MANXMOUSE:
THE MOUSE WHO KNEW NO FEAR

Applause Series Curriculum Guide
April 30-May 1, 2018

DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS
CIVIC CENTER • STONER THEATER • TEMPLE THEATER • COWLES COMMONS
Dear Teachers,

Thank you for joining us for the Applause Series presentation of *Manxmouse: The Mouse Who Knew No Fear*. Based on the book by Paul Gallico, generations of readers have fallen in love with this funny little mouse, his adventures, and his quest to meet his destiny. We had the pleasure of falling in love with Theatergroep Kwatta’s playful adaptation of the book, when it showcased at the International Performing Arts for Youth Showcase. Its message of empathy, embracing our uniqueness, and its celebration of creativity captured our hearts. As such, it is a joy to share it with you and your students now.

We hope that this study guide helps you connect the performance to your 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 wide variety of discussion questions and activities. 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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This study guide was compiled and written by Allison McGuire; edited by Karoline Myers. Adapted from materials by Theatergroep Kwatta and Brooklyn Academy of Music.
ABOUT THE APPLAUSE SERIES

TAKE THOUSANDS OF IOWA STUDENTS OUT OF THEIR CLASSROOMS, PLACE THEM IN A THEATER, SPRINKLE THE STAGE WITH WORLD-CLASS PERFORMERS, AND WHAT DO YOU HAVE? A RECIPE FOR LEARNING THAT REACHES NEW LEVELS OF POSSIBILITY—FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS.

WE CALL IT THE APPLAUSE SERIES.

BRINGING ARTS EDUCATION TO LIFE
The Applause Series is a flagship education program of Des Moines Performing Arts. Since its launch in 1996, more than a half million students and teachers have attended school-time performances as part of the series. You are joining us for the 22nd season of school performances!

MAKING A DIFFERENCE
Each year, more than 55,000 students and teachers attend an Applause Series performance. The actual cost per person is $8, but thanks to the caring contributions of donors, schools pay just $1 per ticket. By removing the financial barriers to participation, donors introduce a whole new generation to the power of arts in action. That means stronger schools and communities now and in the future.

TICKET TO IMAGINATION
The Applause Series annually delivers 60 age-appropriate performances for pre-school to high school students. The impact stretches far beyond the Des Moines metro, reaching schools in over 35 Iowa counties. The theater becomes the classroom. One-hour matinees energize students to imagine new ways of creative expression, cultural diversity and even career opportunities.

BEYOND THE STAGE
For many Applause Series performances, we offer the opportunity for schools to go deeper by exploring an art form or theme that connects with what is seen on stage. Invite a professional teaching artist into the classroom or visit another cultural destination in Des Moines to help students make more meaning of a piece of theater.

ABOUT DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS
Des Moines Performing Arts is central Iowa's premier not-for-profit performing arts organization.

More than 300,000 guests attend performances and events in our four venues each year:
- Civic Center, 2744 seats
- Stoner Theater, 200 seats
- Temple Theater, 299 seats
- Cowles Commons (outdoor plaza)

Guests experience a wide variety of art forms and cultural activities, with presentations ranging from Broadway, comedy, professional dance, to family programming.

Des Moines Performing Arts education programs serving more than 75,000 Iowans annually.

Programs for schools, such as the Applause Series and teacher professional development, help enliven students’ learning. Public education programs such as master classes, workshops, Q&A sessions and summer camps allow audience members and aspiring artists to make meaningful and personal connections to the art they experience on our stages.
GOING TO THE THEATER

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.

WHAT ROLE WILL YOU PLAY?

YOUR ROLE AS AN AUDIENCE MEMBER

Artists on stage are very aware of the mood and level of engagement of the audience. As such, each performance calls for a different response from audience members.

As you experience the performance, consider the following questions:

◊ What kind of live performance is this (a musical, dance, or concert)?
◊ What is the mood of the performance? Is the subject matter serious or lighthearted?
◊ What is the mood of the artists? Are they happy and smiling or somber and reserved?
◊ Are the artists encouraging the audience to clap to the music, move to the beat, or participate in some other way?
◊ Are there natural breaks in the performance where applause seems appropriate?

DID YOU KNOW?
ALTHOUGH NOT REQUIRED, SOME PEOPLE ENJOY DRESSING UP WHEN THEY ATTEND THE THEATER.

