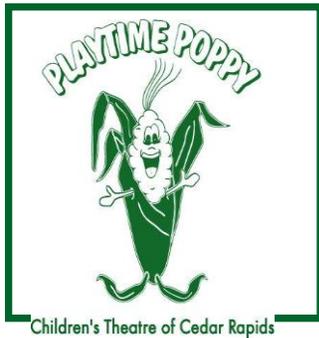


PLAYTIME POPPY AUDIENCE GUIDE



APRIL 2017



- Stage Adaptation by Saskia Janse
- Based on the book by Janell Cannon
 - Music by Guus Ponsioen
- Produced by special arrangement with Plays for Young Audiences

Baby bat Stellaluna's life is flitting along right on schedule—until an owl attacks her mother one night, knocking the bewildered batlet out of her mother's loving grasp. The tiny bat is lucky enough to land in a nest of baby birds, but her whole world has just turned upside down. Literally. Stellaluna's adoptive bird mom accepts her into her nest, only on the condition that Stellaluna will act like a bird, not a bat. Soon Stellaluna has learned to behave like a good bird should—she quits hanging by her feet and starts eating bugs. But when she finally has an opportunity to show her bird siblings what life as a bat is like, all of them are confounded. Anyone who has ever been asked to be someone they're not will understand the conflicts—and the possibilities—Stellaluna faces!

GUIDE CONTENTS

PART 1: KNOW ABOUT THE PLAY

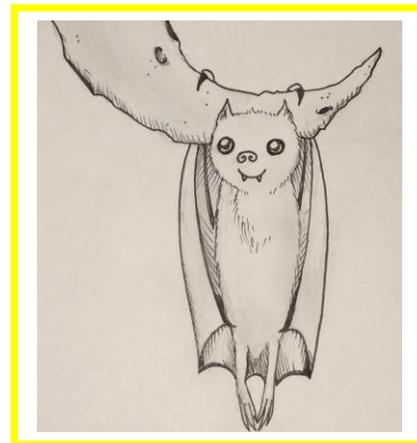
The Story, Characters & Scenes
The Author, Playwright & The Composer
Basic Theatre Vocab & Etiquette

PART 2: LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Pre-Show Prep
After the Show Follow-Up Fun

PART 3: RESOURCES

Websites
Books



ADULTS: This guide is designed to...

- ✓ Assist you to ENGAGE & INSPIRE your students as they prep for attending the performance
- ✓ Provide guidance afterwards to REFLECT on what students saw and heard at the theater
- ✓ Be a MENU of possible lessons/activities to choose from to fit the needs of your students
- ✓ Connect with IOWA CORE standards and expectations across subjects & grades

Enjoy the Learning!

PART 1: KNOW ABOUT THE PLAY

THE STORY

This story will be told through seven *episodes* by actors, puppeteers, musicians and a sign language interpreter. The performers will tell the story using text, puppets and music.

Check out this Stellaluna Prezi Plot Diagram at: <https://prezi.com/2rftfwwhz9vc/stellaluna-plot-diagram-by-olivia-elkins/>

The Cast of Characters

Stellaluna
Mama Bat
Flitter
Flap
Pip
Mama Bird
Owl
Big Bat
Narrators (the moose and the bear)
Puppeteers
Pianists
Interpreter
Vocalists

The Episodes (Scenes)

Prologue—Introductions
Episode 1—The first flight with Mother and the attack of the Owl
Episode 2—Where Stellaluna meets the little Birds and has to eat awful, crawly things
Episode 3—Where Stellaluna shows the little Birds the world upside down
Episode 4—Where Stellaluna and the three little Birds get lessons in flying
Episode 5— Where Stellaluna tries to hide her landing problems and gets lost
Episode 6— Where Stellaluna meets her own family of fruit bats and finds her Mother again
Episode 7—Birds meet the family of Stellaluna and where she has to rescue Flitter
Epilogue—Where the Birds and the Bats find out you still can be friends even if you are different in ways, but the same in others



THE AUTHOR

The play is based on the book by
Janelle Cannon

Janell Cannon was born in Minnesota in 1957 and raised there her whole life. She now lives in Southern California. She has always admired animals of all kinds, but she focused mainly on those animals that have been misunderstood or neglected. Through her drawings and writings, she made these animals seem relatable and approachable. She took their physical appearance and made them into a character that learns about life and also teaches readers a lesson in morals as well.

