



Illustration by Claudia Davila

# THE INCREDIBLE SPEEDINESS OF JAMIE CAVANAUGH

*Applause Series* Curriculum Guide  
October 25, 2016

# The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh

by Chris Craddock

## Dear Teachers,

Thank you for joining us for the Applause Series presentation of *The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh*. Jamie is a feisty, outgoing girl who has a problem – she’s always going too fast! As she tells her story of navigating an ADHD diagnosis and other childhood issues, audiences are invited to explore the hurt and confusion of being different when you can’t help it. With an estimated 11% of US school-aged children diagnosed with ADHD in their lifetime, we look forward to introducing students to a remarkable role model for them and their peers.



Photo credit: Jona Stuart

We 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 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

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

American Enterprise Group, Arts Midwest, Bradford and Sally Austin, Bravo Greater Des Moines, The Coons Foundation, EMC Insurance Companies, EquiTrust Life Insurance Company, Hy-Vee, Inc., Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, John Deere, Richard and Deborah McConnell, Nationwide, Polk County, Prairie Meadows, Principal Financial Group, U.S. Bank, Wells Fargo & Co., West Bancorporation Foundation, Windsor Charitable Foundation, and more than 200 individual donors.

This study guide is based “The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh Study Guide developed by Roseneath Theatre. Additional material compiled by Karoline Myers; edited by Michelle McDonald.

## GUIDE CONTENTS

**About Des Moines Performing Arts**  
Page 3

**Going to the Theater and Theater Etiquette**  
Page 4

**Civic Center Field Trip Information for Teachers**  
Page 5

**Vocabulary**  
Pages 6

**About the Performance**  
Pages 7-8

**About Roseneath Theatre**  
Page 9

**Pre-Show Exploration**  
Pages 10-12

**Post-Show Discussion and Assessment Activities**  
Pages 13-14

**Resources and Sources**  
Page 15

# 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 55,000 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.

## 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. Features include the Lauridsen Fountain, the Crusoe Umbrella sculpture by Claes Oldenburg, and the Swirl sculpture by Jim Campbell.

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 21st season of school performances!

# GOING TO THE THEATER . . .



## 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. 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 Des Moines 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 and causing a distraction.
- \* 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.

# CIVIC CENTER FIELD TRIP INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS



**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.
- \* Des Moines Performing Arts 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.

## DIRECTIONS AND PARKING

- \* Directions: From I-235, take Exit 8A (Downtown Exits) and the ramp toward 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Turn onto 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and head south.
- \* Police officers are stationed at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Locust Streets and will direct buses to parking areas with hooded meters near the Civic Center. Groups traveling in personal vehicles are responsible for locating their own parking in ramps or metered (non-hooded) spots downtown.
- \* Buses will remain parked for the duration of the show. At the conclusion, bus drivers must be available to move their bus if necessary, even if their students are staying at the Civic Center to eat lunch or take a tour.
- \* Buses are not generally permitted to drop off or pick up students near the Civic Center. If a bus must return to school during the performance, prior arrangements must be made with Des Moines Performing Arts Education staff.

## ARRIVAL TO THE CIVIC CENTER

- \* When arriving at the Civic Center, please have an **adult lead your group** for identification and check-in purposes.
- \* Each group will be assigned a specific location in the hall, and ushers will escort groups to their seats upon arrival. 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 that other adults position themselves throughout the group.** This helps with supervision purposes and is especially important in the event a group must be seated in multiple rows.
- \* Please allow ushers to seat your entire group before rearranging individuals' seat locations or taking students to the restroom. This helps ensure that everyone has a seat in your designated section, as well as allows us to more efficiently seat other arriving groups. This helps us to start the performance on time.
- \* As a reminder, children under the age of three are not permitted in the theater for Applause Series 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, please wait for your group to be dismissed prior to exiting the theater.
- \* 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](mailto:education@desmoinesperformingarts.org) or 515.246.2355.  
Thank you!

