

Fort Wayne youththeatre *Education Guide*



2025-2026 Education & Outreach Sponsors



FORT WAYNE METALS
Turning knowledge into solutions.*

Fort Wayne youtheatre *About Us...*

Did you know Fort Wayne Youtheatre is the fifth oldest children's theatre in the country? Since 1934, we've been on a mission to educate, engage, and entertain through the power of live theatre.

It all started when the Old Fort Players (now Civic Theatre) imagined a place where children participated in theatre to develop poise, self-confidence, and an ability to express themselves creatively. Thus, the "Children's Theatre" was born! The very first class had 40 students – paying just \$1 for 8 weeks of lessons! Their first show, *The Steadfast Tin Soldier*, featured 75 young actors performing for audiences at the Majestic Theatre. Tickets were only 10¢ for kids and 25¢ for adults!

In 1978, Broadway actor Harvey Cocks took the lead as Executive Director, inspiring young performers for more than 40 years. In 1984, the Youtheatre began its independent journey. Over the decades, Youtheatre moved to different homes across the city before finding its place at Park Lake Professional Center in 2025. Today, Youtheatre is guided by Executive Director Heather Clossen, Artistic Director Christopher J. Murphy, and a team of amazing local artists.

Youtheatre isn't just about what happens on stage—we take theatre into the community, too! Our touring troupe, Youtheatre-On-The-Go, brings stories to schools, libraries, hospitals, and community centers. In 2018, our Young Heroes of Conscience series, which has celebrated inspiring figures like Anne Frank, Ruby Bridges, and Harriet Tubman, won the Mayor's Arts Award.

For over 90 years, countless youth have discovered their voices, made lifelong friends, and experienced the joy of storytelling. And the story is still being written – by the young artists of today.



ELEMENTS OF A PRODUCTION

SETS

The scenery pieces that form the area in which the performers act out the play. Sometimes scenery is very realistic, making the audience think they are inside a real house, for example. Other times the scenery is quite fanciful or limited. What different sets can you name in the show? What time and place does it look like?

LIGHTS

The lighting instruments that help to create the right atmosphere on the stage. Lights direct the attention of the audience to specific areas of the stage or to a specific performer. The lights may be different colors to add special effects such as nighttime or a storm. How do the lights in this production show changes in the time and place?

PROPS

The objects performers carry to help them act out the story. Look for important props that help define character or place. Can you name a few?

MAKE-UP

The cosmetic bases, blushes, lipsticks, mascara and eye liners which helps the performer physically become the character he/she is playing. Make-up is also used so that the performers facial features can be seen clearly under the bright stage lights from a distance. Do you notice any special make-up in the show?

COSTUMES

The clothing the performers wear. Depending on the story being acted out, this clothing may be what a character of the time would have actually worn. It may also be very exaggerated or fantastic in the case of a dream or a fairy-tale. Costumes help the audience know what a character is like or where and when he/she lived. Are the costumes drab or colorful? Do they look realistic? What do they tell you about the time and place?



BEHIND the SCENES

Nancy Carlson Dodd was born and raised in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and is a graduate of South Side High School and a 1958 graduate of Indiana University, where she majored in Speech and Theatre. While there, she co-wrote a musical, *"The Beautiful Witch"*, which was then the first-ever work to be written by a student and produced by the I.U. theatre. Wherever she lived during the ensuing years, she has always been active in community theatre as an actor, having played leading roles in over 37 productions, including the Bonfils Theatre in Denver, Colorado and Arena Dinner Theatre, First Presbyterian Theatre, and the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre in Indiana.

Nancy began writing musicals for children while she lived in Denver, Colorado. Her first musical, *"The Magic Pebble,"* was premiered by the Fort Wayne Youtheatre and later published by Samuel French, New York. Nancy's career includes seven years as Director of Drama at Trinity English Lutheran church, and she later retired from Ruoff Mortgage as a Senior Loan Officer.

Her comedy *"The Ladies in Cabin 10"* won the 2010 Northeastern Indiana Playwrighting contest, and her comedy *"The Wedding Gift"* won the 2013 Northeastern Indiana Playwriting contest. Both plays were then produced by the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre. Recently, Pioneer Press has published the later play as *"The Wedding Grift"*. In 2019, Nancy was awarded the Koegel Lifetime Achievement award by the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre. She continues to write a humorous column twice a month for the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette.



