



## SHH! WE HAVE A PLAN

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*Applause Series Curriculum Guide*  
March 23-29, 2018

 **DES MOINES  
PERFORMING ARTS**

CIVIC CENTER • STONER THEATER • TEMPLE THEATER • COWLES COMMONS

# SHH!

## WE HAVE A PLAN

### Dear Teachers,

Thank you for joining us for the Applause Series presentation of *Shh! We Have a Plan*, brought to us from the amazing Cahoots NI of Northern Ireland.

The book by Chris Haughton, on which the production is based, features evocative illustrations and very few words to tell the story of a group of friends venturing into the woods and learning to treat nature with respect. Cahoots NI has taken this canvas and matched it with their own form of nonverbal storytelling, humor, and theatrical illusions. The result is a beautiful piece of theater that will fill audiences of all ages with a sense of wonder and childlike curiosity.



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 in part from Teacher Guide materials for *Shh! We Have a Plan* by Cahoots NI.

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# 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?

**REMEMBER....**  
THE THEATER IS DESIGNED TO MAGNIFY SOUND. EVEN WHISPERS CAN BE HEARD!

### 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!**

# TEMPLE THEATER 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 Temple Theater is located on the second floor of the Temple for Performing Arts, 1011 Locust Street, Des Moines.
- ◇ Directions from I-235: Take Exit 8A (Downtown exit). Go south on 5th Ave. Turn west on Grand Ave. Turn south on 13th Street. Turn east on Locust Street.
- ◇ A police officer stationed at the corner of 10th and Locust Streets will direct your bus where to park. (Buses generally park on the south side of Locust Street in front of the Nationwide building.)
- ◇ Personal vehicles are responsible for securing their own parking on a nearby street or in a downtown parking ramp.



Exterior of the Temple for Performing Arts.

## **ARRIVAL/SEATING**

- ◇ A Des Moines Performing Arts staff member will greet you at the door and ask for your school name.
- ◇ You will then be directed upstairs to the Temple Theater (second floor).
- ◇ Ushers will escort groups to their seats.
- ◇ Your school may be seated in multiple rows. Adults should position themselves throughout the group.
- ◇ Help us seat efficiently and start the show on time, by allowing ushers to seat your entire group before rearranging students or taking groups to the restroom.

## **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.

**QUESTIONS?**  
[education@dmpa.org](mailto:education@dmpa.org)

# ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE



Photo: Carrie Daveport Photography

Three woolly-hatted adventurers make their way through a dark misty forest. They seek out stunning wildlife, but have a tendency to want to take what they see home. Then, on a tall tree that sits in the middle of a mound, they spy a beautiful bird. To what lengths won't they go to capture their new object of desire?

Based on the delightful Chris Haughton book of the same title, this show follows the journey of some madcap characters each of whom has a plan - they all want to capture a beautiful bird perched high in a tree! Sounds simple, but the quest becomes an obsession and the obsession becomes the absurd! Where will it all end? Join us as we follow the characters' exploits, meet an elusive and magical little birdie and discover that perhaps freedom and kindness are more important than getting what you want at any cost!

**Run time:** 45 minutes

## A PLAY WITHOUT WORDS

*Shh! We Have a Plan* is a play without words. The artists use a soundscape, lighting and costumes combined with expressive acting to communicate the story.

Here are some of the things you can watch for:

**Mime:** the silent art of using body movements and facial expressions to create an illusion of reality. When these movements and facial expressions are used to tell a story without words, we call it **pantomime**.



Photo: edrants.com



Photo: Carrie Daveport Photography

**Puppet:** a movable model of a person or animal that is used in entertainment and is typically moved either by strings controlled from above or by a hand inside it. All of the birds in *Shh! We Have A Plan* are puppets.

**Puppetry:** the art of operating puppets.

**Illusion:** the use of special effects to create "impossible" events on stage, such as pulling a big ladder out of a little backpack.



Photo: wsj.com

**Music and Sound Effects.** An imaginative musical score with added sound effects from nature help set the tone and mood.

