Dear Teachers,

Thank you for joining us for the Applause Series presentation of *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley* based on the book by Jeff Brown. Stanley Lambchop is just an ordinary boy, until he wakes up one morning completely flat after his bulletin board falls on top of him. All of a sudden, Stanley can slide under doors, fly like a kite, and mail himself across the country in an envelope. Soon, he’s off to explore the globe and learn that heroes come in all shapes and sizes.

We thank you for sharing this very special experience with your students and hope that this study guide helps you connect the performance to your in-classroom curriculum in ways that you find valuable. In the following pages, you will find contextual information about the performance and related subjects, as well as a variety of discussion questions and assessment activities. Some pages are appropriate to reproduce for your students; others are designed more specifically with you, their teacher, in mind. As such, we hope that you are able to “pick and choose” material and ideas from the study guide to meet your class’s unique needs.

See you at the theater,

Des Moines Performing Arts Education Team

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Support for Des Moines Performing Arts education programs and the Applause Series is provided by:


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This study guide was compiled and written by Michelle McDonald and edited by Karoline Myers. Adapted in part from Dallas Children’s Theatre study guide materials for “The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley”
DID YOU KNOW?

More than 300,000 people visit Des Moines Performing Arts venues each year.

Des Moines Performing Arts opened in 1979.

Des Moines Performing Arts has three theater spaces:
- Civic Center, 2744 seats
- Stoner Theater, 200 seats
- Temple Theater, 299 seats (located in the Temple for the Performing Arts)

No seat is more than 155 feet from center stage in the Civic Center.

Cowles Commons, situated just west of the Civic Center, is a community gathering space that is also part of Des Moines Performing Arts. The space features the Crusoe Umbrella sculpture by artist Claes Oldenburg.

As a nonprofit organization, Des Moines Performing Arts depends on donor funding to support facilities, programming, and education programs.

The Applause Series started in 1996. You are joining us for our 19th season of school performances.

ABOUT DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS

Des Moines Performing Arts is a private, nonprofit organization and is an important part of central Iowa’s cultural community. It is recognized nationally for excellence as a performing arts center and is committed to engaging the Midwest in world-class entertainment, education, and cultural activities.

Des Moines Performing Arts presents professional touring productions, including theater direct from Broadway, world-renowned dance companies, family programming, comedy, and concerts.

Education and Community Engagement programs are core to Des Moines Performing Arts' mission as a nonprofit performing arts center.

Public education programs allow audience members and local artists to make meaningful and personal connections to the art they experience on our stages. Guest lectures and Q&As with company members allow audiences to explore the inner workings of the performance. In addition, master classes, workshops, and summer camps taught by visiting performers give local actors, dancers, and musicians the chance to increase their skills by working directly with those who know what it takes to succeed on the professional stage.

Through its K-12 School Programs, Des Moines Performing Arts strives to ensure that central Iowa students have affordable access to high quality arts experiences as part of their education. More than 50,000 students and educators attend curriculum-connected school matinee performances through the Applause Series annually. In addition, Des Moines Performing Arts sends teaching artists into the schools to provide hands-on workshops and residencies in special opportunities that engage students directly in the creative process. And, through its partnership with the John F. Kennedy Center, Des Moines Performing Arts provides teachers with in-depth professional development training on how to use the arts in their classrooms to better impact student learning. The Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards is Des Moines Performing Arts’ newest initiative to support the arts in Iowa schools, providing important learning tools and public recognition to celebrate the achievements of students involved in their high school theater programs.

The Applause Series started in 1996. You are joining us for our 19th season of school performances.
YOUR ROLE AS AN AUDIENCE MEMBER

Attending a live performance is a unique and exciting opportunity. Unlike the passive experience of watching a movie, audience members play an important role in every live performance. As they act, sing, dance, or play instruments, the performers on stage are very aware of the audience’s mood and level of engagement. Each performance calls for a different response from audience members. Lively bands, musicians, and dancers may desire the audience to focus silently on the stage and applaud only during natural breaks in the performance. Audience members can often take cues from performers on how to respond to the performance appropriately. For example, performers will often pause or bow for applause at a specific time.