**NANCY CARLSON
DODD**

Writer of *The Magnificent Plan*

Q: What does a Playwright do?

A playwright writes scripts for plays, creating the dialogue, characters, and storylines that actors bring to life on stage. They use their words to shape the world of the play and guide how the story unfolds for the audience.



BEHIND the SCENES

Q: How old were you when you started writing, and what inspired you to try it?

I have enjoyed writing for as long as I can remember, and eventually it became attached to my love of performing. All through grade school I participated in plays. Our choir director noted my talent and "put on" several plays and an operetta in which I played the leading role. Then, in high school, I was very active in performing in assemblies and plays and even wrote one Thanksgiving assembly for South Side High School. I majored in Theatre at Indiana University where I took several playwriting courses. I also played several leading roles, and then when I was a senior, I.U. produced a musical I had written with a friend.

I used to take my children to children's plays, and one day I thought, "Hmmm... I can write a play as good as that. All you need for a good children's play is lots of action!!"

Q: What is your favorite show you have ever written?

I think my favorite play that I have written was the children's musical, "The Magic Pebble" which has been published by Samuel French. It's about a magic pebble that takes 4 children to a pirate ship, and many zany things happen when the pirates come back to modern times with them.

Q: What does your process look like?

Hmmmm.... what does the process look like? Of course, it starts with an idea, and it grows from there. There is just something inside of a creative person that starts working. As I sit and think about a situation, ideas just come. People have different talents. Some like to investigate and create machinery. Some people have musical talent. I simply love to write and feel that I am blessed in that some people enjoy my work and encourage me.

ABOUT: STORYLINE



Read about the plot of THE MAGNIFICENT PLAN!

The play was written by Fort Wayne local co-authors, Nancy Carlson Dodd, and Betsy Chapman. Betsy sadly passed away 5 years ago, at the age of 84. She was a Southside High School graduate, and provided musical accompaniment for plays in theaters such as Arena Dinner Theatre, Fort Wayne Youtheatre, and First Presbyterian Theatre. She co-authored 3 musical plays, including The Magnificent Plan.



The Magnificent Plan is a spin on the classic tale of The Three Little Pigs. You will see familiar characters, as well as a new lead role "Ravioli The Magnificent", a Fortune Teller with a crystal ball, and questionable talent. See how the Wolf, and Ravioli The Magnificent work together to come up with a plan to capture the Three Little Pigs. What body part will be missing, and from whom by the end of the story?



ACTIVITY #1: THREE LITTLE PIGS SET AND FIGURES

This craft is best suited for Lower Elementary through upper Elementary students!



YOU WILL NEED:

- Toilet paper rolls x3
- paper towel roll
- Paint
- Googly eyes
- Felt leftovers
- Glue
- Paper & pens for the pigs' simple paper origami houses

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Paint toilet paper rolls, 3 pink, 1 black. Once dried, cut features such as feet and ears. Cut a flap for the wolf snout.
2. Use felt scraps for wolf eyebrows, pig snouts, and clothing (should you choose)
3. Glue on googly eyes, and felt pieces.
4. Create 3 origami houses



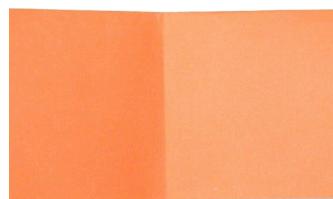
1. TAKE A SHEET OF PAPER, AND FOLD TOP DOWN.



