

DREAMCATCHERS

THE LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL BANK POPEJOY SCHOOLTIME SERIES TEACHING GUIDE

ELEPHANT & PIGGIE'S



WE ARE IN A PLAY!

FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2017

Presented by: The Kennedy Center
Theatre for Young Audiences On Tour

Grades: Pre K - 2

Dreamcatchers Teaching Guides align with
the Common Core State Standards and
New Mexico State Learning Standards.

Standards Addressed By Attending the Performance

NMCCSS

SL.1

New Mexico Content Standards:

NM State Standards: Visual and Performing Arts Standards 3, 5



Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend.”

– ALBERT CAMUS

Based on the Elephant & Piggie Books by Mo Willems

Script and lyrics by Mo Willems • Music by Deborah Wicks La Puma

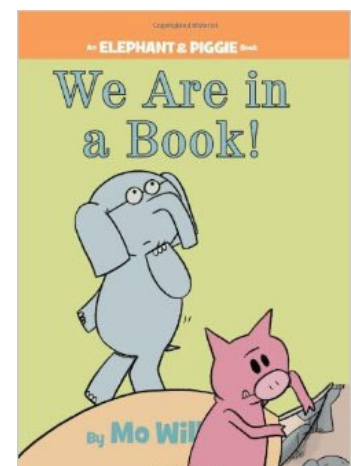
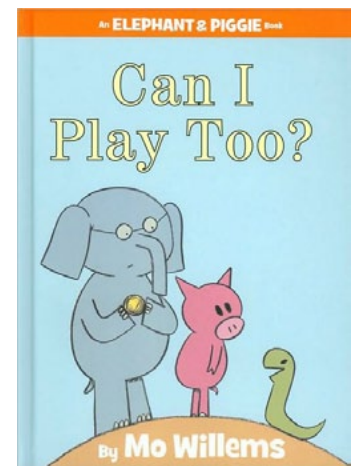
Choreographed by Jessica Hartman • Directed by Jerry Whiddon

INTRODUCTION

Here they go again! The two characters created by Mo Willems—Elephant and Piggie—are back for more exciting adventures! Elephant Gerald is lumbering, formally attired, and prone to melancholy while Piggie is a perky, smiley, and bubbly little pig. You might not think that these total opposites could be best friends—but Gerald and Piggie are. Through their unlikely bond, they teach their audiences some fundamental life lessons about relationships, fairness, compassion, respect, trustworthiness, and responsibility.

Based on six books in Mo Willems' hugely popular *Elephant and Piggie* series, the show was written by Mo Willems himself and directed by Jerry Whiddon, with music by Deborah Wicks La Puma and choreography by Jessica Hartman. Accessible, appealing, and full of genuine thoughts about what makes friendships tick, the show will be equally engaging whether or not the viewers are familiar with the original titles. Willems says, his “primary goal was to create stories that were as funny and exciting as possible.” Watch the exhilarating story come to life as the duo sing and dance their way through peril and suspense.

It might be fun to have a real elephant and pig on stage... but you know what? It's way more fun to have people—actors—pretend to be Gerald, Piggie, and singing squirrels. Unlike animals, actors can talk, dance, and sing. To become their animal characters, the actors change their voices and movements, and they dress up, in a gray suit for Gerald and a pink outfit for Piggie. Your part is simple—all you have to do is bring your imagination!



Synopsis

An elephant named Gerald and a pig named Piggie are best, best, “bestus” (a word Gerald and Piggie made up that means “very best”) friends. While Gerald worries that something could go wrong that would end their friendship, Piggie is not worried at all! Piggie is even happier and more excited than usual when she and Gerald are invited to a party hosted by the Squirrelles, three singing squirrels who love to have a good time. When each day begins, anything is possible. Gerald and Piggie will solve problems together, sing and dance to fun music, make each other laugh, share their favorite things, get mad and sad with each other, and even do a little goofing around with you, the audience. Wait until you see what they have in store!

Vocabulary

Contingency—something that might happen but cannot be predicted with certainty

Cooperate—to work together; to work with another person or group to do something

Forgive—to stop feeling anger toward someone who has done something wrong

Friend—a person who you like and enjoy being with

Lumbering—to move in a slow or awkward way

Manipulate—to change what people do or the way something happens

Melancholy—a sad mood or feeling

Pachyderm (PAK-i-durm)—a thick-skinned animal like an elephant or hippopotamus

Perky—lively in manner or appearance

Personality—the set of emotional qualities, ways of behaving, etc., that makes a person different from other people

Sty (STEYE)—a fenced area, usually for pigs

Swine—a short-haired animal with a curly tail and hooves, like a pig

Unintended consequences—things that happen as a result of something that surprises you

Impossible—a made-up word Gerald uses when he means not possible or impossible

Fun Facts for Students

African elephants are the largest land mammals on the planet and the females are pregnant the longest—22 months to a human’s 9 months.