As you experience the performance, consider the following questions:

* What kind of live performance is this (a play, a dance, a concert, etc.)?
* What is the mood of the performance? Is the subject matter serious or lighthearted?
* What is the mood of the performers? Are they happy and smiling or somber and reserved?
* Are the performers encouraging the audience to clap to the music or move to the beat?
* Are there natural breaks in the performance where applause seems appropriate?

A SPECIAL EXPERIENCE

Seeing a live performance is a very special experience. Although it is not required, many people enjoy dressing up when they attend the theater.

THEATER ETIQUETTE

Here is a checklist of general guidelines to follow when you visit the Civic Center:

* Leave all food, drinks, and chewing gum at school or on the bus.
* Cameras, recording devices, and personal listening devices are not permitted in the theater.
* Turn off and put away all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices before the performance begins.
* Do not text during the performance.
* Respect the theater. Remember to keep your feet off of the seats and avoid bouncing up and down.
* When the house lights dim, the performance is about to begin. Please stop talking at this time.
* Talk before and after the performance only. Remember, the theater is designed to amplify sound. Other audience members and the performers on stage can hear your voice!
* Use the restroom before the performance or wait until the end. If you must leave the theater during the show, make sure the first set of doors closes before you open the second — this will keep unwanted light from spilling into the theater.
* Appropriate responses such as laughing and applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists on stage — they will let you know what is appropriate.
* Open your eyes, ears, mind, and heart to the entire experience. Enjoy yourself!

GOING TO THE THEATER information is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts study guide materials.
Thank you for choosing the Applause Series with Des Moines Performing Arts. Below are tips for organizing a safe and successful field trip to the Civic Center.

ORGANIZING YOUR FIELD TRIP

* Please include all students, teachers, and chaperones in your ticket request.
* After you submit your ticket request, you will receive a confirmation e-mail within five business days. Your invoice will be attached to the confirmation e-mail.
* Payment policies and options are located at the top of the invoice. Payment (or a purchase order) for your reservation is due four weeks prior to the date of the performance.
* The Civic Center reserves the right to cancel unpaid reservations after the payment due date.
* Tickets are not printed for Applause Series shows. Your invoice will serve as the reservation confirmation for your group order.
* Schedule buses to arrive in downtown Des Moines at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the performance. This will allow time to park, walk to the Civic Center, and be seated in the theater.
* Performances are approximately 60 minutes unless otherwise noted on the website and printed materials.
* All school groups with reservations to the show will receive an e-mail notification when the study guide is posted online. Please note that study guides are only printed and mailed upon request.

ARRIVAL TO THE CIVIC CENTER

* When arriving at the Civic Center, please have an adult lead your group for identification and check-in purposes. A Des Moines Performing Arts staff member may be stationed outside the building to direct you to a specific entrance.
* Des Moines Performing Arts staff will usher groups into the building as quickly as possible. Once inside, you will be directed to the check-in area.
* Applause seating is not ticketed. Ushers will escort groups to their seats; various seating factors including group size, grade levels, arrival time, and special needs seating requests may be used to assign a group’s specific location in the hall.
* We request that an adult lead the group into the theater and other adults position themselves throughout the group; we request this arrangement for supervision purposes, especially in the event that a group must be seated in multiple rows.
* Please allow ushers to seat your entire group before rearranging seat locations and taking groups to the restroom.
* As a reminder, children under the age of three are not permitted in the theater for Applause performances.

IN THE THEATER

* In case of a medical emergency, please notify the nearest usher. A medical assistant is on duty for all Civic Center performances.
* We ask that adults handle any disruptive behavior in their groups. If the behavior persists, an usher may request your group to exit the theater.
* Following the performance groups may exit the theater and proceed to their bus(es).
* If an item is lost at the Civic Center, please see an usher or contact us after the performance at 515.246.2355.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact the Education department at education@desmoinesperformingarts.org or 515.246.2355.

