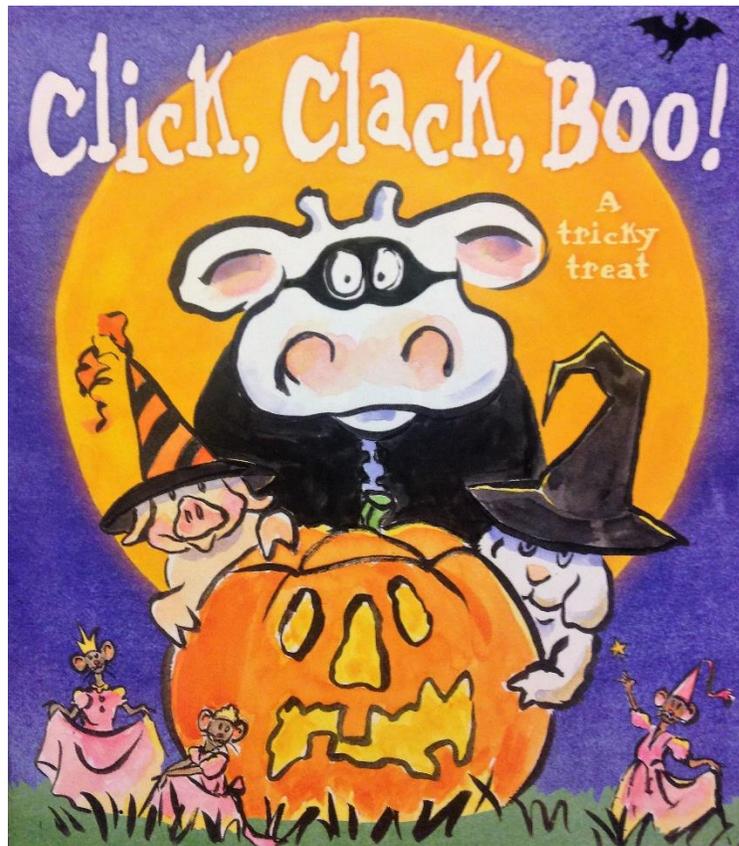


theatre for young america

STUDY GUIDE

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An educational supplement to the live theatre experience of



THE ORIGINAL BOOK

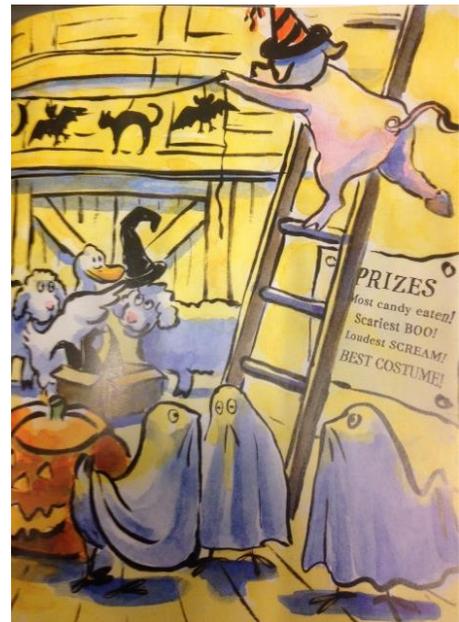
The musical play, *CLICK, CLACK, BOO! A TRICKY TREAT*, is based on an extremely popular book for young people with the same title, written by Doreen Cronin with illustrations by Betsy Lewin in 2013. It is a holiday series sequel to *CLICK, CLACK, MOO, COWS THAT TYPE*, a play that Theater for Young America produced in October-November of 2016. Other books followed such as: *DIARY OF A SPIDER*, *DIARY OF A FLY*, *DIARY OF A WORM*, and *DUCK FOR PRESIDENT*. The book, *CLICK, CLACK, BOO! A TRICKY TREAT* is the basis for the play you are coming to see. Reading the book to your class and showing the students the illustrations is recommended before attending the play adaptation. Have the students read it themselves if they are able. Your students may enjoy watching a video of a reading of the book and showing of the illustrations on the Internet at www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9Mqyflho9Q

SYNOPSIS OF THE MUSICAL PLAY ADAPTATION

The book has been adapted into a lively musical comedy by James E. Grote with original music by George Howe. It was first adapted for the Lifeline Theatre in Chicago, Illinois. This musical play tells the story of Farmer Brown and his Cow, Duck, Pig, and Hen in the fall. All the animals are excited about the Halloween party they want to have in the barn. Farmer Brown says he does not like Halloween and there will be no celebrations of the event anywhere on the farm. The animals are disappointed. They try to figure out why he hates Halloween so much. Hen senses that it might be because some parts of Halloween can be scary and she tries to tell the others that she understands Farmer Brown is not wanting to celebrate Halloween. Pig, Cow, and Duck want to have a party anyway and decide to make it a Farmer Brown Surprise Halloween Party.