THEATER ETIQUETTE CHECKLIST

☐ Do not bring food, drinks or chewing gum into the theater.
☐ The use of cameras and recording devices are not permitted.
☐ Turn off and put away cell phones and other electronics before the performance begins.
☐ Do not text during the performance.
☐ Respect the theater. 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 only before and after the performance.
☐ Use the restroom before the performance or wait until the end.
☐ Remember that this is a special experience. The artists are creating something just for you. Appropriate responses such as laughing and applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists — they will let you know what is appropriate.
☐ Open your eyes, ears, mind, and heart to the entire experience. Enjoy yourself!
CIVIC CENTER FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

WE WANT YOUR FIELD TRIP TO BE SAFE AND SUCCESSFUL!

PLEASE READ BELOW FOR IMPORTANT TIPS AND DETAILS TO ENSURE A GREAT DAY.

GET ORGANIZED

◊ Double-check that all students, teachers, and chaperones were included in your ticket order. Request an adjustment if your numbers have increased. We want to make sure we have enough seats for you!

◊ Tickets are not issued. Bring a copy of your invoice, which will serve as your group’s “ticket”.

◊ Schedule arrival for 30 minutes prior to the start of the performance. This allows time to park, cross streets, find your seats, and go to the restroom.

Let drivers know that Applause performances are approximately 60 minutes, unless otherwise noted.

◊ Remind chaperones that children under the age of three are not permitted in the theater for Applause Series events.

DIRECTIONS/PARKING

◊ The Des Moines Civic Center is located at 221 Walnut Street, Des Moines, Iowa.

◊ Directions from I-235: take Exit 8A (Downtown Exits) and the ramp toward 3rd St and 2nd Ave. Turn onto 3rd Street and head south.

◊ Police officers stationed at the corner of 3rd & Locust Streets will direct buses to reserved street parking near the Civic Center.

◊ Buses are not allowed to drop groups off in front of the theater. Contact us in advance if there is a special circumstance.

◊ Buses remain parked for the duration of the show. Drivers must be available to move the bus immediately following the performance.

◊ Personal vehicles are responsible for securing their own parking on a nearby street or in a downtown parking ramp.

ARRIVAL/SEATING

◊ An usher will greet you at the door and ask for your school name.

◊ Each group will be assigned a specific location in the theater based on various factors. An usher will escort you to your section.

◊ Your school may be seated in multiple rows. Adults should position themselves throughout the group.

◊ Allow ushers to seat your entire group before rearranging student seats or taking groups to the restroom.

This helps us seat efficiently and better start the show on time.

IN THE THEATER

◊ In case of a medical emergency, notify the nearest usher.

◊ Adults are asked to handle any disruptive behavior in their group. If the behavior persists, an usher may request your group to exit the theater.

◊ Please wait for your group to be dismissed by DMPA staff prior to exiting the theater.

QUESTIONS?
We are happy to help!

Please contact us at:
education@dmpa.org
515.246.2355
**VOCABULARY**

**baffling**: confuse and amaze

**bluffing**: pretending you can do something when you can’t

**coincidence**: a lining up of events or circumstances without a known reason

**dining out on this**: to be invited to a social meal because of something particularly interesting or entertaining that you know or have experienced

**doom**: a terrible fate

**fate**: events in your life believed to be controlled by a supernatural power and out of your control

**gawking**: stare openly and stupidly

**inoperative**: not working or taking effect

**Isle of Man**: Island between Great Britain and Ireland

**lorry**: large, heavy motor vehicle for transporting goods; a truck

**telescopic**: able to see far away objects

**Manxmouse**: has lots of great words in it, including some that you may not be familiar with. Spend some time exploring some vocabulary that will help you enjoy the show!

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**Isle of Man**: Island between Great Britain and Ireland

[Map Image: Business Insider]

**lorry**: large, heavy motor vehicle for transporting goods; a truck

[Image: Clipart-Library.com]

**telescopic**: able to see far away objects

[Image: how-to-draw-funny-cartoons.com]
ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Manxmouse may be lacking a tail, his fur may be blue, and his ears may be the size and shape of a rabbit, but that doesn’t stop him from winning the hearts of everyone he meets. Theatergroep Kwatta’s Manxmouse is a delightful theatrical adaptation of Paul Gallico’s young adult novel Manxmouse, the story of an extraordinary mouse who sets out on an adventure in search of his destiny. With lively characters, inventive theatrics, puppetry, music, and a hero everyone can root for, this tiny mouse’s epic quest is sure to engage student’s imaginations and open their hearts.