# VOCABULARY



Photo credit: Jona Stuart

*The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh* is about a feisty girl named Jamie, her friend Max, and their classmates at school. It is a play about how young people often have to deal with complex and big issues. The following list of words will prepare you to explore some of the things that Jamie and her classmates experience.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):** a disorder affecting a person's



Image courtesy of static1.squarespace.com

ability to focus and maintain attention, as well as causing them to be hyperactive. Children with ADHD are often unable to sit still. They may walk, run or climb around when others are seated, and frequently talk when others are talking. This often leads to learning and behavior problems at home, school, and work. Jamie Cavanaugh is diagnosed with ADHD.

VOCABULARY based on "The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh Study Guide" developed by Roseneath Theatre.

**bullying:** when someone repeatedly and purposefully says or does harmful things to another person. Will Jamie discover why the schoolyard bullies act the way they do?



Image courtesy of cfparents.

**divorce:** to end marriage with one's spouse. Jamie's friend Max is trying to cope with his parents' divorce.



Image courtesy of wikihow.com.



Image courtesy of pbs.org.

**learning disabilities:** disorders that cause a person to have a hard time learning even though they are good thinkers. A learning disability may affect how someone is able to organize, retain, understand or use information.

**medication (or "meds"):** a substance used for medical treatment, such as a medicine or drug. After her diagnosis, Jamie's pediatrician starts her on a trial round of medications for the ADHD.



Image courtesy of wellnessresources.com

Prescription medications should only be taken upon direction from a doctor.

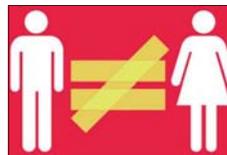


Image courtesy of theodysseyonline.com

**sexism:** prejudice, stereotyping or discrimination on the basis that one sex (male or female) is

better another and therefore not equal. Jamie notices when there are different expectations for men and women around her.

**symptom:** changes in a person's mind or body that indicate they may be suffering from a particular illness or disorder



Image courtesy of iconfinder.com

## ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE, pg. 1 of 2



Photo credit: Jona Stuart

*The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh* is an insightful look at the impact of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) on a child's life. The play is told with gentle humor and passionate honesty.

The play is about much more than ADHD, however. As director Richard Greenblatt shares, "The play really is about how young people deal with significant problems in their lives. It is about the nature of friendship. It is about understanding others, and the essence of empathy. It is about storytelling itself, and has at its core, the message that everyone has a fascinating and unique story to tell."

**Run Time:** 65 minutes, including a post-show Q&A

### SYNOPSIS

Jamie Cavanaugh always seems to be moving too fast, her mind on overload and her attention flying around and landing everywhere but where it should be. If she isn't accidentally knocking over the fishbowl for the millionth time, she's missing the school bus or letting words come out of her mouth that should stay in. She finds herself in trouble all of the time, both at school and at home, despite her desire to do the right thing.

When the suggestion is made that a school social worker might help her sort things out a little, Jamie gets a chance to talk things out. As she describes her whirlwind life, she has a sudden flash of insight — she decides she doesn't have a problem after all, but a gift... the power of super speed!

Jamie shares her discovery of her superpowers with her best friend Max, who is struggling with his own issues. On top of it, the two friends end up in a conflict with the school bullies Rock and Hardplace. Life goes from bad to worse as Max and Jamie have an argument and their friendship starts to split apart.

Meanwhile, Jamie's parents have been contacted by the social worker and have started to worry that their daughter has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Jamie begins to doubt her superpowers and starts to feel more like a villain than a superhero.

With the help of those around her, will Jamie learn to manage her ADHD? And more importantly, will she come to understand that she is super just the way she is?

**(About the Performance, cont. pg. 8)**

About the Performance information based on "The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh Study Guide" developed by Roseneath Theatre.

## ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE, pg. 2 of 2



Photo credit: Jona Stuart

### IN HER WORDS

Jamie tells her story in her own words. In it, you will hear her talk about her experience as a participant in the story as well as what she observes about the behaviors and actions of others around her.

As you watch, think about why the playwright wanted the audience to hear Jamie's story told in her own words. How does that change your understanding of her experience?