**Choreography:** planning and arranging the movements of performers. How do the movements show the story?



"Was absolutely spellbound by the fantastic production by Cahoots NI."

—Author/illustrator  
Chris Haughton,  
via Twitter

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Photo: Carrie Daveport Photography

Learn more about the theater company behind *Shh! We Have a Plan* and the book it was inspired by!

## AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR, CHRIS HAUGHTON

*Shh! We Have A Plan* is based on a children's book of the same name by Chris Haughton, an Irish illustrator based in London.

He has published four books and one app. His books have been translated into more than 24 languages and won awards in 10 countries such as Dutch Picturebook of the Year, the Children's Book Ireland Bisto Award and the Association of Illustrators award. His app, HAT MONKEY, came out in September 2014.



My name is Chris Haughton and I'm an illustrator and designer

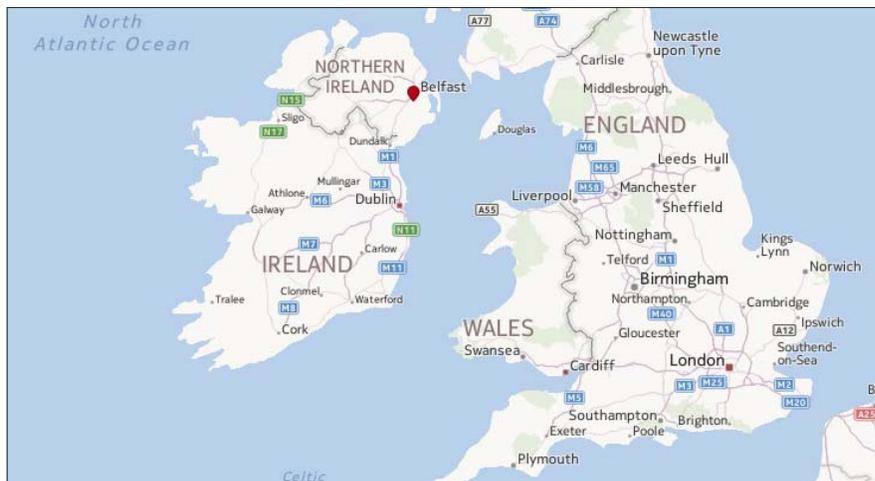
Meet Chris Haughton and see how he goes about creating collages for the illustrations for his books and other projects. Video by Tate Kids.

## THE COMPANY, CAHOOTS NI

*Shh! We Have A Plan* is brought to us by Cahoots NI, a professional children's touring theatre company based in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The Company combines the visual potential of theatre with music, magic and illusion to create entertaining and inspiring theatre for children. The company tours extensively throughout Ireland, as well as internationally, expanding the imagination and artistic creativity of children around the world.

## THE DIRECTOR

Paul McEneaney, artistic director of Cahoots NI and the director of *Shh! We Have Plan*, creates magical theatrical experiences. His love of illusions started at a young age: "According to my parents, at around the age of six I pestered them so much for a magic set that they gave in and bought me one. I practiced and practiced and did shows for my parents and sister. I then started giving shows to family and friends... By the age of ten I was doing small shows in the local leisure centre. I'm still practicing — a magician never stops!"



Cahoots NI is a professional theater company from Belfast, Ireland. Map: CNN.com.

# BE A LISTENING DECTECTIVE!

*Shh! We Have A Plan* is a play without words (*Shh!*), so we need to look for other clues, like lighting, movement, and sound, to understand the story and know how the characters are feeling.

Let's explore what sound can help us learn in a play!

## SOUND CAN HELP YOU FIGURE OUT...

### WHERE we are

*Shh! We Have A Plan* takes place in a mysterious forest, so we hear lots of bird calls and wings flapping, but also magical music. There are big rocks the friends must step on to get to the birds' home, and each time they step on those rocks we hear a big thumping sound.

### WHEN the story is happening

The friends in *Shh! We Have A Plan* go exploring at night, so we hear crickets and other insect noises in the quiet forest.