Run time: 60 minutes

SYNOPSIS

A potter who lives in the make-believe city of Buntingdowndale in England makes amazingly life-like ceramic mice. One night he comes home after a party intending to make the best mouse figurine he has ever made. Instead, he mistakenly makes a mouse-like figure described as having a “fat little body like a opossum, hind feet like those of a kangaroo, the front paws of a monkey, and instead of delicate and transparent ears, these were long and much like those of a rabbit. And what is more, they were blue, too, and violently orange-colored on the inside. But the worst thing of all was that it had no tail.” He is disappointed but finds that the statue has an endearing look, so he calls it a “Manx Mouse” and decides to keep it. That night while the potter sleeps, the statue comes to life as a Manxmouse.

The Manxmouse decides to leave the potter’s home and travel. He first meets a clutterbumph — a shapeshifting monster that takes the form of whatever those around it fear most.

On his travels, Manxmouse meets many other creatures, including old One-Eye the cat, Captain Hawk, a little girl named Wendy H. Troy, a truck driver, Mr. Smearer the pet-shop proprietor, and a wax copy of himself at Madame Tussauds.

Finally Manxmouse goes to the Isle of Man to meet Manx Cat. Will the Manxmouse be eaten by the Manx Cat? Or will he escape his Doom?

WHAT YOU WILL EXPERIENCE

The play is purposefully set in a boring environment: a storage room where four men in overalls move boxes around. These dusty men are influenced by their youngest co-worker, who reads a book during their lunch break, instead of talking with the others. Initially, they laugh at him. But after a while, they also use their imaginations, and the four of them act out the story of the strange, brave, blue mouse with the help of items from the closets behind them.

Just like they are playing make-believe, they make wings out of two paper rolls for the hawk who takes Manxmouse for a trip in the sky. A rag is transformed into a perfect wig for Manxmouse’s little friend Wendy, and a feather-duster really looks like a parrot when you put him in a cage!

Manxmouse is a puppet. It looks like a cuddly stuffed animal, with no holes or sticks like most puppets have. So watch how the performers manipulate him.

“Incredible, joyful, hilarious, brilliant – THANK YOU!”
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Manxmouse was adapted from a book by Paul Gallico by a theater company called Theatregroup Kwatta, from the Netherlands. Learn more about the artists whose imaginations bring the tale to life!

THEATREGROUP KWATTA
Theatregroup Kwatta is a professional youth theater company based in Nijmegen (Nie-may-chen) in Holland, near the German border. Nijmegen is the oldest city in the Netherlands and celebrated its 2,000th year of existence in 2005!

The home of Kwatta is a building called Theater Het Badhuis. The building used to be a place where people went to take a shower or a bath if they did not have access to one in their homes. It used to be very common that only rich people had access to a shower in their home!

Kwatta puts on productions that are both light-hearted and light-footed with a serious undertone. Kwatta’s mission is to create room for amazement and admiration by asking simple questions about difficult issues and difficult questions about things that appear to be simple. They make no assumptions and always are searching for the unknown and the absurd. Kwatta tilts reality to create a different perspective.

Productions by Kwatta are often a combination of text and other forms of theater such as music, song, puppetry and film. Kwatta performs in theatre, in school classrooms, on location and in their own trailer.

PAUL GALlico, AUTHOR
Paul Gallico wrote Manxmouse: The Mouse Who Knew No Fear in 1968, toward the end of a very long career. He wrote more than 40 books and wrote about sports for a newspaper before that.

He was born in America, but spent most of his adult life living abroad. Mr. Gallico loved boxing and deep sea fishing.

DID YOU KNOW?
The original edition of Manxmouse was illustrated by Janet and Anne Grahame-Johnstone (who are best known for illustrating One Hundred and One Dalmatians).

J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter series, lists Manxmouse as one of her favorite books!
CERAMIC
The Manxmouse is a ceramic mouse made by a potter who makes amazingly life-like mice out of clay.

Ceramic is the name for materials that are changed and formed by the use of heat. For a long time ceramics have been used to produce useful things such as containers, bricks, and tiles.

Pottery is a type of ceramics where objects are made from damp clay mixed with other materials. They are then fired in a special oven called a kiln at high temperatures. Firing makes the clay hard.

Most pottery has a functional use, like mugs, pitchers, plates, and bowls. But some items, like the potter’s mice are more like sculptures.

THE ISLE OF MAN
The Isle of Man is located in the middle of the northern Irish Sea, almost exactly between from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland (closest), and Wales (farthest).

The official languages of the Isle of Man are Manx and English.