THE PLAYWRIGHT

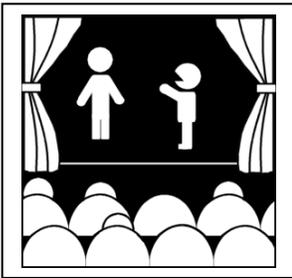
Saskia Janse

Saskia Janse is a co-founder of Speeltheater Holland, a traveling theatre company based in Edam, Holland. Founded in 1976, the company performs theatre for children using a combination of acting and puppetry. Their performances range in size from plays using one to three actors to larger-scale productions. Speeltheater Holland has received many prizes This group is one of the largest and most prestigious puppet theatre companies for children in Holland.

THE COMPOSER

Guus Ponioen

Guus Ponioen was born in the Netherlands in 1951. After obtaining his diploma at the academy for performing arts, Guus worked for several years as a composer, singer and supporting musician at The Dutch Cabaret. Working there he developed his interest in theatre music and more specific in the musical and dramatic translation of the written word. At the moment Guus is writing music and song lyrics for various youth theatre groups in the Netherlands and other countries.



THEATRE ETIQUETTE

*The performers have worked hard to prepare this play.
Audience members can show respect by demonstrating the following:*

1. Arrive at the theatre on time.
2. Visit the restroom before the performance begins.
3. Silence cell phones to minimize disruptions to the actors and other audience members.
4. Applaud! It's welcomed and encouraged at appropriate times to show your appreciation of the performers' hard work.
5. Participate (sing, speak, move etc.) when the performers invite you to do so.
6. Be a good listener and keep your focus on the performance.
You won't want to miss any of it!

**You can practice your audience skills before attending the performance...
Divide up into small groups. Each group creates a short skit, practices, and then performs it.
When watching the groups perform you can practice being a good audience member!*

BASIC THEATRE VOCABULARY

Acting-the process by which an individual interprets & performs the role of an imagined character

Adlib- to improvise or make up parts of dialogue

Articulation- speaking clearly so that every word is understandable

Backstage – The space behind the acting area, unseen by the audience

Blocking- the actor's movement from place to place and action on stage

Character- the role played by an actor as she or he develops and portrays another by creating a different voice, body and personality

Choreography-the art of creating and arranging dances on the stage

Costume- carefully selected or specially designed clothing worn by the actors

Cue – a signal (dialogue or action) that indicates something else is to happen

Dialogue- the stage conversation between characters

Diction –the clarity with which words are pronounced

Director- the person who oversees the entire process of staging a production

Downstage-the part of the stage closest to the audience

Ensemble-a cast of actors working together to present a performance

Green Room-a room near stage where actors await to go on stage

Make-up -cosmetics and hairstyles that actors wear on stage to emphasize characterizations

Narrator –a character who tells the story of the play directly to the audience

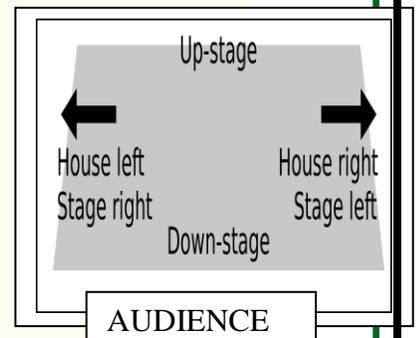
Projection- speaking loudly so your voice can be heard in the back of the theater space

Props –all the stage furnishings, including furniture that are used by the actors

Set-all the scenery that makes up the physical environment of the world of the play

Strike- dismantling all of the pieces (sets, costumes, props, etc.) at end of the run of a show

Upstage –the area of the stage farthest away from the audience and nearest the back wall



PART 2: LEARNING ACTIVITIES

“Pre-Show Prep” Before You Go You Can ...

Literacy Skills:

➤ Point of View

- ✓ Read the story of *Stellaluna* by Janelle Cannon.
- ✓ Make a list of the characters.
- ✓ Pretend you are one of the characters and write a short autobiography about yourself.
- ✓ Answer questions such as: Where do you live? What is your favorite food? Who are your friends? What is your family like? How do you handle challenges?
- ✓ Compare your character to others in the class. What was the same? How are you different?