2. FOLD THE SIDES TOGETHER



3. FOLD THE SIDE ACROSS. THEN OPEN IT AGAIN.



4. FOLD THE SIDES IN. THE EDGES SHOULD ALINE IN THE CENTRE.



5. UNFOLD THE ROOF, BY "OPENING UP THE FLAPS."



6. SMOOTH IT DOWN TO GET A NICE "ROOF" CREASE.



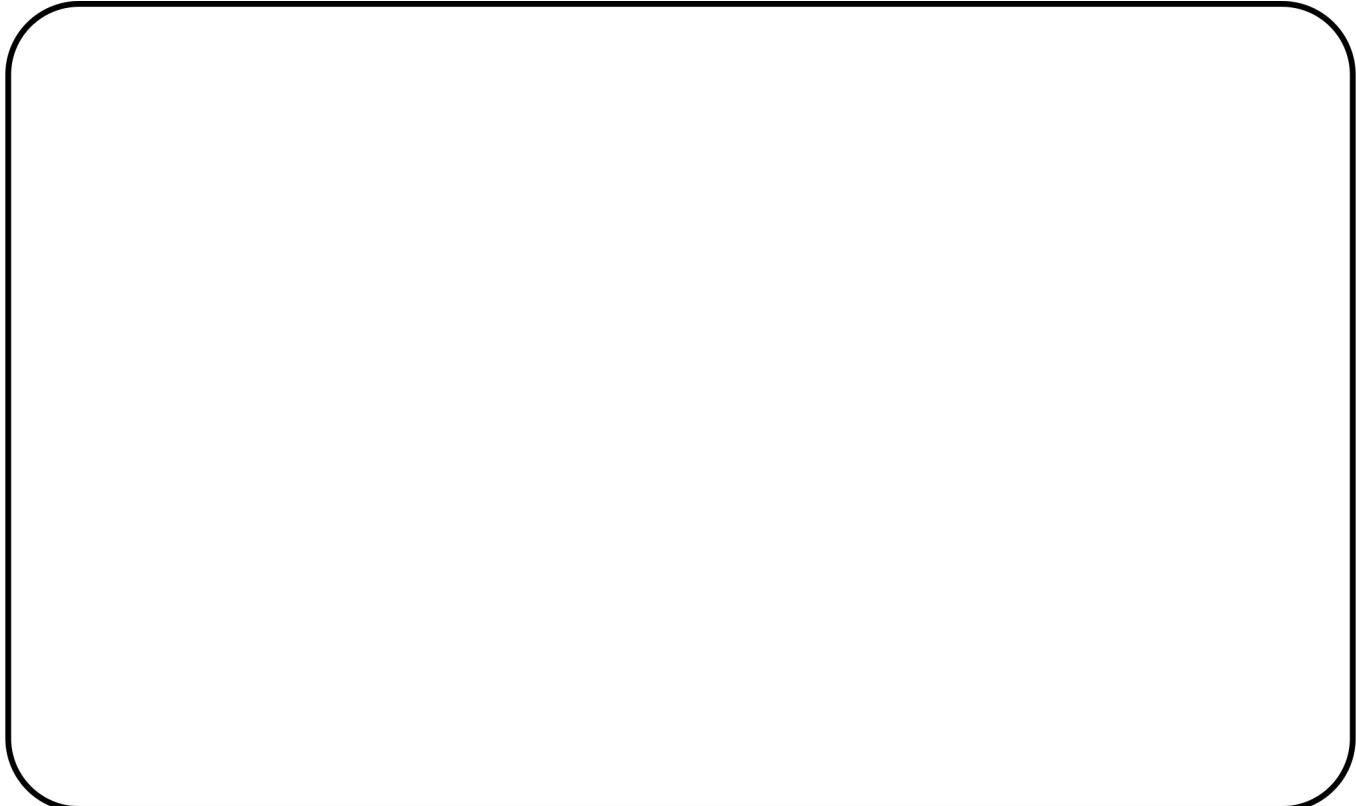
7. REPEAT ON THE OTHER SIDE.