In Manx mythology, the island was ruled by the sea god Manannán, who would draw his misty cloak around the island to protect it. One folk theory about the origin of the name Mann is that it is named after Manannán.

A look at the Manx Cat...
The Manx cat is a breed of domestic cat originating on the Isle of Man, with a naturally occurring mutation that shortens the tail. Many Manx have a small stub of a tail, but Manx cats are best known as being entirely tailless; this is the most distinguishing characteristic of the breed, along with elongated hind legs and a rounded head.

Manx cats come in all coat colors and patterns. Manx are prized as skilled hunters. They are said to be social, tame and active.

OBJECT THEATER
In Object Theater, performers use ordinary, everyday objects to tell a story in a fun, inventive, and theatrical way. In Manxmouse, objects are used in many creative ways.

Sometimes objects are used like puppets, such as the stuffed toy that is operated by two actors to become the Manxmouse, or the trash can cover and rain boots that are combined to become the frog.

Other times they are used to help the actors play different characters, such as the mop placed on a male actor's head that becomes Wendy H. Troy's hair, or the biker's helmet worn backwards to help an actor become the Billibird.

And at times they are combined with action in to create dramatic events, such as Captain Hawk's flying adventure, in which brown rolls of paper become wings that allow Manxmouse and Captain Hawk to soar across the sky.

The best thing about Object Theater is that it requires both the performers and the audience to use their imagination in order to bring the story, characters, and events to life.
1) EXPLORING THE TEXT

Goal: Students will practice close reading to determine what the text is saying and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Explanation: Students will begin to visualize the main character of *Manxmouse* by listening to a description and making logical inferences.

Materials:
- Piece of paper (one for each student)
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons (make sure you have plenty of blue)

Activity:
1. Explain to the students that you are going to read a description of the main character in the performance they are going to see. Their job is to listen and remember as many details as possible.
2. Read the two passages from the text, available at right:
3. Discuss:
   - What kind of animal is the author describing?
   - What different types of animals does the mouse look like?
   - What color is he? What word did the author use to describe the color?
   - What do you think "mad blue" looks like?
   - Do you think you would like Manxmouse? Why or why not?
4. Provide each student with a piece of paper and crayons, markers, or colored pencils. (Make sure you have plenty of the color blue!)
5. Read the passages a second time and after you have finished reading them, have students draw a picture of Manxmouse based on the details of the passages.
6. Allow time for students to share their pictures with the class.

Follow-up questions:
1. Did the words the author chose to describe Manxmouse help you know what he looks like and how he acts? Why or why not?
2. What words stuck out to you in the description of Manxmouse? Are there any other words that you think should have been used?

...it was not gray, but utterly mad blue. It had a fat little body like an opossum, hind feet like those of a kangaroo, the front paws of a monkey, and instead of delicate and transparent ears, these were long and much like those of a rabbit. And what is more, they were blue, too, and violently orange-colored on the inside. But worst thing of all was that it had no tail.

"If you looked at him from one angle, his face seemed to say, 'I love you! Please like me.' And from another, its expression was, 'I'm such a small mouse, I really don't much matter to anyone. But I'd be happy to help you in any way I could."
*(Manxmouse, Paul Gallico, p.22-23)*

2) MODES OF TRANSPORT

Goal: Students will collaborate with diverse partners, build on others’ ideas, and practice expressing their ideas clearly and persuasively.

Explanation: Students become different modes of transportation using their bodies, voices, and objects to explore the actors’ creativity.

Activity:
1. Explain that the actors in *Manxmouse* use their bodies, voices, and different objects to dramatize Manxmouse’s travels on a bus, a train, a boat, and even in the air on the wings of a hawk.
2. Clear the desks in the room to the side so that there is a large open space to work in.
3. Divide the class into four groups. Assign each group one of the following: bus, train, boat, and cab.
4. Tell students that it will be their job to transport an object (stuffed toy, book, hat, etc.) from one side of the room to the other by becoming their mode of transportation. The rules are:
   - Everyone in the group has to be connected in some way.
   - They can only use their voices and bodies to make the sounds of their mode of transportation.
   - They can only use objects that exist in the classroom as part of their mode of transportation.
   - They must make sure the trip is safe for their object (it can't fall on the ground en route).
5. Have each group demonstrate their travels.

Follow-up Questions:
1. How do you think your group did working together to complete your task?
2. Were there any rules you found challenging? Why?
3. Where was your group successful? How could your group have improved?
3) MANXMOSUE, MAKE A...