➤ Fact or Fiction?

- ✓ As you read the story or watch a video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZlSaEgsfx0>) of *Stellaluna* use a graphic organizer to make a list of things in the book that are fact and another list of things that are fiction.
- ✓ Do some research or check with an expert to make sure your choices are correct.

Science:

➤ What's in a Name?

Explore the world of nocturnal animals.

- *Stellaluna's* name is made up of two Latin words—“stella,” meaning star, and “luna,” meaning moon. So her name translates to Star-moon. That makes sense because it makes you think of nighttime and the sky she flies through.
- Bats are nocturnal because they find bugs during the night, and they can evade predators more easily at night. Bats stay away from daylight to avoid competing for food with other predators, such as birds.
- Research your favorite nocturnal animal.
- Be sure to keep a science journal with your discoveries. Then share the information in a report, PowerPoint or make a class iMovie about the animals.



➤ Get Batty!

- Bats use sound to see by emitting sounds that echo off other objects and then return to their ears. Depending on how long it takes the sound to reach their ears and the direction it comes from, these animals can determine the location of the object.
- Check out this lesson plan to learn how engineers use principles of echolocation for Sonar & Radar: https://www.teachengineering.org/activities/view/cub_soundandlight_lesson4_activity1

✓ Take note: **Indian Creek Nature Center** will be hosting an interactive table prior to the public performances of this show where you can test your bat knowledge while you play a bat trivia game, experiment with echolocation, and make a pair of bat wings for your head!

(*Teachers attending the School Matinees can contact the Nature Center Education staff at <http://indiancreeknaturecenter.org/>

to find out more about taking your class on a Study Trip to the ICNC!)

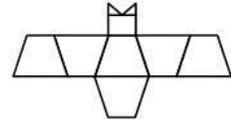
Math Skills:

➤ **“Fruity” Fun**

- ✓ Stellaluna’s mother is a fruitbat. They love to eat about any kind of fruit. What is your favorite?
- ✓ Take a poll of the students in your class or another class about favorite fruits.
- ✓ Provide a list of 5-7 fruit choices (such as mangos, apples, bananas, etc.).
- ✓ Then graph your results. Which was the most popular? Least popular?
- ✓ Poll your teachers or parents and compare the results with the student choices. What did you discover? How were they the same/different?

➤ **Shape Bat**

- ✓ Review your knowledge of geometry by creating a bat out of shapes.
- ✓ Cut out a variety of different shapes from black construction paper (triangles, squares, rectangles, trapezoids, etc.)
- ✓ Use your science knowledge of the parts of a bat and create your own bat artwork by gluing the shapes into a bat form.
- ✓ Then decorate it or label the parts and share your learning by displaying your shape creation!



More bat-themed math lessons at <http://mathwire.com/themes/themebat.html>

Social Studies:

➤ **Bat Map**

- ✓ Each student chooses a species of North American bat to research (such as Eastern Red Bat, Big Brown Bat, Southern Yellow Bat, Mexican Free-tailed or Evening Bat.)
- ✓ Then plot their bat’s main habitat area/range on a class map of North America.
- ✓ Why does your bat live in this particular area of the continent? Food? Climate? Landscape?

➤ **Friendship & Acceptance**

- ✓ Stellaluna realizes that she can remain best friends with her bird siblings, but she doesn't have to look or act like them, she can be herself. How can we be so different and feel so much alike?
- ✓ Interview another person in your class about friendship and acceptance. Share your findings with the class and discuss your friends’ similarities and differences. Why is it important to be yourself?

The Arts:

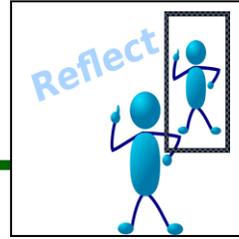
➤ **Be a Designer**

- ✓ Pick a bat or bird character from the play. Design how you think the character’s puppet will look.
 - A *costume rendering* is a drawing which shows a character’s costume and often includes attached samples of fabric used in the costume. Use this format to imagine your puppet character.
- ✓ Draw the picture and explain your puppet design ideas.
- ✓ Could you really make this puppet? Why/Why not?