Thank you!
**VOCABULARY**

**airmail:** the system of sending mail by airplane.

**bulletin board:** a way to store and display important items, photos, messages in a bedroom, classroom or hallway.

**falling star:** also known as a shooting star, it is actually a visible meteor in the sky.

**Little Bo Peep:** the title character of a popular English nursery rhyme. Little Bo Peep typically has a dress, a bonnet and a staff, as pictured here.

**Mona Lisa:** a portrait of a young woman, painted by Leonardo da Vinci in approximately 1503. The subject of the painting is often admired for her smile.

**museum:** a building or place where works of art, scientific specimens, or other objects of permanent value are kept and displayed.

**Napoleon:** Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) was a French general who later became emperor of France.

**painting:** an artistic composition, made by applying paint to a surface such as canvas.

**postcard:** a card, often with a photo or picture on one side for sending a message by post without an envelope.

**postmark:** a mark stamped onto mail by postal officials, indicating the date and route of the piece of mail.

**thief:** a person who steals something, especially secretly. Stealing a cookie from the cookie jar is not as serious as stealing something of value from someone.

**travel:** to go on a journey, usually by car, train, plane, or ship. In this story, Stanley travels by mail!
ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Fans of the book *Flat Stanley* will delight in this one act musical that brings the pages of the story to life. Heroes really do come in all shapes and sizes!

**Run Time:** Approx. 60 minutes

**PAGE TO STAGE**
Now celebrating its 50th anniversary, the beloved children's book *Flat Stanley* was written by Jeff Brown in 1964 and has become a literary and pop cultural phenomenon.

This performance of *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley* is an adaptation of the book into a musical. Timothy A. McDonald took the story written by Jeff Brown and adapted it so that it could be performed for an audience on stage.

**SYNOPSIS**
Stanley Lambchop is just like everyone else. That's the problem. For Stanley, life is too normal. Determined to do something amazing, something no one's ever seen before, he makes a wish on a falling star. That night, the bulletin board on the wall above Stanley's bed comes loose and falls—right on top of him. The next morning, Stanley Lambchop wakes up flat. Not just a little flat...really, really flat!

Thus begins his new life and an unexpected quest to see the world, which comes surprisingly easy when you can travel through the mail as a letter! Along the way, Stanley thwarts a robbery at the Louvre Museum in Paris and surfs off the coat of Hawaii. He's stamped, posted and cancelled from Hollywood to France to Honolulu and beyond.

Once Stanley realizes that great adventures aren’t as special without his family around to share in the joy and excitement, he wishes to become a three-dimensional boy once again and learns that heroes come in all shapes and sizes.

“What I love about the show are the teachable moments that don’t feel like lessons.”
-Michael Serrecchia Director

**PRE-SHOW DISCUSSION**
1. What kinds of things did the authors have to consider in writing a script of the story?
2. What changes might you expect in adapting the story for the stage? Why would these changes be necessary?
3. Do you think the performance will be shorter or longer than the book?

“About the Performance” information adapted from Dallas Children’s Theater press release materials.
ABOUT DALLAS CHILDREN’S THEATER

The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley comes to Des Moines from a theater company called Dallas Children’s Theater based in Dallas, Texas.

WHO THEY ARE
In response to the growing need for professional family theater in their community, Robyn Flatt and Dennis Vincent founded Dallas Children’s Theater in 1984. Since then, DCT has grown to be one of the top five family theaters in the nation. DCT serves over 250,000 young people each year through its local main-stage productions, national tour, educational programming and outreach activities.

As the only major organization in Dallas focusing on theater for youth and families, DCT produces literary classics, original scripts, folk tales, myths, fantasies and contemporary dramas that foster multicultural understanding, confront topical issues and celebrate the human spirit. Each season is thoughtfully chosen to produce plays that are engaging, enriching, and educational.

TOURING
Dallas Children’s Theater travels coast to coast with professional large-scale productions designed with the mission to stir the heart, stretch the mind and promote education. With such a vast and impressionable audience to serve, DCT’s productions usually target a different age range every other touring season.

