

PRE- AND POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG THEATRE-GOERS

Friendship

1) Stuart makes friend with all types of characters most of which are very different than he is. To Stuart it doesn't matter if someone is a bird or human, short or tall, young or old, he simply accepts people as they are. Think about your own friends. How are your friends different from you? How are they like you? What do you learn from friends who are different?

2) Stuart also has a special friendship with Margalo. Discuss the important qualities of their friendship. What actions did you see them take in the play that proves their friendship?

3) In the play, Stuart is unable to become friends with Snowbell. Why do you think Snowbell refuses to be Stuart's friend?

Friendship Activities

- Write a letter to someone in class thanking them for being a good friend. Then stand up in class and read it sincerely to them or mail it.
- Make Special Friend awards for everyone in class. Then create a ceremony where everyone receives his or her awards. Use as many theatrical devices as you can: lights, music, costumes and sets (rearrange desks).
- Create a wanted poster advertising the ideal friend.
- Write or improvise a scene between Snowbell and Stuart where Stuart is successful in winning Snowbell as his friend. Be clear about why Snowbell has a change of heart. Perform your scene for the class "in character, " which means giving the characters very specific cat and mouse characteristics. You can imitate the actors in the play or try your own interpretation.

The Search

At the end of the story, Stuart is still searching for Margalo. How does he feel as he begins his journey? Do you think he ever finds her?

The Search Activities

- Pretend you are Margalo. Write Stuart a series of postcards telling him about your travels. Draw a picture on the front of the card of the place you are visiting and write a letter on the back. Be sure to address it correctly.
- Compose a journal for Margalo, describing the exotic places she is visiting.
- Research different states or countries so you can accurately describe the sights and sounds.
- Pretend you are Stuart. Send the Little Family a series of emails detailing your adventures as you search for Margalo.
- As a class, brainstorm alternative endings to the play. Then have each student pick his or her favorite option and write out a 1 – 2 page scene with dialogue. Be sure to include stage directions

for the actors. Have the author then watch other people perform this scene for the class and give positive, yet critical feedback on how they would like the scene staged and performed.

Fun Facts

- 1) Mice are members of the order Rodentia.
- 2) Over half of all mammals are rodents.
- 3) Mice originated in Asia about 40 million years ago.
- 4) House mice were unknown in the US before the American Revolution, when they arrived as stowaways on ships from Europe.
- 5) Most sounds made by mice are too high pitched for us to hear.
- 6) Despite their big, bright eyes, mice are nearsighted. Fortunately, they do have some night vision.
- 7) Mice have sixteen teeth adapted for gnawing and nibbling

OTHER FUN ACTIVITIES

1. Draw your own picture of Stuart Little.
2. Put together your own “book of rules” as a class or as an individual project. Make sure every rule has a good reason behind it.
3. Write a letter to the actors, or director, or the Playhouse about our production of *Stuart Little*.
4. Write your own ending to the play and try and act it out. Does Stuart keep on traveling? Do Margalo and Stuart travel together or return to their home? Do they meet other friends along the way and take them home, too?

Special thanks to the Laguna Playhouse for use of this material