hind legs, in a kangaroo-like fashion. Because of their speed, hares prefer open areas like prairies so they can out run their attackers. There are more than 20 different species of hares. Some hares include the common hare, the jack rabbit, the arctic hare, the snowshoe hare, the European hare, and the blue hare. Some hares are solitary, while others live in groups. Some hares live in shallow dens (called "forms"). Hares rarely burrow deeply. Hares dig their forms using their front feet.



**Distribution and Range:** Both rabbits and hares live in a variety of environments, including deserts, swamps, marshes, forests, grasslands, and prairies, on every continent except Antarctica.

**Anatomy:** Rabbits range in size from one to two feet long. They have very big and powerful hind legs which they use for hopping and digging burrows. Hares vary from 14 to 28 inches in length. Their powerful hind legs are made for running.

**Diet:** Both hares and rabbits are herbivores. They eat grass, leaves, bark, and twigs.



# Activities



*This series of drama activities will help you students portray characters, express emotions, and tell stories.*

## **Cross The Room**

*If you have a large space, this lets kids run in an controlled way, while illustrating the differences between them. All students start at one wall. Instructor tells them to cross the room if what they say is true. For instance: “Cross the room if you like chocolate ice cream.” Most children will cross the room, but those who don’t will stay where they are. This shows that different people have different likes and dislikes.*

After doing this a few times, you can change it up for different purposes. Cross the room like an animal (frogs, eagles, worms) will give them a change to explore how animals move. Cross the room like different kinds of people (heroes, spies, police, etc), helps them explore communicating characters physically. Cross the room with different emotions lets them think about how our bodies are different when are happy or sad.

## **Spaghetti\***

*If you only have little room, you can try Spaghetti. This is usually done in a circle, but could be adapted for a classroom with desks. The instructor starts by calling someone by name and giving them a suggestion, such as, “Mario, give angry spaghetti. Mario must go to the center of the circle, then say the word “spaghetti” expressing anger. This should be done at a good pace, so no one thinks too much (thinking is the death of creativity. Some students, given time, will think themselves out of good ideas, trying to find the right idea. Right is often the enemy of good).*

## **Spots**

*This is a game that allows for creativity, while offering good controls on a group. Tell all students to find a spot that is not near anyone else, or anything else (if space is limited, you can alter these instructions). Once everyone has a spot tell them this is their spot. “When I say spot, you will go back to your spot. Walk around the room.” Let them walk, then yell “spot.” Practice this a few times.*

Now hold out your arm to one side and say, “My arm is a gauge. When it’s here, it’s at zero. This means you don’t move.” Swing are to the other side of your body. “When my arm is here, this is 10. It means you move as fast as you can. If I hold it straight up, it means you move at a regular walking pace. Now I want you to walk around at a level of 4.” Start with four so if you students are moving too fast, you can move down to three. Let them try different speeds, including 1 (very hard to move that slow and good for concentration), and 10 if you feel they can do this without breaking anything or anyone in the process. Get them back to their spots.

Now tell them as some point, you will say freeze and they must freeze exactly as they are when you said freeze. Many will try to freeze in some crazy position. Tell them that’s not a freeze, that’s a pose. Have them practice this a few times to get used to controlling their bodies.

Then add the command “pose” to this. A pose is making your body into some fantastic shape. Practice this a few times, then give them the following instructions. “This time, I’m going to say “pose” but I’m going to give you a kind of space to do it in. If I say ‘pose in high space,’ you’ll make your pose as high as you can. If I say ‘pose in medium space,’ you’ll make your pose at about the height of you waist. You can kneel or bend, or anything else. If I say ‘pose in low space,’ you must pose below you knee-level.” Play around with this until they get it.

Now, tell them, “you will pose as whatever I say. If I say ‘pose like a duck’ you’ll pose in a position that looks like a duck.” You can try different things with this, including scenes from books like, “pose like the skin horse talking to the velveteen rabbit.” In this way you get them ready for tableau work.

\*“Spaghetti” from

Trefor-Jones, Glyn. Drama Menu. London, England. Nick Hern Books Limited, 2015.