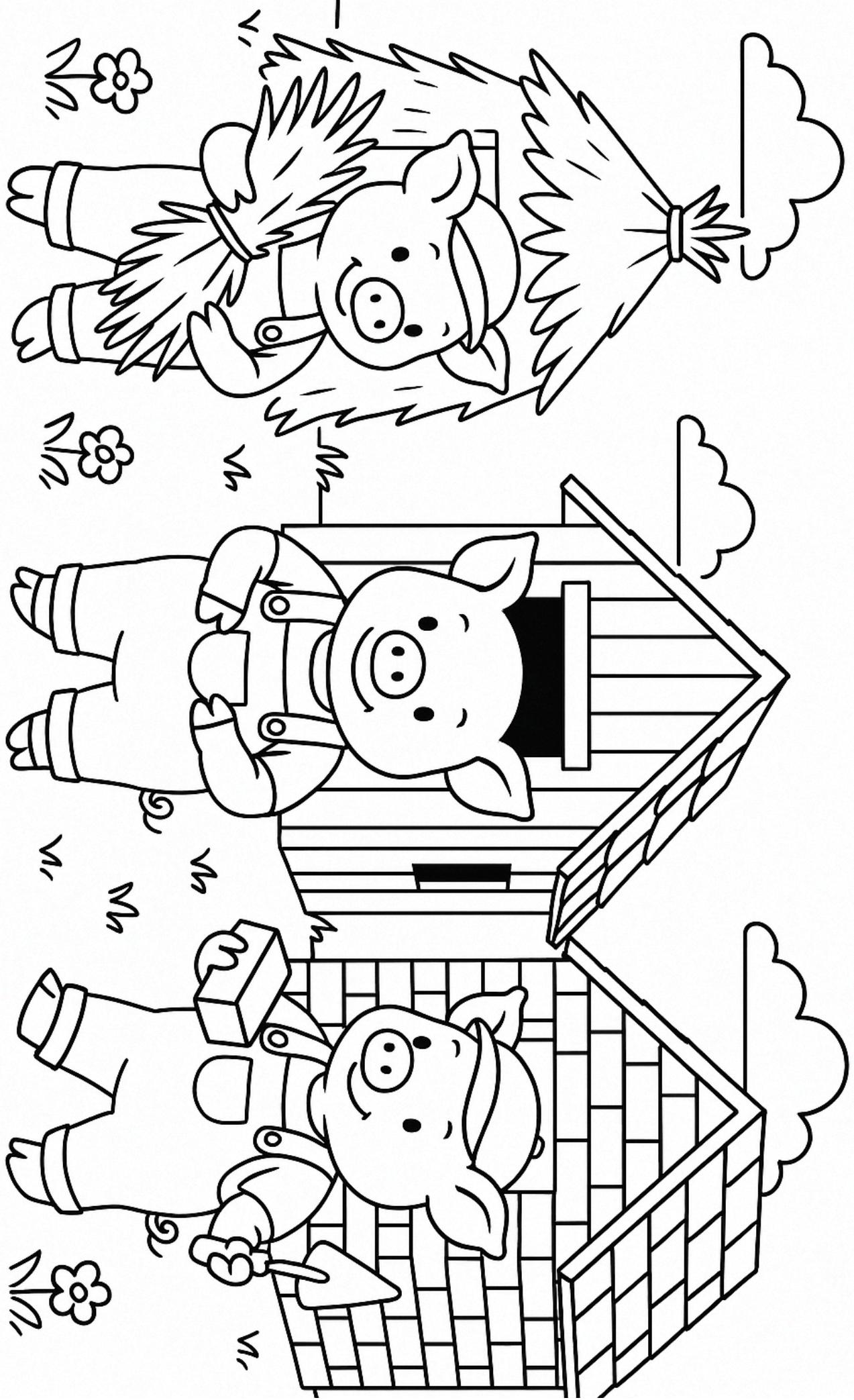
8. MAKE SURE YOUR CREESE ARE ALL NEAT AND STAND UP.



If you had to build a house, how would you do it?
Draw a house, and describe what makes it safe.

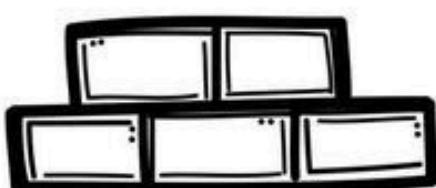
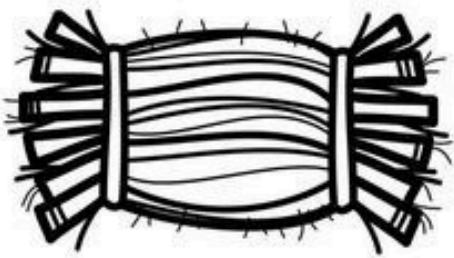






THE THREE LITTLE PIGS:

DRAW A LINE FROM THE BUILDING MATERIAL, TO ITS HOUSE

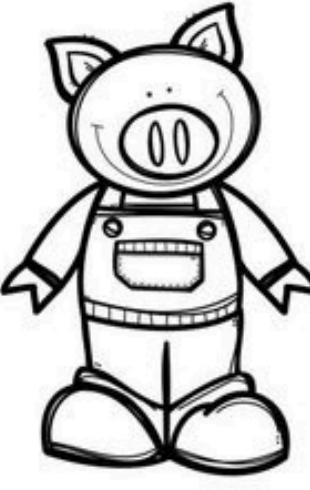
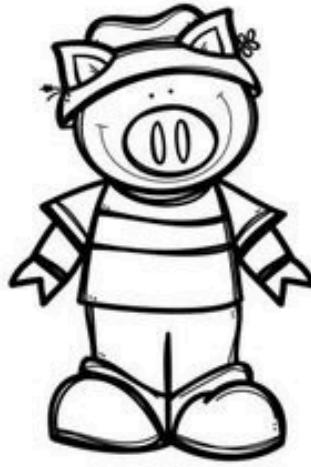
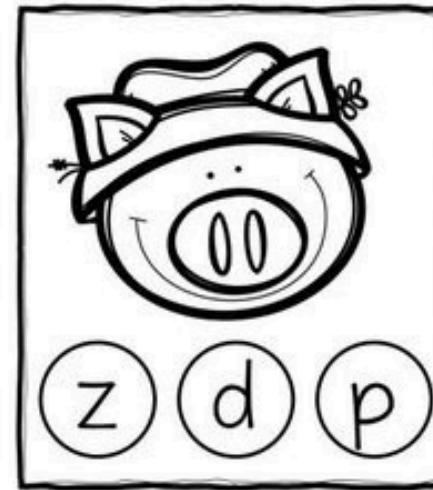
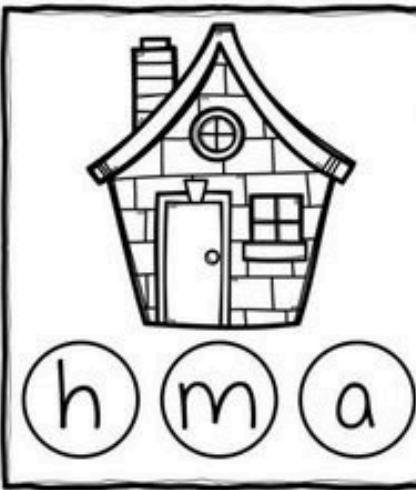
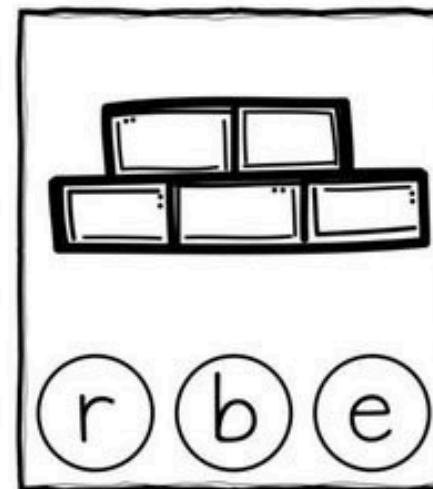
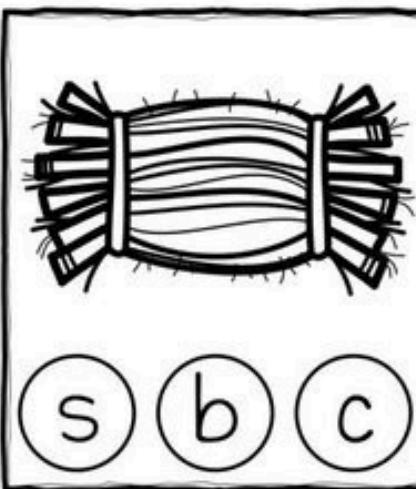
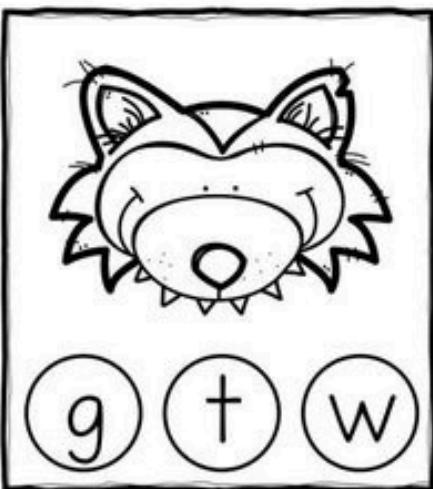


Name _____

Beginning Sounds

Directions:

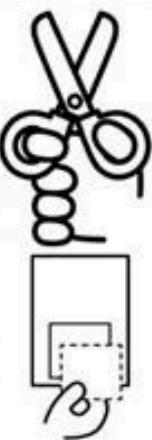
Color the circle with the first letter in each word.