Elephants don’t like peanuts. They don’t eat them in the wild, and, contrary to popular belief, zoos don’t feed them to their elephants.

Female elephants live in groups of about 15 all related and led by one of the oldest in the group. She decides where and when they move and rest, day to day and season by season.

All the females help take care of the babies, so there’s always a Mommy, Aunties, Cousins, or a Grandma watching and teaching the young ones.

Male elephants leave their mother’s group between the ages of 12 and 15. But they aren’t loners—they live in all-male groups.

Like human toddlers and great apes, magpies, dolphins, and elephants have passed the mirror test—they recognize themselves when they see their reflection in a pool of water!

Elephants can get sunburned so they take care to protect themselves. Adult elephants will douse themselves in sand and stand over the little ones as they sleep to provide shade.

Newborn piglets learn to run to their mothers’ voices and to recognize their own names. Mother pigs sing to their

young while nursing.

Pigs communicate constantly with one another with more than 20 vocalizations (sounds). Scientists have found that pigs make different meanings.

Pigs snuggle close to one another and prefer to sleep nose to nose. They dream much like humans do.

In their natural surroundings pigs spend hours playing, sunbathing, and exploring. They also enjoy listening to music, playing with soccer balls, and getting massages.

Adult pigs can run at speeds of up to 11 mph.

Pigs do not “eat like pigs” or “pig out.” They prefer to eat slowly and savor their food.

Pigs are clean animals. If they have enough space, they will be careful not to soil the area where they sleep or eat.

Pigs don’t really “sweat like pigs” they are unable to sweat.

They like to bathe in water or mud to keep cool and they actually prefer water to mud.



We Are Elephant and Piggie

Lesson 1 Adapted from Emerald City Theatre, Disney and Pigeon Presents

Grades K - 2

NMCCSS

RL.3, RL.6, SL.1, SL.5

New Mexico
Content
Standards

Visual and Performing
Arts Standards 1, 2, 4, 5

In this lesson, students will go through a series of acting exercises where they will pretend to be Gerald the Elephant and Piggie. They will generate a list of the unique characteristics of each figure and use those attributes to act out the characters following specific directions.

Objectives

Students will:

- identify unique characteristics of Elephant and Piggie.
- use identified characteristics to inform choices in acting out the characters.
- make character and action decisions that are consistent with information given about them.

Materials • large space to play in

Procedure

1. In *Elephant and Piggie's We Are in a Play!*, actors play the roles of Elephant and Piggie. Tell students that they will become actors and pretend to be Elephant and Piggie. They will have to move their bodies like Elephant and Piggie, talk like Elephant and Piggie, and make character choices that make sense for Elephant and Piggie.

2. Before getting students on their feet, ask them to think about characteristics of both Elephant and Piggie. What do they have in common? How are they different? Make a Venn diagram to help illustrate the differences and similarities of the characters.

Part 1

1. When you call out "go," students should walk around an open space as they normally walk. When you call out "stop," students should stop wherever they are. Practice this a few times.

2. Next, introduce the command: "Gerald." When you call out "Gerald," students change how they are walking. They become Gerald and walk as he would walk. Say "Hello Gerald," and students, in character, must point to themselves and say, "I know parties." Encourage them to think about the characteristics of Gerald

that they identified.

3. The next command is "Piggie." When you call out "Piggie," students change their walk and their behavior to reflect that they are now Piggie. How would she walk? Say "Hello Piggie" and students can either pretend they are playing a trumpet or say "Oink, oink!" Encourage them to think about the characteristics of Piggie that they identified.

Part 2

1. Divide students into pairs.

2. In each pair, one player will be Elephant Gerald and one player will be Piggie. Piggie's objective is to make Gerald laugh. Gerald's objective is to stay serious. Tell students to remember their characterizations from Part 1. Students should do their best to act like Piggie and Gerald.

3. Piggie has one minute to make Gerald laugh. She may not touch Gerald and may only say "oink." She must be creative and think of silly things to do that will make Gerald laugh.

4. Gerald must keep his "serious" face and not smile or laugh at all. He must remain serious for one minute.

5. If Piggie touches Gerald or says anything other than "oink," Gerald is the automatic winner. Gerald will

also win if he can remain serious for the entire minute.

6. If Gerald laughs or smiles before the minute is up, Piggie is the winner.

7. Have the pairs switch roles and play again.

Part 3

1. Distribute copies of an illustration from an Elephant and Piggie book. Pick your favorite!

2. Have the students study the picture. Ask: "What do you think happened right before this moment? What do you think happened right after this moment?"