**“There are few classrooms today where teachers are not dealing with children with ADHD, like Jamie. We hope this play will put a human face to a condition that far too many people know simply as a label or a stereotype that stigmatizes these children as being different.”**

**-Chris Craddock,  
Playwright**

### THE SHOW'S LOOK

The set or look of a show can do much more than represent the places the action occurs. It can also be used to support the story's themes or message.

In the *Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh*, the designers took inspiration from how Jamie tries to explain her feelings of being different by likening her speediness to being a superhero. In popular culture, many superhero tales told through comic books or cartoons feature characters whose “specialness” could be seen as a disability, but is instead an asset. (Think about the X-Men or Spiderman, for example.)

Thinking about this idea, the designers decided to make the set and other elements look cartoon artwork.

### TALK ABOUT IT BEFORE YOU GO...

1. What is a learning disability? What are some examples you have experienced or seen?
2. Why do you think life might be more difficult for someone with a learning disability?
3. Why do you think some people might not give someone with a learning disability the same opportunities as someone else?
4. What are some of your strengths or talents?
5. What is your dream? What if someone told you that you could not achieve your dream? How would you feel?
6. Accommodations such as being given extra time, can be very helpful to students with learning disabilities, as well as everyone at school. What are some examples of accommodations that can help everyone?

# ABOUT ROSENEATH THEATRE

Established in 1983, Roseneath Theatre is one of Canada's leading producers of award-winning theater for children and their families. Roseneath Theatre's plays address issues that resonate with today's youth, encouraging them to reflect on themselves and their place within the community. The company's extraordinary commitment to excellence has earned many accolades, including 37 Dora Mavor Moore Awards nominations and a total of 14 awards. Roseneath was a recent finalist for the Ontario Premier's Award for Excellence in the Arts.



## THE COMPANY



**ROSE NAPOLI**  
Jamie



**MATTHEW GORMAN**  
Max



**KALEB ALEXANDER**  
Dad/Rock



**BURGUNDY CODE**  
Mom/Hardplace

## THE CREATIVE TEAM



**CHRIS CRADDOCK**  
Playwright



**RICHARD GREENBLATT**  
Director



**DANA PAUL**  
Stage Manager



**KELLY WOLF**  
Set & Costume  
Designer



**RICK SACKS**  
Sound Designer

'About Roseneath Theatre' information and company photos from "The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh Study Guide" developed by Roseneath Theatre.

# PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION, pg. 1 of 3

## 1) THAT'S ME

**Goals:** The goal of this activity is for students to recognize that they have more in common with others than is always evident

**Explanation:** This activity uses group work to assess students' understanding of one another and to increase self-awareness. The activity may be implemented in four different formations, per the teacher's discretion: students sitting at their desks, standing randomly around the room, sitting in a circle of chairs, or standing in a circle.

### Activity:

1. The teacher calls out a series of statements and, if the statement applies to them, students stand or step forward and call back "That's me!" Some possible examples are:

Stand if...

- ◇ You love to read
- ◇ You love sports
- ◇ You love to dance
- ◇ You enjoy playing video games
- ◇ You like writing stories
- ◇ You like puzzles
- ◇ You like acting or singing
- ◇ You love to draw or paint or make crafts
- ◇ You love math
- ◇ You like to go outside
- ◇ You wear glasses
- ◇ You like to sit in the front of the room
- ◇ You love to talk in front of the class
- ◇ You like listening to music when you work
- ◇ You like to be in silence when you work
- ◇ You have trouble focusing in class

2. Encourage students to notice classmates who have acknowledged the same statement as themselves and the similarities they share.

### Follow-up Questions:

1. What did you notice about the exercise?

2. Were there things that you had in common with others? Were there things that you did not have in common with others?

3. What are some of the ways that you feel like you learn best? (examples: listening to the teacher, seeing a diagram or illustration, getting to do a hands-on experiment, etc.)

4. What does that say about how we learn? Does everyone learn the same way? If not, is that okay?

### Extension (Grades 7-8)

1. If teacher feels classroom is a safe environment and that students will respond well to more direct and sensitive topics, the following prompts can also be considered. Please be sure to preface that students do not have to disclose any of the following information by standing if they do not feel comfortable.