DCT’s local touring program began in 1985 and expanded to statewide and regional venues in 1989. In 1996, DCT launched its first national tour. September 2006 marked DCT’s introduction to the world stage, as the theater was honored with an invitation to perform at the 2006 Shanghai International Children’s Culture and Arts Expo in Shanghai, China.

PAST TOURING PRODUCTIONS
And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank
Giggle, Giggle, Quack
Heidi
If You Give a Pig A Party
Jack and the Giant Beanstalk
A Midnight Cry The Underground Railroad To Freedom
Most Valuable Player
Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters
The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fair(l)y (Stoopid) Tales
Young King Arthur
The True Story of the Three Little Pigs
Stuart Little

Dallas Children’s Theater most recently appeared at the Des Moines Civic Center in March 2014 with their adaptation of E.B. White’s Stuart Little.

Photo by Karen Almond
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Every piece of art — a book, a painting or a performance — is created by a person or a group of people. Learn about Jeff Brown, the artist who created the book the show is based on and how he found his inspiration for the well-known Flat Stanley books.

JEFF BROWN

Richard Chester (Jeff) Brown was born in New York City in 1925. In addition to having a successful career as a children’s author, he was a story editor and assistant film producer in Hollywood. Mr. Brown also worked as a short story writer and editor for The New Yorker and The Saturday Evening Post. His Flat Stanley series has sold nearly one million copies in the U.S. Jeff Brown died in 2003.

Here is what Mr. Brown said about how he came up with the idea for the Flat Stanley books:

“More than thirty years ago, I was saying goodnight to my sons, J.C. and Tony. J.C., stalling for my chat time, asked me not to leave the bedroom. He was scared and when I asked him what he was afraid of he said: ‘I’m afraid my big bulletin board will fall on me.’ I told him that was ridiculous. Then I thought of a small joke and said ‘of course, when you wake up in the morning, you’ll probably be flat.’ Both boys thought that was a hoot and many evenings after that one, we’d make up stories about adventures you could have if you were flat. Best idea I ever had, and I didn’t even know I’d had it, until a friend in the children’s book business, who knew about the flat stories, suggested I make them into a book.”

Flat Stanley is often pictured with famous people. He is shown here with Mickey Mouse.

author of Flat Stanley

www.goodreads.org

www.sweetshoppedesigns.com

Photo by Karen Almond
THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE PRODUCTION

ACTORS
Actors are all of the people who you see on the stage. They work together as a team to rehearse the play, memorize their lines, and tell the story.

SET DESIGNER
The set designer creates the world where the actors tell the story. The set designer imagines and draws all of the pieces that you see on the stage. The set designer also figures out how the stage changes from scene to scene.

COSTUME DESIGNER
The costume designer works with the director to create the clothes and costumes that the actors wear to help them become the characters. Each actor may have many "costume changes."

LIGHTING DESIGNER
The lighting designer makes sure the audience can see what they are supposed to see and use lighting and effects to create a mood.

PROPS MASTER
The props master carefully reads the script and collects, buys, or makes any of the objects that an actor picks up or carries.

BACKSTAGE CREW
There are lots of people backstage who build and operate the scenery, costumes, props, lights, and sound during the performance. They rehearse with the actors to learn their "cues" and make the show run smoothly.

DIRECTOR
The director is in charge of telling the actors where to go on stage and how to interpret their characters. The director guides all the designers to make sure everyone is telling the same story.

AUTHOR
Some musicals and plays are inspired by books. This play is inspired by the book Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown.

STAGE MANAGER
During the show, the stage manager "calls the cues," which means he or she makes sure all the show elements, like lights, sound, and actor entrances and exits are timed correctly.

WRITER OF THE ADAPTATION
A play based on a book has to be adapted for the stage. The writer, Timothy McDonald, took the story from the book and decided what to keep, take out, or add to make the story work for the stage.

AUDIENCE
There can be no performance without you, the audience. You are a collaborator in the performance and your polite attention and applause is one of the most important parts of any live show.
THE FLAT STANLEY PROJECT

Learn about The Flat Stanley Project, which has connected kids from around the world with literacy since 1994.