3. Give partners a few minutes to decide who will play which part and agree upon what they think is happening in the scene.

4. Tell students to improvise a scene with Elephant and Piggie. They should act as the characters would and say things the characters might say. At some point in their scene, they should strike the same pose as Elephant and Piggie in the picture. Allow them time to practice.

5. Have the pairs perform their scenes for the whole class.

Extensions/Modifications

- Write your own *Elephant and Piggie* play. It can be based on your students' favorite Elephant and Piggie books or be a completely new Elephant and Piggie adventure. Have pairs plan and develop their own scenes, then combine all of the pairs' scenes into one great *Elephant and Piggie* play.

Assessment

- Quality of participation

Make Your Own Elephant & Piggie Comic

Grades PreK - 2

Lesson 2 Adapted from [Emerald City Theatre](#), [Disney](#) and [Pigeon Presents](#)

NMCCSS

RL.1, RL.3, RL.6, SL.1, SL.5

In the first part of this lesson, students will use a blank *Elephant and Piggie* comic page to create their own *Elephant and Piggie* story. In the second part of the lesson, students will learn how to make their own drawings of Elephant and Piggie in order to have more freedom in their story creation (Note that Part 1 is more suited to younger students [PreK & K] and Part 2 is more suited to older students [1-2], but both parts can be done together.)

Objectives

Students will:

- use templates to help them create their own *Elephant and Piggie* stories.

Materials

- any *Elephant and Piggie* book
- “Color and Create Your Own Story” pages
- “Draw Elephant and Piggie” pages
- blank paper
- pencils, crayons, markers, etc.

Procedure

1. Read the class an *Elephant and Piggie* book. Show students the pictures and note how the pages are drawn in the style of a comic book (no narration and speech bubbles to show who is speaking).

2. Tell students that they will have a chance to make their own *Elephant and Piggie* comics, while making up an entirely new *Elephant and Piggie* adventure.

Part 1

1. Distribute the “Color and Create Your Own Story” pages (1–3) per student.
2. Encourage students to look at

the pictures and decide what is happening in the pictures. What is Piggie saying? What is Gerald saying?

3. Once students have a solid idea of the story they are going to tell, they can fill in the speech bubbles and color the pictures.

4. Allow students time in class to share their *Elephant and Piggie* comics.

Part 2

1. Distribute the “Draw Elephant and Piggie” pages.
2. Have students follow the pictures and make their own

Elephant and Piggie drawings. Talk about ways to change the picture so that Elephant and Piggie can be drawn in different positions (drawing the arms and legs in different spots, placement of facial features, etc.).

3. Ask students to think about an activity that Elephant and Piggie could do together.

4. Have students create their own *Elephant and Piggie* comic using that activity as inspiration.

5. Encourage students to share their comics with the class.

Extensions/Modifications

- As a class, come up with a new adventure for Elephant and Piggie. Have each student create one frame of the comic for a class-made comic book.
- Create Elephant and Piggie cutouts. Look at the shapes used to draw Elephant and Piggie. Can you make these shapes out of construction paper? Sure you can! Make construction paper cutouts of Elephant and Piggie!

Assessment

- Quality of participation

Resources

[Color and Create Your Own Story](#)
[Elephant and Piggie Craftivity](#)

Questions to Engage & Connect

Consider these questions for discussion **before** you attend the production:

Do you think the performance will be shorter or longer than a book version of the tale?

What will the characters look like? Will they match illustrations you might have seen? What differences can you expect?

What story changes might you expect for the stage? Why would these changes be necessary?

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

After the performance, consider these questions:

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

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

What things helped to tell the story on stage? (set, lights, costumes, music, etc.)

Overall, the show made me feel...

The things that make a good friend are...

Something I want to share with my family about the experience is...

Lessons & Activities

Think about how two very different animals can be such good friends. For ideas, watch how they share, cooperate, joke around, help each other, and forgive each other. There are many videos on the internet of animal friends. Watch [one of Android's latest commercials](#) to see an adorable collection of various animal pals. After watching a few videos and discussing the questions, have the children draw pictures of two animal friends and write or tell a story about their friendship.

If you were the show's costume designer and had to use ordinary clothes for Gerald and Piggie, what items would you choose? Make a list or draw your ideas and share them with your class, friends, and family.

The songs in *Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a Play!* tell you a lot about the characters and what's happening in the story. During the performance, watch and listen for how the performers communicate through their actions and lyrics. After the performance, discuss (and sing!) the music with family and friends—which songs made you happy? Sad? Why? Which song was your favorite?