➤ **Be a Composer**

- ✓ Use a familiar tune (such as *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*) and write your own lyrics to a song about yourself. In the story Stellaluna discovers information about herself. What unique qualities do you have? What are you good at? *Can you play the song on an instrument? Teach it to your friends and have them sing along!*

“After the Show” Follow-up Fun!



➤ **Imagine Own Story**

- ✓ Choose one of these writing prompts. Use your imagination. Write down your ideas!
 - *If I were Stellanuna’s mother I would have...*
 - *I would like to be a bat because...*
 - *If my family adopted another child we would ...*

➤ **Write a Letter**

- ✓ Write a review of the performance or thank you letter and send it to the Washington High School Drama Department, and/or Playtime Poppy Children’s Theatre.

➤ **Act It Out**

- ✓ Choose one small scene from the play. Work in a small group. Assign each person a character and act out the scene for your classmates. Discuss how your movements and expressions helped convey the character’s emotions.

➤ **Be a Set Detective**

- ✓ Create a list of the geometric shapes found in the architecture of the sets and puppet structures in the performance. What math and science skills did the WHS set & puppet designers need to build all the sets for this performance? Draw a sketch of your favorite scene from the show.

➤ **Do some Reflecting**

- ✓ Discuss and take notes on your answers to the following questions after you see the performance:

- 1) *Who are the main characters from the play?*
- 2) *Where does the story take place?*
- 3) *What conflicts/problems happened?*
- 4) *How were the conflicts/problems solved?*
- 5) *What was your favorite puppet, set or props used in the play?*
- 6) *Was there any music in the play? If so, how does it affect the mood of the story?*
- 7) *Were there any surprises in the play?*
- 8) *What was the best part of going to the performance?*

➤ **Celebrate your Learning!**

- ✓ Share your learning with family or friends. Tell them about your experience and show them your work (project, writing, etc.).
- ✓ Make an edible “bat bite” treat to celebrate. Check it out at:
 - <http://copy-kids.com/bat-snacks>
 - or <http://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/bat-bites>

PART 3: RESOURCES

WEBSITES:

Playtime Poppy Children's Theatre

✓ <http://www.playtimepoppy.org>

Indian Creek Nature Center

✓ <http://indiancreeknaturecenter.org>

Washington High School Drama Department

✓ <https://sites.google.com/site/carolyntinkham/>



Stellaluna websites with related lesson plans and activities:

✓ <http://www.umich.edu/~childlit/Stellaluna/stellaframeset1.htm>

✓ <http://www.uniqueteachingresources.com/Stellaluna-Lesson-Plans.html>

✓ <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/calendar-activities/stellaluna-author-janell-cannon-20345.html>

✓ <http://www.lovetoteach.org/by-subject/reading/stellaluna-activities.html>

✓ <http://www.teachingchildrenphilosophy.org/BookModule/Stellaluna>

Kids' Drama and Puppet Activities

✓ <http://www.kidactivities.net/post/drama-introduction-and-menu.aspx>

✓ <http://www.kinderart.com/drama>

✓ <https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/how-to/tipsheets/five-easy-drama-games>

✓ <http://kidsactivitiesblog.com/66700/26-puppets-kids>

✓ <http://wonderteacher.com/teaching-with-puppet-power/>

BOOKS

Stellaluna

By Janelle Cannon (1993)

How Does the Show Go On: An Introduction to the Theatre

by Thomas Schumacher & Jeff Kurtti (2007)

Backstage Cat

by Harriet Ziefert & illustrated by Jenni Desmond (2013)

Zippping, Zapping, Zooming Bats (Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science 2)

by Ann Earle and illustrated by Henry Cole (1995)



SPECIAL THANKS TO:

➔ **Washington High School Drama Department**
Director: Carrie Tinkham
Student Cast & Crew

➔ **Season Sponsor:**



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➔ **Playtime Poppy Board of Directors & Volunteers**



Don't forget to learn the
Playtime Poppy Song!

For the lyrics and music go to:

<http://www.playtimepoppy.org/about/playtime-poppy-song/>

*"I love to sing
and dance and
play..."*
-Playtime Poppy

Playtime Poppy has been serving the Cedar Rapids community since 1951, bringing the stage to life with children's theatre and a love of the performing arts. Playtime Poppy's song has been sung by generations of children, parents and grandparents, spreading smiles with its fun melody.