### The MOOD of the characters in the story

The music in *Shh! We Have a Plan* matches the friends' moods. For example, we hear the same music every time they have a plan. The "Plan" music has a strong beat and makes you feel happy. When the beautiful bird is nearby, the music becomes more hushed, slow, and mysterious to make you feel wonder.



Listen to this 30-second animation of the book *Shh! We Have a Plan*. What can you tell about where, when, and the mood of

Sound is a constant part of our daily lives: it is very, very rare for the world to be absolutely silent. Take a moment to listen to the world around you, and try to list all of the sounds you can hear.

These sounds make up the **soundscape** of your life at this moment.

I hear:

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Now, look closely at the pictures below. Imagine what sounds you might hear in these locations:



Image courtesy of islands.com

At the beach on a sunny day:

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Image courtesy of abc7chicago.com

In a haunted house at night:

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Image courtesy of cityschools.com

Indoor recess on a rainy day:

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# RESPECT FOR NATURE



Photo: Carrie Daveport Photography

Watch a snowflake float down and land on the sidewalk. Within a few seconds, it has vanished, possibly leaving a faint spot of moisture. One snowflake is insignificant.

Go to bed and look outside the next morning and see your sidewalk 5 inches deep in snow that you now have to shovel. What happened? A whole lot of tiny, insignificant snowflakes piled up and made a big impact, that's what!

The same sort of thing happens in the outdoors. One person dropping litter, stepping on fragile vegetation, or in some way not caring for the area will most likely be of little significance. But, when the millions and millions of visitors to the outdoors each year all contribute a bit of garbage or misguided actions, the results become a serious impact!

Explore some things to think about before your next nature hike or camping trip!

## DISPOSE OF TRASH PROPERLY

- ◇ Bring only what you will eat to reduce garbage.
- ◇ Collect all scraps and pack in plastic bags.
- ◇ Recover anything you drop or spill while eating.

### WHY?

Trails and campsites will be used more because they look nicer. Animals will also look for natural food away from campsites.

## LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- ◇ Leave flowers, sticks, bark, rocks, arrowheads and other artifacts, and animals where they are.
- ◇ Take a picture or sketch the things you find instead. This means leaving them in the position you found them. Please refrain from arranging stones, scratching on rocks, or drawing in sand or dirt to "leave your mark."

### WHY?

By leaving items untouched, future visitors can discover them and feel the excitement you felt. Who knows, just yesterday someone may have been tempted to pick that flower but left it there just for you!

## RESPECT WILDLIFE

- ◇ Be quiet so you don't startle the animals.
- ◇ Look from a distance.
- ◇ Move slowly when around animals.
- ◇ Avoid disturbing their nests, food, and water sources and resting areas.
- ◇ Be aware of their birthing seasons and give them more space.
- ◇ Manage food and garbage so they don't eat our food instead of theirs, which is healthier for them.
- ◇ Control pets at all times.

### WHY?

Remember that we are visitors to someone else's home when we go into the wild — the residents are the animals. Not only that, they did not invite us to visit!



So, understanding and respecting their needs is critically important.

# PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES, pg. 1 of 2

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## 1) NATURE, YA DIG?

**Goal:** Reinforce the concept that artifacts and natural items should remain in nature for enjoyment and study.

**Explanation:** In *Shh! We Have A Plan*, the friends love the beautiful animals they see so much they want to take them home. After trying to study a decreasing number of natural items to learn about an imaginary animal, students will understand that removing natural artifacts, plants, and animals lessens the beauty and historic value of an area.

**Recommended for:** Grades 1-3

### Materials:

- ◇ A collection of small items that can indicate the appearance, habitat, and behaviors of a make-believe animal (Feathers, twigs, pipe cleaners shaped like antlers, plastic eggs, leaves, a bag of gold coins if the animal is a dragon, etc.)
- ◇ Paper and pencil for each participant.