The party planning begins on the farm. The animals make invitations, decorations, decide games to play like "Pin the Tail on the Cow." They also will have apple bobbing, and a costume contest. Hen knocks on the front door to ask him to come to the barn. They are both still afraid of Halloween, and they talk about why that is. She tells him sometimes she cannot tell the difference between something scary for real and something scary for fun. She asks him to come. Pig also talks to him about what Halloween means to her. She sings her fears away when she gets scared! She even gets Farmer Brown to sing along with her. He begins to understand that Halloween is about make-believe and really could be a fun. The animals hand him an invitation.

Farmer Brown goes to the party in his pajamas. which he decides looks like a wizard costume. When he gets there, he is scared of the farm animals in their costumes. He thinks everyone really is who they are dressed up like and he thinks they are going to hurt him. They take off parts of their costumes to show him they are really just Cow, Duck, and Hen, and Pig wearing costumes. Farmer Brown is really freaked out by Hen dressing as him. He says, "Are you me?" After hearing that it is Hen dressed as him, Farmer Brown now catches on to the fun of Halloween. Hen gives him a ribbon that says "Best Costume" for his Wizard pajamas. They all dance. Farmer Brown has learned to enjoy the fun of Halloween.



SOME CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS TO EXPLORE VOCABULARY WORDS

The book and the play are both examples of the **personification** of animals. Although the farm animals are dressed to resemble real animals, their thoughts and actions are those of humans. We see this literary form often in literature for young people. What other examples of personification can you think of that you have read or seen on stage? Sometimes we give human characteristics to objects or ideas too. Can you think of some? Here are a couple of examples to get started: “My bike is a beauty” or “Time marches on.”

Another vocabulary word that is fun to learn about is **onomatopoeia**. It means the use of words that imitate the sounds associated with the objects they refer to. In the book the author uses the “crunch, crunch, crunching” of the leaves and the “creak, creak, creaking” on the old boards of the front porch. What other examples of **onomatopoeia** can you recall?

THE HOLIDAY CELEBRATION OF HALLOWEEN

Research Halloween and its customs. Here are a few facts to get you started: It is one of the oldest holiday that is still celebrated today. Christmas is the most celebrated holiday, but Halloween is second. For some people Halloween is a time for fun, putting on costumes and having parties. For others it is a time for telling ghost stories, scaring, and playing pranks on people. Investigate Halloween and Fall games like apple-bobbing and ‘trick or treating.’ What is a jack o’ lantern? Can you find where jack o’ lanterns first were made? Did you know that people thought they would scare evil spirits away? Now it is an art project to carve a pumpkin.



ACTIVITY: PLAN A PARTY LIKE THE ANIMALS DID

The farm animals did a lot of working together to make a good fun party for Farmer Brown. Divide the room into groups of 3 or 4 and have each group plan an imaginary party for the class. Decide what **theme** your group wants to have for you part. Birthday Party, 4th of July Party, Christmas Party, and End-of-School Party are some of the possible choices. The group can even think of their own unique kind of party theme.

Next, plan the **invitations**. Where is it going to be? When is it going to be? Do the party guests need to bring anything?

What decorations would be good for your group’s party?

What activities or games are you going to play at your group’s party?

Have each group decide the answers to these questions. Have them write the plans down if they are able. Then have each group take a turn to tell the class what they decided.

What food are you going to serve? What are you going to have to drink?

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS AND WRITING PROMPTS TO REFLECT ON THE PLAY EXPERIENCE

Before attending the play, brainstorm with the class about good audience behavior. What can each do to help the actors show you a good play? What do you do at the end of the play?

At the end of the play after the bows, you can ask the actors some questions. What might you ask?

To encourage sequential thinking, go over with the students the beginning of the play. What happened then? What happened in the middle of the story? What happened at the end of the story?

What in the play surprised you? Why?

What was your favorite part of the book? What was your favorite part of the play? Were they the same? Why or why not?

Name some of the differences you noticed between the book and the play? (Hints: fewer characters in the play, the addition of music, the addition of dance, the play is longer than the book, etc.)

How did the actors succeed in bringing the book to life for the play? Did you enjoy the costumes, the scenery, the dancing, and the music? Why?

A costume designer worked with the director and actors to make the costumes. What costume was your favorite? How did it show you in the audience something about that character in the play?

Were there any sound effects in the play? Did they help you understand the story of the play?

If you could change one thing about the play you attended, what would you want to change?

What did you learn by reading the book and watching the play?
What did Farmer Brown learn in the book and the play?

In his childhood Farmer Brown had been told by his brother that Halloween was a time when bad things would happen to you. How did the animals help Farmer Brown deal with his fears of Halloween?

1. They let him know that they understood his fears. The Hen was especially helpful with this.
2. The animals prepared him for what was going to happen at the Halloween Party.
3. When Farmer Brown began to get really scared, the animals took off parts of their costumes so he could see it was really the animals in a costume.
4. The animals kept the party festive and friendly so he would be comfortable.

Maybe the students have a friend that is also scared of Halloween and could be helped by these steps too. What other ideas might the animals do to help Farmer Brown with his fears?

Does your family do anything special for Halloween? What do they do? Do you dress in costumes like the animals did?