Name: _____

I can label the

THREE LITTLE PIGS STORY



brick¹³
house

pigs

stick
house

pot of
boiling water

wolf

straw
house

POP QUIZ: TEST YOUR MEMORY

Test your knowlege of The Three Little Pigs
with this pop quiz!



1.What does the 1st Little Pig build their house with?

- a. Sticks
- b. Paper
- c. Straw

2.What does the 2nd Pig build their house out of ?

- a. Legos
- b. Sticks
- c. Bricks

3.What does the 3rd Pig build their house out of?

- a. Bricks
- b. Wood
- c. Caramel

4.How many houses did the Wolf destroy?

- a. 3
- b. 2
- c. 1

5. How did the Wolf destroy the houses?

- a. With fire
- b. With water
- c. By blowing

6.What word best describes the Pigs?

- a. Brothers
- b. Juicy
- c. Little

7. What word best describes the Wolf?

- a. Bad
- b. Little
- c. Shy

8. What do the Pigs have on their chins?

- a. Ketchup
- b. Scruff
- c. Hair

9. What did the wolf fall into at the brick house?

- a. A pile of bricks
- b. A soup pot
- c. A hole

10. How did the pigs survive?

- a. Team work
- b. Weapons
- c. Digging a hole, and hiding underground

Answer Key

pot Q10: A) Team Work

Q1: C) Straw Q2: B) Sticks Q3: A) Bricks Q4: B) 2 Q5: C) Blowing Q6: C) Little Q7: A) Bad Q8: C) Hair Q9: B) A soup

Fort Wayne Youtheatre

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Suggested Reading...

Elementary: *The Three Little Wolves And The Big Bad Pig*, by Eugenios Trivizas, *The Three Little Fish And The Big Bad Shark*, by Ken Geist, *The Three Little Tamales*, By Eric Kimmel, *The Three Little Guinea Pigs And The Andean Fox*, by Ana Velez.

Middle school: *The True Story Of The Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka, *The Three Ninja Pigs* by Cory Rosen.



LANGUAGE ARTS

STANDARDS

Most Youtheatre productions are literature-based and on the recommended reading list of the Library of Congress.

Language Arts Standard: Perceive, identify, describe and analyze the distinguishing characteristics of form, structure and style of story.

- Retell story identifying plot, theme, characters, and setting.
- Recall story plot utilizing chronological order.

Language Arts Standard: Evaluate Theatre/Literary work based on critical perception and analysis.

- Share perception of theatre experience in the area of voice, movement, mood and motivation.
- Make suggestions for alternative endings.
- Analyze and critique story and performance through creative writing.
- Create a similar story through creative writing.

Language Arts Standard: Use Theatre /Literary work to develop affective areas of self-concept, problem solving and interpersonal skills.

- React to feelings of self and others within a production.
- Identify conflict within story as it relates to self and others.
- Compare and contrast problems and resolutions found in different stories and real life situations.
- Express personal attitudes, values, and belief systems as it relates to theatre piece.
- Interact freely in conversations, class discussions and dramatic activities.
- Contribute to the solving of problems through dramatization/improvisation.

Language Arts Standard: Examine Theatre /Literary work in a historical and multicultural context.

- Identify similarities and differences between characters from diverse cultures depicted.
- Identify historical differences/figures in different time frames depicted in story.
- Identify significance of historical aspects in story.

Exploring Aesthetics: A Philosophical Basis for Life!

- Attending live theatre helps children value its importance to the community and helps develop a lifelong commitment and love of Theatre and Literature. Students experience aesthetic growth through appreciation of Theatre.
- Students discover through experience that making art is an essential human activity. It requires collaboration, and enhances creative thinking.