### Activity:

1. Prior to beginning the activity, lay out the nature items on the ground in an isolated area, such as a separate room or the back corner of your classroom.
2. When you are ready to begin the activity, ask students to think of things they might find on a nature walk. If students bring up arrowheads or fossils, explain that these are artifacts, left by earlier people and animals that tell about their ways of life. The more artifacts we have to study, the more we can learn.
3. Explain that recent erosion has unearthed clues about an unknown species of animal. People from around the world are racing to reach the find first, collect the natural items, and write articles about what the animals were like so they can be famous.
4. Partner up the students and randomly assign an order. Explain that each team will observe the area and retrieve one item they feel is significant to learning about the animal. Once they retrieve their item, they must keep it a secret from the other teams.
5. Allow the first team to view the scene for no more than 30 seconds and to write down all the items they see. Instruct them to put one item in a pocket or bag, return to their seats, and to begin writing a report on the animal.
6. Have each team visit the area in turn. (The last few won't have much to write about.)
7. Starting with the last visiting team, ask them what they can tell us about this lost species and have them show what item they took.

Adapted from "Pilfered History" lesson plan by Leave No Trace Dude.

8. Ask the previous group if they agree, and if they have anything to add.

9. Repeat all the way to the first group. The understanding of the animal should grow as more items are available.

### Follow-up Questions:

1. How can we enjoy nature in the field without diminishing its value?
2. How does removing flowers, antlers, stones, and other natural items affect the value of an area or what you can learn?

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## 2) WHAT'S IN THE BAG

**Goal:** Students will practice critical thinking, problem solving, planning, listening, and compromising.

**Explanation:** Each of the characters in *Shh! We Have a Plan* carries a bag or backpack on their journey. Read the book that inspired the play and then imagine what the characters might need to bring.

**Recommended for:** Grades PreK-1

### Materials:

- ◇ *Shh! We Have A Plan* by Chris Haughton
- ◇ Items you might pack for a hike: a net, snacks, some glass jars, warm drinks, etc.
- ◇ Small bag or backpack

### Activity:

1. Read *Shh! We Have A Plan* out loud with your students.
2. Ask students "What do you think is in their bags?" Lay out a small bag and several different objects that may be needed on such an adventure.
3. Go through the objects and facilitate a discussion about which objects are the most important to take with you, asking students to explain why.
4. Everyone must agree on the item before it gets packed in the bag!

### Follow-Up Questions:

1. Was it difficult to decide what should go in the bag? Why or why not?
2. Did everyone agree about what should go in the bag? If not, how did those disagreements get resolved?
3. Why should you pack for a trip ahead of time?
4. Was there anything on the table that didn't fit in the bag? What other problems came up? How did you solve them?

Adapted from Teacher Guide by Cahoots NI.

## PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES, pg. 2 of 2

### 3) WALK LIKE A...

**Goal:** Students will experiment with focus and non-vocal acting techniques to convey a character.

**Explanation:** The four actors in *Shh! We Have A Plan* don't say a word, but they speak volumes about problem-solving, teamwork, and empathy. In this activity, students will explore how actors use their bodies to convey a character.

**Recommended for:** Grades PreK-3

**Materials:**

- ◇ A prop, such as a stuffed animal or colorful item from the classroom (tip: pick a familiar item so that the novelty does not cause distraction)
- ◇ Painter's tape, to mark out start and finish lines on the floor

**Activity:**

1. Clear desks or move to a room with a larger open space. Pre-tape on the floor "start" and "finish" lines. Have students face you. Introduce the idea of focus (thinking hard about just one thing). Show students how to focus by asking them to focus on your selected prop. Slowly move it and watch to see if your students' eyes are following. Coach students to hold their focus on the prop.
2. Ask students to focus on the floor, then the ceiling, then their own hands, then you. Tell the class they have just shown you that they can control their focus and that they are ready to become actors!
3. Line students up so that they can safely cross the room from the "start" line to the "finish" line.
4. Tell them that this activity will challenge them to use one of their main actor tools: their body. As such, they will not be making any noises with their voices.
5. When students are ready, tell them that their acting challenge is to "walk like a..." without touching another student. Specify that if the prompt is an animal, they should imagine what that animal would look like walking on two legs, and imitate what's in their imaginations. Ask one student to demonstrate walking like a frog on two legs.
6. Continue the game with additional prompts. Ask students to cross the room walking like: the floor is made of Jell-O, an elephant, a giant pig, a turtle, a melting ice cream cone, a person on the moon, a butterfly, you're in a blizzard, you're being chased by a bear, you're walking on the ceiling, a rock star, you're a mermaid taking her first steps, you're alone in a crowded city where you don't know anyone, an eagle, a lizard, etc.