THE PROJECT

The purpose of The Flat Stanley Project is to connect children with other children or classrooms participating in the Project by sending out “flat” visitors, created by the children, through the mail (or digitally, with The Flat Stanley app). Kids then talk about, track, and write about their flat character’s journey and adventures. Although similar to a pen-pal activity, Flat Stanley is actually more enriching because students don’t have to wonder where to begin or what to write about. The sender and the recipient already have a mutual friend, Flat Stanley. Writing and learning becomes easier, flows naturally, and tends to be more creative. Kids are inspired to write of their own passion and excitement about the project, and given the freedom to write about many things through the lens of the Flat Stanley character.

DALE HUBERT

In 1994, Dale Hubert began the Flat Stanley Project in Ontario, Canada. He had the idea of children creating their own Flat Stanley paper cutouts and mailing them to friends and family around the globe, in order to foster authentic literacy activities for kids and get them excited to write about Stanley’s adventures.

Today, the Flat Stanley Project includes more than 6,000 schools registered in 88 countries around the globe and is included in the curriculum for more than 15% of elementary schools in the U.S.

Learn more: flatstanley.com

Dale Hubert, of The Flat Stanley Project.

ABOVE: Flat Stanley befriends a shop owner in Kano, Nigeria. Image courtesy of: en.wikipedia.org
ABOUT THE LOUVRE

LOCATION
The Louvre is one of the world’s largest museums and a historic monument. It is a central landmark of Paris, France. The Louvre is the world’s most visited museum. In 2012, there were more than 9.7 million visitors!

HISTORY
The museum is located inside the Louvre Palace and opened in 1793 and started with 537 paintings and 184 objects of art. The public was given free access to the museum on three days per week. The building has gone through many changes since the 12th Century. In 1989, the glass pyramid, built by I.M. Pei became the focal point of the museum’s central area of circulation into the main wings and serves as an entrance to the large reception hall located underneath.

EXHIBITS
There are nearly 380,000 objects from prehistory to the 21st century exhibited over 625,300 square feet. The museum includes paintings, sculptures, archeological finds and other art pieces from all over the world.

The decorated ceiling of the Apollo Gallery in the Louvre museum.
www.dotlymeckler.wordpress.com

The Mona Lisa painting is the Louvre’s most popular artwork.
Image courtesy of: www.monalisa.org

The Louvre’s iconic glass pyramid, shown from the exterior.
Image courtesy of www.aflouvre.org
1) PREPARE FOR THE JOURNEY

**Goal:** To prepare young students for what may be their very first performance experience.

**Explanation:** In this activity, lead a class discussion that a) accesses students’ prior knowledge of performances and b) prepares them for what to expect when they visit the theater to see *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley*.

**Activity:**
1. Ask students about their experiences with performance (watching older siblings in a school play, going to a concert, etc.)
2. Share the journey with them step by step. Talk about:
   - Going into a special ‘theater’ space.
   - Being an ‘audience’. They are a very important part of the performance. The actors need them.
   - What is the job of the audience? To look and listen.
   - What is going to happen? They will be watching ‘actors’ tell a story with words, movement, and props.
   - A performance usually finishes with clapping.

**Follow-up Questions:**
1. Why do you think going to a performance is a special experience? How is it different from a movie?
2. Why is it important to look and listen during a performance?
3. What different things do you think actors have to do to prepare for a performance?

2) TAKE FLAT STANLEY TO THE THEATER

**Goal:** To engage the students and prepare them for their theater experience.

**Explanation:** Take Flat Stanley on an adventure to the theater, the day of the performance.

**Activity:**
1. Make a copy of Flat Stanley for each of your students to decorate and cut out. You can find Flat Stanley online [HERE](#).
2. Take a picture of Flat Stanley at school the morning of the performance, on the bus ride, and then at the theater getting ready for the show to begin.*
3. When students return to school after the performance, they can write their own narrative about Flat Stanley’s adventure to the theater.
4. Have the students share aloud their narratives in groups or in front of the class and display their Flat Stanleys.
5. Please send any pictures you would like to share to:

   Des Moines Performing Arts  
   Attn: Education Department  
   221 Walnut Street  
   Des Moines, IA 50309

   Or email them to:  
   education@DesMoinesPerformingArts.org

We would love to see pictures of your students and Flat Stanley in our theater before the show, and we always share photos and stories with our generous donors!