Resources

BOOKS

Elephant & Piggie Books A collection of books by Mo Willems.

WEBSITES

ARTSEDGE Cuesheet for Elephant & Piggie Learn more about the Elephant & Piggie performance.

Mo Willems' Official Website

Wikipedia – Mo Willems More information on children's book author Mo Willems.

The World of Elephant & Piggie Another Teaching Guide for Mo Willems' *Elephant & Piggie Books*.

The Elephant & Piggie Books: Party Kit Lessons and ideas for the *Elephant & Piggie Book Series* (includes an event kit)

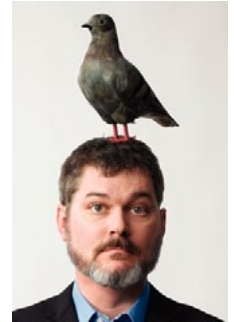
The Elephant & Piggie Books: Happy Pig Day! *Happy Pig Day* Event Kit

VIDEOS

ARTSEDGE: Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a Play! Learn how Mo Willems' books went from page to stage. Additionally, there are wonderful questions and activities to pursue after viewing the four minute videos.

About the Author

Mo Willems is a *New York Times* #1 best-selling author and illustrator who started his career on *Sesame Street*, where he garnered six Emmy Awards for his writing before changing the face of children's literature with his groundbreaking picture books. Born in Chicago, he grew up in New Orleans and graduated from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts before starting his work at *Sesame Street*. Later on, Willems began writing and drawing books for children, for which he has been awarded a Caldecott Honor on three occasions (for *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale*, and *Knuffle Bunny Two: A Case of Mistaken Identity*). His acclaimed *Elephant & Piggie* "Early Reader" series received the Theodor Seuss Geisel Medal in 2008 and 2009. For older audiences, he has published an illustrated memoir of his year-long trip around the world in 1990-91 entitled *You Can Never Find a Rickshaw When it Monsoons* and *Don't Pigeonhole Me!* a collection of 20 years of his annual sketchbooks. His books have been translated into over 20 languages. Today, he lives in Massachusetts with his family, and they like to draw together every night at dinnertime.



About the Company

Since 1992, the **Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences on Tour** has been a leader in bringing imaginative and original works to communities around the nation. KCT on Tour has performed for young audiences all over the US and in parts of Canada, letting their viewers experience the professionalism and talent that has become their trademark. This company is committed to developing new plays and musicals for children as it is their belief that supporting the creation of new works is critical to the ongoing revitalization of the field. Whether through new plays or through adaptations of some of the literary, historical, opera, or musical classics, they continue to reveal new worlds of excitement, education, and entertainment.



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Schooltime

SERIES

The Schooltime Series
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International Performing Arts for Youth
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The LANB Popejoy Schooltime
Series is supported in part by
awards from:

The Eugene and Marion
Castiglia Popejoy Children's
Schooltime Endowment

The Popejoy Schooltime
Education Endowment



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Creating a better way.



About the Schooltime Series

The Los Alamos National Bank Popejoy Schooltime Series brings you national and international touring companies and performers you can't see anywhere else in or around Albuquerque. Each touring company is selected with youth and family audiences in mind, and our repertoire reflects the cultural diversity of our global community. The Schooltime Series includes new plays, familiar stories, literary works, biographies, mythologies, folk tales, music, dance, and puppetry. These professional performing artists create educational experiences designed to encourage **literacy, creativity, communication, and imagination.**

Send an email with your name and email address to schooltime@popejoypresents.com requesting to be added to the mailing and monthly newsletter list. Visit us at schooltimeseries.com and facebook.com/schooltimeseries.

Popejoy Hall

Popejoy Hall is New Mexico's premier nonprofit venue for the performing arts and entertainment. Our mission is to provide access to the performing arts for all New Mexicans.

Etiquette

The inside of a theatre is called a "house" and to get along, have fun, and enjoy the shows, there are rules to follow. Schooltime provides a wonderful opportunity to learn how good behavior in a live theater is different from watching television at home. For guidelines to practice with your class and chaperones go to schooltimeseries.com/house-policies.

House Policies

Please visit our website for detailed information about **House Policies**. This includes our guidelines on safety, special needs, food and drink, backpacks, cell phones, photography, recordings, and more.

Credits

Dreamcatchers are Teaching Guides produced by the Education Department of Popejoy Hall, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Selected Dreamcatchers Teaching Guide materials provided by **The Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences on Tour**, **ARTSEDGE**, **Smithsonian.com**, **PETA**, and other resources noted within this guide.

The University of New Mexico



The Los Alamos National Bank Popejoy Schooltime Series is
a program of The University of New Mexico.