7. As you go, remind students not to make animal noises: "No voices! Show me what you are with your body!" "If you are choosing not to control your voice, please sit over here where you can observe the activity."

8. As time allows, invite students to suggest animals or things to "walk like".

**Extension Idea:**

If students are appropriately engaged, give students an additional challenge. Have two students start from each line, meet in the middle, and interact with the other student without speaking as their animal or character.

**Follow-Up Questions:**

1. What is focus?
2. What were you focused on for this activity?
3. What was your favorite thing to act like? Why? What other things could we walk like if we do this activity again?
4. Was it hard not to use your voice? Why?
5. Did our class cooperate well and work as a team? How can you tell?

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### 4) PREPARE FOR THE JOURNEY

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

**Explanation:** Lead a class discussion that accesses students' prior knowledge of performances and prepares for them what to expect when they visit the theater.

**Recommended for:** Grades PreK-1

**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 using their bodies.
  - ◇ A performance usually finishes with clapping.

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. Why do you think going to a performance is a special experience?
2. Why is it important to look and listen during a performance?

# POST-SHOW DISCUSSION AND ASSESSMENT

## DISCUSSION

1. Why did the characters want to catch the bird?
2. Did any of the characters think about the well-being of the bird?
3. How do you think the bird felt when the characters tried to trap her?
4. What happened when the characters finally stopped chasing the bird? How does the play differ from the book?
5. Do you think the characters will treat the squirrel at the end of the play any differently?
6. How did the music and the sound effects help you understand what was happening in the play?
7. Did anything in the show surprise or amaze you?
8. In the end, which friend had the best idea? What can we learn from this friend?
9. In the dedication at the start of the book the play is adapted from, Albert Einstein is quoted as saying "Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding." What do you think this means in the context 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 the *Shh! We Have a Plan* actors 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 find? What did they learn?

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

### Example letter starters:

Dear *Shh! We Have a Plan* actors,

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 ...

Dear Donors,

Thank you for helping my class go to the Temple Theater to see *Shh! We Have a Plan*.  
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. After writing the letter, students can illustrate a scene from the performance.

4. Last, mail the letters to us and we'll make sure they get to the right people.

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

### Follow-Up Discussion Questions:

1. What did you choose to share in your letter? Why?
2. How does receiving a letter make you feel?
3. How do you think the recipient of your letter will feel when he or she receives your letter? Why?

# POST-SHOW DISCUSSION AND ASSESSMENT

## 2) SHH! WE HAVE ANOTHER PLAN

**Goals:** Students will use their experience of reading the book and seeing the play as a jumping off point to imagine how the friends might try to catch the squirrel they meet at the end of the story.

**Explanation:** Students draw or write their own stories of the friends trying to execute a new plan.

**Materials:**

- ◇ Worksheet for each student ([HERE](#))
- ◇ Pencils
- ◇ Crayons, colored pencils, or markers

**Activity:**

1. Say to the students: “In *Shh! We Have A Plan*, the three friends have lots of ideas, like climbing tall ladders, riding a unicycle, and setting a trap to catch the beautiful bird. Then, after they decide it’s best to let the bird be free in nature, they see a squirrel! What do you think they’re going to try to do next?”
2. As a group, brainstorm how the friends might interact with the squirrel. If they try to catch it, what might their plan be? Or what if they decide to let the squirrel be? If they don’t try to catch it, what happens next?
3. Ask students to draw the friends trying one of these new plans.
4. Ask students to think of a short story to describe their drawing and share it with a friend, teacher, or family member.