*Remember, photos cannot be taken during the actual performance.

**Follow-Up Questions for After the Show:**
1. What challenges did you face in this activity? Was it difficult to write your narrative?
2. How was your narrative different from your friends’ narratives? How were they the same?
3. What was your favorite part of the performance *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley*? Why?
3) OH, THE PLACES YOU’LL GO!

**Goal:** To learn about new places and to understand how writing helps us to communicate with people who are far away

**Description:** In this activity, students will receive postcards from Flat Stanley, read them as a class, and use a map to plot out Flat Stanley’s travels.

**When:** before the performance

**Materials:**
- Bulletin Board
- World Map
- Pins or stickers
- Letter to parents & families (template on page 18)

**Activity:**
1. Ask students to work together to define the ideas of family and friendship. 
2. Encourage them to share examples of people or stories that they know that exhibit these values.
3. Create a display in the classroom that consists of three columns.
4. As students come up with examples, write a description of the person or character who exemplified the value or add a representative picture.
5. Continue to add to the display throughout the school year.

**Follow-Up Questions:**
1. What does it mean to belong to a family? Can a family occur outside of the house in which you live?
2. What are some things that make your family great? What are some challenges of belonging to a family?
3. What does friendship mean to you? What are some challenges of friendships? What are your favorite things about your friends?

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4) FAMILY AND FRIENDSHIP

**Goal:** To explore examples of family and friendship.

**Explanation:** Family and friends are very important to Stanley Lambchop. In this activity, students will collect examples of people in the news, their neighborhood, stories that they read, etc. that exemplify the values of family and friendship—themes discussed in the book *Flat Stanley*.

**Activity:**
1. Ask students to work together to define the ideas of family and friendship.
2. Encourage them to share examples of people or stories that they know that exhibit these values.
3. Create a display in the classroom that consists of three columns.
4. As students come up with examples, write a description of the person or character who exemplified the value or add a representative picture.
5. Continue to add to the display throughout the school year.

**Follow-Up Questions:**
1. What does it mean to belong to a family? Can a family occur outside of the house in which you live?
2. What are some things that make your family great? What are some challenges of belonging to a family?
3. What does friendship mean to you? What are some challenges of friendships? What are your favorite things about your friends?
**COMPREHENSION**

1. Were there any characters or events that were in the book but not in the play? Why do you think these choices were made?

2. Did the changes make the story stronger or was it weaker because of them?

3. What do you think the set and costume designers need to consider when bringing the book to the stage?

4. What things helped to tell the story on stage?

5. How might you react if you woke up in the morning and were flat?

6. How would you handle the ‘cool kids’ if they asked you to turn your friend into a kite and fly him? What should you do if someone pressures you into doing something you know is wrong?

7. Stanley visits many places around the world. Where is the most interesting place you’ve traveled? Where would you mail yourself if you could? Why?

8. In the show, an actor portrays Stanley both before and after he is flat. How did the actor portray this on stage? How did the actor “change” his character to appear flat? What things would change if you were flattened?

**THEATER EXPERIENCE**

1. What was our favorite part about our trip to the theater?

2. How did you know that the performance was beginning and ending? What happened that made you know?

3. Why is the audience such an important part of the show? What did the actors do to make the audience feel like they were part of the show?

4. What do you remember about the set? The lights? The props? The costumes? How did these elements help create the world of the story?

**1) WRITE A LETTER**

**Goal:** To reflect on the performance experience and to practice writing skills.

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will write a letter about their experience to Des Moines Performing Arts education donors whose support keeps Applause Series tickets accessibly priced for school groups.