Stand if...

- ◇ You have a friend or family member who has a learning disability (e.g. ADHD)
- ◇ You have a friend or family member who has \_\_\_\_\_
- ◇ You have a friend or family member who has overcome a difficult life challenge

2. At the end of the activity, the class might discuss the notion that many people face challenges in life, but with the right amount of support there is no challenge that is too difficult to overcome.

---

Pre-Show Exploration activities based on "The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh Study Guide" developed by Roseneath Theatre.

# PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION, pg. 2 of 3

---

## 2) THROUGH MY EYES

**Goals:** For students to experience the characteristics often associated with a learning disability and thereby develop a better understanding of what some of their peers might be experiencing in class.

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will use an interactive online resource that simulates what it is like to take a test, read, or solve problems with a learning disability.

**Materials:**

- ◇ Computer
- ◇ Internet access to <http://www.pbs.org/wbgh/misunderstoodminds/>

**Activity:**

1. Decide whether you would like students to experience this activity as a class, in partners, or individually.
2. Direct students to the *Misunderstood Minds* website, which contains simulations that allow users to experience challenges associated with:

**Attention**

- ◇ Reading distractions
- ◇ Listening to distractions

**Writing**

- ◇ Tracing letters
- ◇ Putting ideas in sequence

**Reading**

- ◇ Recognizing phonemes
- ◇ Recalling and understanding

**Mathematics**

- ◇ Using basic facts
- ◇ Making 3-D inferences
- ◇ Working multistep problems

3. Provide students with time to try out one or more simulations.

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. What feelings did you experience when going through the simulations? (e.g. frustration, anger)
2. Did the simulations help you to better understand a disability in that area? If so, how?
3. How do you think we could work to better understand disability or difference?
4. As you were going through the simulation, were there things that you wished you had or that you could do that would help you? If so, what were they? (e.g. more time, chance to refer to your notes)
5. What supports or accommodations might teachers provide to the students in their classes who have ADHD or learning disabilities?

---

Pre-Show Exploration activities based on "The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh Study Guide" developed by Roseneath Theatre.

## PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION, pg. 3 of 3

### 3) TREATED DIFFERENT, BELONGING TOGETHER

**Goals:** To reflect on bullying behaviors students have witnessed or personally experienced and to propose ideas that may help foster a safer school and classroom environment.

**Explanation:** In this two part activity, students will experience what it feels like to be treated as if you have less value than others and then work together to propose solutions to improve their school environment for all.

**Materials:**

- ◇ Deck of playing cards
- ◇ Ball of yarn
- ◇ Scissors

**Activity Part One:**

1. As a warm-up, explain to students that they will be given a playing card and they should not look at it. When instructed to do so, students will hold their card on their forehead so others can see what card it is. With the cards on their foreheads, each participant should treat everyone else “according to the value of the card”.
2. Distribute the cards and let the class interact for a few minutes.
3. Next, ask the class to line up according to how they feel. The line will likely have face cards at one end and lower numbered cards at the other end.
4. Facilitate a short reflection using the following prompts:
  - ◇ Why did you stand where you did? How were you treated? (Ensure there are a wide range of answers. Choose someone who has a face card, someone with a 7, 2, Ace, etc.)
  - ◇ What gave you hints about your card value? How did this activity make you feel?
  - ◇ When have you experienced something similar? What might this game be trying to simulate?
  - ◇ What are some examples of bullying at this school?
  - ◇ How are “values” of people determined? Is this a fair process?