## Story in Three Pictures

*This activity can be used to explore stories, historical event, even situations children may find themselves encountering (educator and actor Augusto Boal uses this technique to illustrate various events, and how we can find a positive outcome for them).*

Divide students into groups (no less than three). Each group is to tell a well-known story in just three frozen statues. Tell them it's like a story in a book where there are only three pictures to illustrate the whole story. Each statue doesn't have to have everyone in the group, but everyone must be in at least one of the statues. If they are having trouble, explain that the first statue should be the most important part of the beginning of the story. The second statue shows the problem, and the third statue is the solution to the problem. Have each group show their three statues one at a time (it might help them if you count them out by saying, "Statue number one..." Let them show that statue, then say "statue number two. Then the same for statue number three. See if the audience can clearly tell what the story is by the three statues.

If desirable, you can do a second round where, during the statue an important line of dialogue is used. Keep it minimal. The objective is to teach them to tell their stories with limited explanation.



## Topics for Discussion

### Before seeing the play

In a play, all characters are portrayed by people. Different scenes will take place on the same stage. The Velveteen Rabbit happens in the boys room, and outside. Many of the characters are toys, some are people, and some are animals. What kind of things will the production do to show the difference between these characters?

### After the Play

Think of a favorite toy. Why is it your favorite?

What does "real" mean? How can loving someone or something make it real?

How has your love helped someone else?

Why do the wind-up toys act superior?

Why is the skin horse the only toy who talks to the velveteen rabbit?

When the boy returns from the beach, which toy do you think will be his favorite?

*“It is true that some of the most beautiful stories ever written for children ... have been sad stories. But it is the sadness which is inseparable from life, which has to do with growth and change and impermanence, and with the very essence of beauty.”*

*Margery Williams Bianco*

## WHAT IS DRAMA?

Aristotle (384-322BC) was one of the first philosophers to begin to explain Drama. He wrote an essential list of elements in Drama. Even though he wrote this list well over 2000 years ago, we still reference Aristotle's elements when discussing the definition of Drama.

### **Aristotle's six Elements of Drama:**

**Plot:** What happens in the play; the storyline.

**Theme:** Meaning of the Play; lessons learned from story.

**Characters:** Usually people in the play but at times characters can be animals, inanimate objects, or simply an idea.

**Dialogue:** The words spoken in the play written by the playwright. It helps move the plot.

**Music/Rhythm:** Sometimes Plays use music to help tell the story, but Aristotle was also talking about the rhythm of the dialogue of the characters. The pace of the play.

**Spectacle:** Visual elements of the play, which include:

- **Scenery:** The Set; The equipment, such as curtains, flats, backdrops, or platforms, used in production to communicate environment.
- **Costumes:** Clothing and accessories worn by the actors to portray character and period.
- **Props:** Properties; Any article except costumes and scenery, used as a part of a dramatic production; any movable object that appears on stage during performance.
- **Lights:** The placement, intensity, and color of lights to help communicate environment, mood, and/or feeling.
- **Sound:** The audible effects heard by the audience to communicate character, context, and/or environment.

*The Chattanooga Theatre Centre is thrilled that you are coming to the show! A few reminders for you and your students to ensure the best experience possible for everyone!*

This performance will take place on our **Circle Stage (under the Marquee)**.

- Please be on time to a performance. Usually this means arriving 15 minutes before curtain time to ensure proper time for seating.
- This performance will be in the **Circle Theatre** (First set of double doors, under the sign).
- Upon arrival, one person should check in at the box office on the left side of the lobby.
- Please line up in the lobby the way you would like your class to be seated. If you must move someone please do so before entering the theatre
- There will be no intermission for this show so please use the restroom before the performance to avoid a disruption during the performance.
- Turn off your cell phones and refrain from using them during the performance.
- Please pay close attention to the curtain speech before the performance. There is critical information given about the safety of our patrons while watching the performance.
- Please be mindful that any noise can be distracting for the audience. Whispering is still speaking. Even unwrapping a piece of candy is more distracting than you know!
- Taking photos or video is strictly prohibited during a performance by our contractual agreement with the publisher.
- Please remain in your seat for the entire performance. If you must leave, do so discreetly so as not to disturb others. In an emergency, please walk, do not run, to the nearest exit.
- Please refrain from eating or drinking in the theatre.
- Keep feet off the seats and do not kick the seat in front of you.
- Applause at the end of the performance tells the performers and crew that you appreciate their work. Standing and applauding means you really liked the show.
- It is distracting and inappropriate to whistle or scream out to the performers (even if you know them).

Please consider filling out our survey after seeing the Production:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScTytr4Qz0D4pWGu38yrykKoSCx34yORyskQBUw91690rXJQw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScTytr4Qz0D4pWGu38yrykKoSCx34yORyskQBUw91690rXJQw/viewform?usp=sf_link)

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