**Activity:**

1. After attending the performance, discuss the experience with your students. Use the following discussion questions to guide the conversation:
   - What was the show about?
   - What parts of the show were most exciting?
   - Which character did you enjoy the most? Why?
   - What did the characters learn?

2. Next, invite students to write a letter to Des Moines Performing Arts donors about their theater experience.

   **Example letter starter:**
   
   Dear Des Moines Performing Arts Donors,
   Thank you for helping my class go to the Civic Center to see *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley*.
   My favorite part of the show was…
   While watching the show I felt… because …
   I have drawn a picture of the scene when…
   This experience was special because …

3. Mail the letters to:
   
   Des Moines Performing Arts
   Attn: Education Department
   221 Walnut Street
   Des Moines, IA 50309

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. What did you include in your letter?
2. Why did you want to share that particular idea?
3. How do you feel when you receive a thank you note?
2) ACTING OUT A STORY

Goal: To use drama and imagination to demonstrate comprehension of a story.

Explanation: In this activity, students will use drama and their imaginations to re-tell the story of Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown to demonstrate their understanding of characters and key events using tableau.

**Tableau:** a dramatic convention in which individuals use their bodies to create a “frozen picture” that expresses actions, locations, feelings or situations.

**Activity:**
1. Read a section, or all of Flat Stanley aloud to the class.
2. As a class, brainstorm the characters in the story.
3. As a class, determine the plot or sequence of main events.
4. Break up the section of the story into small segments and assign each segment to a group of 3-4 students.
5. Students then create tableau (frozen picture that tells a story) of their assigned moment in the story. Together, students may represent the characters, objects, or setting of their assigned moment.
6. Have groups share their tableau in the order of the story.
7. Once a group is “frozen,” tap students on the shoulder one at a time. When a student has been tapped, they should “unfreeze” and briefly describe who they are and what they are doing in the scene.

**Follow-up Questions:**
1. How would you describe the character or object you played?
2. What happened at the beginning of the story? In the middle? At the end?
3. How did you feel when you were depicting your tableau for the class?
4. What was interesting about the other students’ tableaux?

3) WRITE YOUR OWN STORY

Goal: To write a creative story that includes plot elements of situation, conflict and resolution.

Explanation: Stanley seems to adjust rather quickly to being flat and despite some initial concerns, he is accepted by his peers even though he is now very different. In this activity, students will create a story about some new difficulties that Stanley encounters, both with adjusting to his daily activities as well as difficult peer interactions and how he overcomes these challenges.

**Activity:**
1. Review the plot of The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley with your students.
2. Ask students to imagine what might happen if Stanley and his friends had not accepted his new “state”. Have them think about situation, conflict and resolution.
3. Using the basic plot format, have students write a story about challenges that Stanley faced since becoming flat and how he persevered through these challenges. You could write this story as a whole group activity, in small groups, or individually.

**Follow-up Questions:**
1. In the play, Flat Stanley tells his parents that he is concerned that his friends will laugh at him for being flat. Do you ever worry about being laughed at?
2. Stanley’s parents tell him about positive things that come with being flat and later he realized that he can travel the world through the mail and have amazing experiences. He enjoys being flat! What benefits are there in finding the “sunny side” of difficulties in life? What things make it hard? Do you often find yourself looking on the “sunny side” or being negative?
3. At the end of the play when Stanley is no longer flat, he says that you don’t have to be flat to have amazing adventures. You just need to find a little adventure in everything you do. Can you think of ways you can make adventures out of an ordinary day?
4) FRIENDSHIP COUNTS

**Goal:** To explore friendships and what makes them special and to learn the value of our differences.

**Explanation:** Stanley Lambchop has friends and family in the story who accept him the way that he is. In this activity, students will think about their own friendships and what makes them unique and special.

**Activity:**
1. After the play, have students think about their own friends. How are they like you? How are they different? What can you learn from friends who are different from you?
2. Have students fill out the table below (reproducible on page 18) to organize their thoughts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRIEND</th>
<th>HOW LIKE ME</th>
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3. In the play, “popular” kids at school hold Stanley down, tie a string to him and fly him like a kite, which is not very nice. Stanley’s brother Arthur doesn’t help Stanley and instead gets on the bus with the popular kids. Have students discuss why Arthur makes the decision to get on the bus rather than help his brother?
4. Next, have students write or improvise a scene with Stanley, Arthur and the popular kids, demonstrating how the situation should or could have been handled better by each person, in order to promote friendship and acceptance. Have students perform their scene for the class.