**Activity Part Two:**

1. In this next part of the activity, you will work to build a network of support.
2. Ask students to stand close together in a circle.
3. Give the ball of yarn to one student and ask the student to tell the group a statement:
  - ◇ Something they wish to see in the classroom that could make it a safer space
  - ◇ Something a friend, teacher, or fellow student did that made them feel valued
  - ◇ Or, something they hope for in the future
4. Once the first student has completed their statement, have them wrap the yarn around their wrist once and then toss the ball of yarn to another student across the circle.
5. The next participant catches the ball of yarn, responds with their statement, and wraps the yarn around their wrist, before tossing the ball on to another person across the circle.
6. Continue until all students in the circle have responded.
7. Discuss the purpose of the web (e.g. the power of many people working together, communities/ classrooms can work effectively when everyone does their part, building a network of support, etc.)
8. Students can now cut the strings and tie the yarn together into a simple bracelet that symbolizes support, trust, shared values, and hope for the future.

**Follow-up Questions:**

1. Were there any ideas shared that you think we should work towards together? Why?
2. What is one step we can all take to make our classroom a safer and more welcoming place?
3. Did you hear anything that inspired you to make a change in your own behaviors?

---

Pre-Show Exploration activities based on “The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh Study Guide” developed by Roseneath Theatre.

# POST-SHOW ASSESSMENT— pg. 1 of 3

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was meaningful and/or important to you about the play?
2. Explain an image or a moment in the play that stood out for you or struck you emotionally.
3. How did the design of the show (the set, the sound, the music composition and costumes) contribute to the appeal of the production?
4. Max and Jamie are best friends? What are some of the positive things Max did to support Jamie? What were some of the positive things Jamie did to support Max?
5. Jamie's ADHD affects her relationships at school and at home. What were some of the challenges Jamie faced at home and at school?
6. What were some of Jamie's strengths as a person? How did she overcome the challenges of ADHD? How did she handle bullies?
7. Rock displays bullying behavior at the beginning of the play, but becomes an upstander towards the end. Why do you think Rock was behaving this way in the first place?
8. The notion of sexism is that one sex (male or female) is better than another and therefore not equal. In the play, Jamie discusses the 'sexism' women and girls face at school and at home. What are some examples of 'sexism' you can think of that affect men and/or women? Why do you think it is an important issue?
9. What else could Jamie's teacher have done to better support Jamie?
10. Jamie receives treatment for her ADHD. What fears did she have leading up to the treatment? What did Jamie's parents do to support her?

## 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 either the performers or to Des Moines Performing Arts education donors whose support keeps Applause Series tickets accessibly priced for school groups.

### Materials:

- ◇ Paper
- ◇ Writing utensil

### Activity:

1. After attending the performance, discuss the experience with your students. Use the following discussion questions to guide the conversation:

- ◇ How did the performance make you feel?
- ◇ What surprised you about the performance?
- ◇ What do you think was the main message or idea of the performance?

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 actors // Dear Donors...

My favorite part of the show was...  
While watching the show I felt... because ...  
If I could have lived during the time of Dr. King, I would ...

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?

# POST-SHOW ASSESSMENT — pg. 2 of 3

---

## 2) IMAGINE YOURSELF AS A SUPERHERO

**Goal:** To celebrate what makes each student unique and to instill confidence

**Explanation:** In this activity, students will create a superhero using themselves as models. Just like Jamie imagined she had the special ability of super speed, students will focus on their unique strengths by imagining how they might translate into a superpower.

**Activity:**

1. Lead an opening discussion:
  - ◇ Think back to the play. Why did Jamie think she was a superhero? What was her superpower?
  - ◇ What are some superheroes you can think of? What is their origin story? What are their special talents and abilities? (List them on the board.)
2. Next, invite students to brainstorm a list of their unique strengths.
3. Then, in pairs or small groups, have students brainstorm a list of strengths for each other. As a teacher, you can also contribute to this list.
4. After, task students to create a superhero character using themselves as models. Their super power should be unique to their personality and strengths.
5. Give students choice on how to present their superhero, such as a drawing, a written description, a model, a video, a comic strip, a song, a dramatic monologue, an oral presentation, or a group improvisation...or try something completely unique and different. Be creative!

**Guiding Questions:**

- ◇ Which of your strengths is your superhero showcasing?
- ◇ What is an appropriate/relevant name for your superhero?
- ◇ What is your superhero wearing or holding? What do these symbols, images or objects represent?
- ◇ What evil force (or super-villain) is your superhero fighting?
- ◇ What is your superhero's origin story?