**Goal:** Development of body awareness and cooperation in group work, as well as encouragement in creativity.

**Explanation:** Students will work silently in groups to portray different animals and objects.

**Activity:**
1. Clear a large opening in your classroom space — enough room for all students to walk freely.
2. Tell students that the magic word is “Manxmouse,” and that when they hear you say “Manxmouse,” they should move around the open space at a normal walking speed (a level 3 on a 1-5 scale). Explain that they will freeze in place when they hear you clap your hands. Practice this a few times until students are comfortable with their “Stop” and “Go” cues.
3. Explain that the Manxmouse was created by a potter who loves to shape things out of clay. Students will be making their own creations based on your descriptions.

**Procedure:**
- You say “Manxmouse”
- Students mingle in the open space, changing their location in the classroom and the people they are standing by.
- When you clap your hands, everyone freezes.
- Then, you clap your hands again, once for each member of the new group they will form (2 claps = team of 2, 25 claps = team of 25).
- Students silently get into groups with the correct number of peoples as quickly as they can. If students cannot move into groups silently, are taking too long to form groups, or have a group with too few or too many members, they are out for that round only.
- Once students are in their groups, say “Manxmouse makes a ____________ (eagle with frog legs, bear with puppy tail, unicorn with porcupine quills, etc).” Using only their bodies (not their voices), students silently arrange themselves to configure the animal you have described. To encourage quiet, you may want to impose a time limit, like counting down from 10.

4. Take time to comment on the individuality of each group’s animal and point out what makes them different from the others’ groups. Then you are ready to start again by saying “Manxmouse!”.

**Follow-up Questions:**
1. Do you have any animals you wish we would have made? What were they?
2. Did you have a favorite creation that you saw another group make? Which one, and why did you like it?
3. What was challenging about this activity?
4. What did the groups that worked together the best do?

4) WHAT AN ADVENTURE!

**Goal:** Write a narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

**Explanation:** Students will write a short essay about an adventure that they’ve imagined or experienced.

**Recommended for:** Grades 2-4

**Materials:**
- Pencil and paper for each student

**Activity:**
1. Discuss the following:
   - What is an adventure?
   - Who thinks they are adventurous? Why?
   - What kinds of things happen on adventures?
   - Who might you meet on an adventure?
   - Why might someone want to have an adventure?
   - Are there any reasons why someone wouldn’t want to have an adventure?
2. Explain that Manxmouse is the story of a unique mouse who has many adventures. As a class, read the summary of the show.
3. As you read the summary, make a list of all the adventures Manxmouse has and the different characters he meets.
4. Have students write a short essay answering the following (or discuss as a class):
   - Describe an adventure you have had. What happened? Who did you meet?
   - What are some adventures you would like to have?
5. Allow time for students to share their work.

**Follow-up Questions:**
1. What was challenging about writing an adventure? What was fun about it?
2. Did you write about a real-life experience or one you imagined? Why?
DISCUSSION
Theatergroep Kwatta has received lots of questions about the play. Answer some of the most popular questions for yourself — and in some cases, make a drawing or write a story.

The Clutterbump
1. The clutterbump can change into anything that scares you. What scares you?
2. Who has ever seen a clutterbump?
3. What do you think a clutterbump looks like?
4. Is a clutterbump real or not?

Manxmouse
1. What does it mean when you are brave?
2. In your opinion, at which point is the Manxmouse really brave?
3. The Manxmouse sees himself. Draw your own image and put the drawings in your classroom.

Wendy
1. Do you have a real friend?
2. Why does Wendy think Manxmouse is beautiful?
3. What would you like to carry around in your pocket?

Manxcat
1. The Manxcat believes in faith. What does that mean?
2. Can you be friends with your enemies?
3. Does the Manxcat really want to eat the Manxmouse?

Hawk
1. Why doesn’t the hawk eat the manxmouse?
2. What would you like to see from high in the sky?
3. When you are grown-up, what brave thing would you like to be able to do?

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 the Manxmouse performers or 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 the performers or to Des Moines Performing Arts donors about their theater experience.

Example letter starter:

    Dear Manxmouse performers,

    My favorite part of the show was... While watching your show I felt... because...
    I have drawn a picture of the scene when...
    If I could be in your show, I would play the part of... 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? Why did you want to share that particular idea?
2) NIGHT AT THE LIVING WAX MUSEUM

**Goal:** Students will present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning. Students also will practice body awareness.