**Follow-up Questions:**
1. In the scene you created, what was the outcome?
2. What actions or facial expressions would each character have? How are these different from your facial expressions?
3. How were your actions similar to the actors’ actions in the play? How were they different?

5) FLAT STANLEY’S TRAVELS

**Goal:** To encourage students to use their imaginations and practice creative writing.

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will write Stanley’s family a postcard as if they are Flat Stanley, using the postcard template on page 19.

**Activity:**
1. Copy the postcard template from page 19 onto thick white paper, if desired, and distribute to students.
2. Have students pretend they are Flat Stanley, traveling the world. Students will write a postcard to Stanley’s family telling them about his travels. Where have you been? What have you seen? Where are you going next? When will you return home?
3. Students then draw a picture on the front of their postcard and can make up Stanley’s home address.
4. Have students “pair and share” their postcards with a classmate.

**Follow-up Questions:**
1. When the play ends, Stanley is not flat anymore, but decides he can still have adventures. What are some adventures that you can have this week?
2. Have you ever written a friend who lives far away? What types of things did you tell them about? Is there a friend you can write to this week?
3. What is your favorite place to visit? Is it close to home or far away?
4. Where did you choose to have Stanley visit with your postcard? Why did you choose that particular place?
Dear Parents, Friends & Family,

We are currently studying the story *Flat Stanley* at school. In the book, Stanley makes a wish upon a star to do amazing things. That night a bulletin board over his bed falls on him, causing him to become completely flat. So flat that he can be sent in an envelope in the mail. Flat Stanley decides to take advantage of his new state and mails himself all over the world to have amazing travel experiences.

We would like to ask you to help us in our classroom study by sending us a postcard or letter from Flat Stanley on his travels. Tell us about his adventures, what he's seen and done, etc.

We will read all of our postcards from Flat Stanley and use our world map to discover each place that he has traveled. By participating, you will help us practice our reading and geography skills!

Postcards/letters can be sent to

Feel free to ask friends and family from across the state, the country or even the world to send us a postcard from their neck of the woods. The more the merrier!

Thank you,

NAME:______________________

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MORE FLAT STANLEY BOOKS BY JEFF BROWN:

Stanley, Flat Again!
Invisible Stanley
Stanley in Space
Stanley and the Magic Lamp
Flat Stanley’s Worldwide Adventures #1: The Mount Rushmore Calamity
Flat Stanley’s Worldwide Adventures #2: The Great Egyptian Grave Robbery
Flat Stanley’s Worldwide Adventures #3: The Japanese Ninja Surprise
Flat Stanley’s Worldwide Adventures #4: The Intrepid Canadian Expedition

CLASSROOM RESOURCES:

Flat Stanley Fun and Games for Kids:
http://www.flatstanleybooks.com/kids/
Find information about Stanley and his Friends. Read more about the people behind the books and interact in games and activities about Flat Stanley and his adventures.

How the U.S. Postal Service Works.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYFtalTNzKk
Watch this video about what happens after you put a letter in the mail.

The Flat Stanley Project.
https://www.flatstanley.com/
Register online and begin your own Flat Stanley Project and connect with others around the globe.

Tales of the Museum.
http://www.louvre.fr/en/tales-of-the-museum#tabs
Some fifty anecdotes and five stories about the Louvre museum and its masterpieces are accessible in this interactive workshop, by clicking on objects that appear at random, by choosing from a list in the portfolio or by using the index mode.
*Teachers may want to review prior to showing students.

STUDY GUIDE SOURCES:

“Curtains Up on the Author, Jeff Brown.”
Dallas Children’s Theatre. www.dct.org

“Flat Stanley Project.” https://www.flatstanley.com/