**Follow-Up Questions:**

1. What does your superhero express about you?
2. Not all heroes have superpowers. Is there someone in real life, either that you know or a public figure, that is a personal hero to you? If so, why?

## 3) WRITING IN ROLE

**Goal:** To draw from personal experience to help students imagine how a character might respond to life's challenges

**Explanation:** This activity invites students to think critically about events in *The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh* by focusing on resolving one character's personal conflict.

**Materials:**

- ◇ Paper and pencils

**Activity:**

1. As an opening point for discussion, ask students:
  - ◇ Life is full of challenges. Can you think of any examples?
  - ◇ What are some strategies that help us cope or resolve those challenges?
  - ◇ What are some examples of the personal challenges that characters in the play faced?
2. As a creative writing-in-role exercise, have students select a character from the play, identify that character's personal challenge, and explore how the character might resolve the issue.
3. Invite students to pick a writing format of their choice to explore the issue: diary entry, a letter, poem, a spoken word piece, monologue, song lyrics, etc.

**Examples include:**

- ◇ Jamie could write a spoken word piece about her ADHD
- ◇ Rock could write a diary entry about his parents
- ◇ Hardplace could write an apology letter to Max

**Guiding Questions:**

- ◇ How does my character speak?
- ◇ Who am I talk to? How do I feel about them?
- ◇ What personal challenge am I facing?
- ◇ How does this challenge affect my actions?
- ◇ What/Who is causing the problem?
- ◇ How could I deal with this problem?

**Follow-Up Questions:**

1. What did you include in your writing? Why?
2. Do you think the solution would help the character?

---

Post-Show assessment activities based on "The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh Study Guide" developed by Roseneath Theatre.

# RESOURCES AND SOURCES



## BOOKS ABOUT LEARNING / LIVING DIFFERENTLY

- ◇ *Freak the Mighty* by W.R. Philbrick
- ◇ *Gathering Blue* by Lois Lowry
- ◇ *Killing the Kudu* by Carolyn Meyer
- ◇ *My Name is Brian Brian* by Jeanne Betancourt
- ◇ *Not Better...Not Worse... Just Different* by Sharon Scott
- ◇ *Pay Attention, Sloth* by Mark Smith, Gail Piazza
- ◇ *Reach for the Moon* by Samantha Abeel, Charles R. Murphy, and Robert Williams (Editor)
- ◇ *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller
- ◇ *Terry Fox — A Story of Hope* by Maxine Trottier
- ◇ *Thank You, Mr. Falker* by Patricia Polacco
- ◇ *Cripple's Club* or *Absolutely Invincible* by William Bell (Note: read aloud for intermediate students, wonderful but gritty story. Some terms may require editing as read aloud.)

## ONLINE RESOURCES

- “ADHD and ME” The Voices Study.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yyaVKvuEBkk>  
Video for both kids and adults. Video is cartoon illustrations but voices are from real kids talking about their experiences. It demonstrates that each child is different, as is their experience with ADHD.
- ADHD Together. <http://www.adhdtogether.com/adhd-resources>  
Site contains a variety of resources that explore ADHD, with materials appropriate for adults and caregivers, teachers, and children.
- “Youth Discussion Guide for the Campaign for Disability Employment’s ‘I Can’ PSA: Fostering CAN-Do Attitudes Among Youth and Young Adults.” What Can You Do Campaign.  
<https://whatcanyoudocampaign.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/Discussion/youthGuide.pdf>  
A useful document for grades 5 and above which explores the ways that adults with disabilities succeed in the workplace and in life by understanding and emphasizing their strengths and abilities.

## STUDY GUIDE SOURCES

- “The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh” by Chris Craddock.  
Copyright applies.
- “The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh” Study Guide by Roseneath Theatre.  
<http://roseneath.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/The-Incredible-Speediness-of-Jamie-Cavanaugh-Study-Guide-20161.pdf>
- Roseneath Education. <http://roseneath.ca/>