**Explanation:** Manxmouse has an encounter with a very familiar creature in the wax museum. Create a classroom museum by having students use their bodies to become different characters.

**Activity:**
1. Clear the desks in the room to the side so that there is a large open space to work in.
2. Divide the class into two groups. For the first round, Group A will be museum visitors, and Group B will be museum statues. The groups will switch roles each round.
3. Explain to the students that the classroom space is going to become a museum and that one group will be the statues in the museum and the other group will be the visitors. When they are statues, they must freeze in their spots as if they are a statue in a museum. (And remember: Statues don’t talk!) When they are visitors, they are allowed to walk around the museum, looking at the statues but not touching them.
4. Have each Group B member find a spot in the space and tell them the type of museum they are statues in (see list below). Give them a count of five seconds to freeze in their statues.
5. After they are frozen, have Group A walk around and look at the statues, discussing the following:
   - What are some of the characters you see?
   - How are they using their bodies to become those characters?
   - How are they using their facial expressions to become those characters?
6. Reverse the groups and have Group A become statues and Group B visitors, and repeat the steps above.

**Museum Ideas:** “Museum Of”…
Underwater Creatures; Dinosaurs; Cartoon Characters; Rainforest Animals; Celebrities/ Movie Stars; Rock Stars; Athletes

**Follow-up Questions:**
1. What types of statues were the most interesting to look at? Why?
2. Was it challenging to stay frozen for such a long time? If not, do you have any tips for others?

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3) FACTS AND FOLKLORE

**Goal:** Conduct a short research project based on focused questions while gathering relevant information from multiple print and digital sources and assessing the credibility of each source. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**Explanation:** Learn more about the Isle of Man and the real Manx cat, including the folktales about how the Manx cat came to have no tail. Compare and contrast the tales.

**Recommended for:** Grades 3-4

**Materials:**
- Pencil and paper for each student
- Copies of “How the Manx Cat Lost Her Tail” for each student, available [HERE](#)
- Access to research materials, such as internet or the library for print sources
- “Isle of Man” information found on page 9

**Activity:**
1. As a class, research the following:
   - Where is the Isle of Man? Locate it on a map.
   - What country is the island a part of?
   - What language do they speak there?
   - What is a Manx cat? What makes it unique?
   - What are some stories about how the Manx cat arrived on the Isle of Man?
2. Read the short tale: "How the Manx Cat Lost Her Tail", found at the link above and discuss using the prompts below.

**Follow-up Questions:**
1. What are some differences between the research we did and the story we read? Can we trust both of these resources equally?
2. What is a folk tale? Do you know any other folk tales?
3. Why do you think we have stories like “How the Manx Cat Lost Her Tail” and other folk tales?

**Extension Activity:**
If time allows, invite students to make up their own story about how the Manx cat might have lost her tail.
RESOURCES AND SOURCES

RESOURCES

10 Quirky Facts About Manx Cats.
http://mentalfloss.com/article/78418/10-quirky-facts-about-manx-cats
Fun facts about Manx Cats, to compare and contrast with the Manxcat character in the play.

Kids World Atlas app.
Features engaging lessons that teach about rivers, animals, mountains, volcanoes, geography, and much more. Imagine being able to explore some of the world’s most fascinating deserts, mountains, and oceans without actually visiting them.

Mission Adaptation from Planet Science
Try to “capture” each animal with the camera, then quickly choose which adaptation fits that particular animal.

SOURCES

“Manxmouse: The Mouse Who Knew No Fear.” Kids Entertainment.
http://www.kidsentertainment.net/shows/manxmouse-the-mouse-who-knew-to-fear/

Manxmouse Study Guide by Brooklyn Academy of Music.
https://www.bam.org/education/2015/study-guide/manxmouse

Manxmouse Study Guide by Theatergroep Kwatta.

BOOKS

◊ The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
  by Kate DiCamillo
  (4th grade+)

◊ The Velveteen Rabbit
  by Margery Williams
  (Grades K-3)

◊ The Invention of Hugo Cabret
  by Brian Selznick
  (3rd grade+)

◊ Where the Wild Things Are
  by Maurice Sendak
  (Grades K-4)

◊ My Side of the Mountain
  by Jean Craighead George
  (Grades 3-4)

◊ The Capture, Guardians of Ga’Hoole Book #1
  by Kathryn Lasky
  (4th grade+)

◊ Benny: An Adventure Story
  by Bob Graham
  (Grades K-2)

◊ Tiny’s Big Adventure
  by Martin Waddell
  (Grades K-2)