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. This is an example of a circle story, where the end of each story leads to needing another new plan. After they interact with the squirrel, who might the friends try to catch next?
2. In *Shh! We Have a Plan*, the friends learn that even though the bird is beautiful, it belongs in the wild. But then they see a squirrel, and they start their plans all over again! Have you ever needed to learn a lesson more than once? Why do you think making a change in our behavior is so hard?

## 3) A WILD BIRD CHASE: RESEARCH ACTIVITY

**Goal:** Students will draw conclusions from context clues in *Shh! We Have A Plan* while practicing their research skills.

**Explanation:** Students will research different types of birds to see what they can find out about the brightly colored birds from *Shh! We Have a Plan*. What kind of birds could they be? What habitat might they live in?

**Materials:**

- ◇ Computer for each student or pairs of students
- ◇ Notebook paper
- ◇ Pencils

**Activity:**

1. Tell students that you have a problem. You loved the bird you saw in *Shh! We Have a Plan* so much that you just have to have it for a pet! But you don’t know what kind of bird it is, so you don’t know what kind of food it eats or even where to find one like it!
2. Ask the students to help you solve your problem. Compile a list of things you know about the bird based on what students have seen in the book and the play.
3. Once your list has been compiled, lead a discussion about research and why we do it. How do we research a subject?
4. Using the list of traits about the bird you’ve compiled as a guide, ask students to use the SweetSearch Engine, or something comparable, to research the bird and make an educated guess about what the type of bird it is and the type of habitat it lives in. Ask them to take notes on their pieces of paper.
4. Ask each student or pair of students to tell the class what type of bird they think was in the play, what type of habitat it lives in, and what in their research led them to this conclusion.

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. Do you feel confident about your answer? Why or why not?
2. Was finding an answer more difficult than you thought? Easier? Why?
3. Did we have enough information about the bird to come to a definite conclusion? Why or why not?

Adapted from *Shh! We Have a Plan* lesson idea by Kindergarten Nana.

# RESOURCES AND SOURCES



Photo: Carrie Daveport Photography

## BOOKS

### By Chris Haughton:

- ◇ [A Bit Lost](#)
- ◇ [Oh No, George!](#)
- ◇ [Goodnight Everyone](#)

### Featuring Creative Plans:

- ◇ [Rosie Revere, Engineer](#)  
by Andrea Beaty
- ◇ [The Little Mouse, The Red Ripe Strawberry, and The Big Hungry Bear](#)  
by Audrey and Don Wood

### Nature Exploration:

- ◇ [I Took a Walk](#)  
by Henry Cole
- ◇ [Nature Adventures](#)  
by Mick Manning
- ◇ [The Listening Walk](#)  
by Paul Showers
- ◇ [The Busy Tree](#)  
by Jennifer Ward
- ◇ [Birdwatchers](#)  
by Simon James
- ◇ [A Log's Life](#)  
by Wendy Pfeffer

## RESOURCES

Chris Haughton.

*Information, including video interviews, about author/illustrator Chris Haughton.*

<http://www.chrishaughton.com/>

Nature's Child: Apps and Sites to Help Kids Explore the Natural World.

*Extensive resource list of websites, apps and other materials to guide students exploration of nature.*

<http://www.brightpips.com/natures-child-apps-sites-help-kids-explore-natural-world/>

Toca Nature: The Magic of Nature App.

*Child-friendly app that encourages exploration of nature, animals and different biomes, with the goal of "amplifying the mysteries and magical moments that COULD be experienced in the wild."*

<https://tocaboca.com/app/toca-nature/>

## SOURCES

Leave No Trace Dude.

[leavenotrace.com/teach/leave-history.shtml](http://leavenotrace.com/teach/leave-history.shtml)

"Paul Bosco McEneaney: Bringing a Certain Magic to a Moving Wartime Story." Belfast Telegraphy Digital.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/entertainment/belfast-childrens-festival/paul-bosco-mcneaney-bringing-a-certain-magic-to-a-moving-wartime-story-30049395.html>

*Shh! We Have a Plan* Teachers Guide, by Cahoots NI.

Shh! We Have a Plan! Kindergarten Nana.

<https://dbsenk.wordpress.com/2015/03/15/shh-we-have-a-plan/>