

Alliance
Theatre at the Woodruff

Alliance Theatre for Youth presents

Honk! Jr.

PRE-SHOW STUDY GUIDE



Music by George Stiles

Book and Lyrics by Anthony Drewe

Based on the classic fairy tale

“The Ugly Duckling” by Hans Christian Andersen

Directed by Rosemary Newcott

Study guide created by Nesbit Elementary 4th and 5th grade FOCUS class of '10-'11.

Honk! Junior. is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized performance materials are supplied by

Music Theatre International, 421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019

Honk! Jr. Study Guide



Note to the Educator

This Study Guide has been prepared by the 4th and 5th grade FOCUS students of Nesbit Elementary in Gwinnett County. The students and teacher, Mrs. Rogers, participated in the Alliance Theatre Institute for Educators and Teaching Artists Jr. Dramaturgy program under the guidance of Resident Teaching Artist, Kim Bowers-Rheay.

The intent of this study guide is a starting point for further research and reading as the audience prepares to see the play “Honk!” and as they reflect afterwards.

The questions, information and activities have been created with both the educator AND their fellow student audience in mind.

You are free to use/copy any or all of the pages as you prepare your students to see “Honk!” at the Alliance Theatre.

Share your ideas, reflections, poems, scripts with the Alliance Theatre!

Send any documents you would like to share to: kim.rheay@woodruffcenter.org

Your work will not be published, but will be archived as we collect responses to the Theatre for Young Audiences production of “Honk!”

Enjoy!

A note from Rosemary Newcott, the Sally G. Tomlinson Artistic Director of Theatre for Youth and director of “Honk!”

We are hatching “Honk!”, an award winning musical version of the ultimate ‘under-bird’ story: Hans Christian Andersen’s *The Ugly Duckling*. Towering over his siblings, (and his mother) Ugly knows he is ‘different’ from the start. We are treated to a beautiful score, unique and delightful characters, ingenious puppetry and gorgeous spectacle as we follow Ugly on his hilarious and poignant journey to return home to this mother and maybe find out who (or what) he truly may be.



Inside this Study Guide

Note to Educator	1
Note from Rosemary Newcott	
Play Synopsis, Characters	2
About Hans Christian Andersen	3
The Story of the Story	
Vocabulary: Theatre	4
Ugly Duckling and Honk! Jr.	
Bibliography	5

Before the Play

Play Synopsis and Characters

Honk! Junior

Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale has been transformed into a modern musical comedy appropriate for everyone in the family.

Written by George Stiles and Anthony Drewe, *Honk!* tells the story of Ugly, whose odd, gawky looks instantly incite prejudice from his family and neighbors.

Separated from the farm and pursued by a hungry Cat, Ugly must find his way, while his loving mother, Ida, searches for him. Along his journey, he not only discovers his true beauty and glorious destiny, but he also finds love and acceptance. *Honk!*, with all of its wonderful humor, charm and message of tolerance and acceptance of those who are different, is perfect for audiences of all ages.



“Being born in a duck yard does not matter, unless you are hatched from a swan’s egg.”

Hans Christian Andersen from “The Ugly Duckling”

Featured Songs include:

“A Poultry Tale,” sung by the characters of the duckyard to introduce the story.

“The Joy Of Motherhood,” sung by the character of the mother duck Ida.

“Look At Him,” which is sung to Ugly by his taunting duckling siblings.

“Different,” sung by a sad Ugly as he realizes he is not like his family.

“Play With Your Food” is sung by the Cat, in a clever play on words as he tempts Ugly into his lair.

“Every Tear A Mother Cries” is sung by Ida as she continues her search for Ugly, her lost duckling.

“Warts And All,” sung by the Frog and froglets as they encourage Ugly to love himself, “warts and all.”

“Look at Him” is reprised by the entire cast of characters as they all realize Ugly is actually a swan. The whole neighborhood of the duckyard has learned how important it is to “just believe in yourself. Don’t be left on the shelf feeling that all hope is dead and gone. And you may find, in your own way, you’re a swan.”

Cast of Main Characters

Ugly: the unusual duckling to hatch; looks different from the other ducklings.

Drake: a mallard duck, the husband of Ida and the proud papa of the ducklings.

Ida Duck: wife of Drake and the proud mama of the ducklings and Ugly.

Greylag: a pompous military goose - the gander and leader of the troop of geese.

Bullfrog: teaches Ugly to love himself “warts and all.”

Penny: a young swan that offers to guide Ugly South; returning in the spring, she falls in love with Ugly.



Cat: a devious gourmet who tries to trick Ugly into becoming a savory dinner.



The Ugly Duckling

Before the Play

About the Author: Hans Christian Andersen

Hans Christian Andersen was born in Odense, Denmark on the Island of Fyn on April 2, 1805. He was named after his father, Hans Andersen. His father died when Hans was 11 years old, and three (3) years later, at the age of 14, Hans went to the capital of Denmark, Copenhagen, looking for his career.

Hans Christian Andersen wrote his first fairy tale in 1835 called "The Tinder Box." His fairy tales were first printed in pamphlets and in the early 1840's, both Hans and his stories were becoming famous.

Hans also wrote several travelogues, the most popular being about Sweden. Many of his travelogues included fairy tales. He was also an accomplished paper cutting artist and created many intricate designs to reflect themes of his stories and his own life. Andersen unsuccessfully pursued acting throughout his life, for he loved singing and theatre. But writing stories was his gift.



Hans Christian Andersen

Some of Hans's stories were based on his very own life, while others were written about Denmark and to make fun of human faults. Hans also wrote an autobiography called "The Fairytale of My Life." He wrote 168 fairytales in total, including "The Ugly Duckling," "The Princess and the Pea," "The Little Mermaid," "The Emperor's New Clothes," "Thumbelina," "The Steadfast Tin Soldier," "The Snow Queen," and the "Little Match Girl." Mr. Andersen never married, but he did fall in love, most deeply with famous singer, Jenny Lind. His story "The Nightingale" was written for her.

Hans Christian Andersen died peacefully in his sleep at 70 years old on August 4, 1875, in Copenhagen. At the time of his death, Mr. Andersen was a world renowned author and beloved by children throughout Denmark. His stories are for both children and adults and have been translated into more than 150 languages. Many have been the inspiration for plays, musicals, ballets and movies.



A paper cutting by Hans Christian Andersen. Can you find the swan? It was his favorite symbol.

The Story of the Story: The Ugly Duckling

In 1844, Hans Christian Andersen wrote "The Ugly Duckling", which was originally called "The Story of a Duck".

The story was one of Andersen's most personal stories, having been teased during his childhood because he was tall and gangly and had a big pointy nose. Because of this life long struggle with feeling 'different,' the swan became a favorite symbol for him, depicting the hopeful change that we can all experience. In the story, Andersen let the Ugly Duckling character show what he was feeling inside, that he was really a swan, and that we should all look at a person's heart, not appearance.

Before the Play

Theatre Vocabulary

Actor- A male who acts

Actress- A female who acts

Audience- People who come to see the performance

Backdrop- A painted canvas which creates a background, setting or scene in the play

Backstage- The area behind and to the sides of the stage

Choreography- Creating sequences of movements into a dance.

Costumes- The clothes created for the actors to wear during a performance

Designer- Person who creates the designs for the costumes, set or lighting of a play

Director- Leader of a play

Lyrics- Words of a song

Perform- Acting on stage

Playwright- A person who writes the play

Rehearse- Practice time for actors and director before the performance

Alliance
Theatre at the Woodruff

Ugly Ducking and Honk! Vocabulary

Blizzard- heavy snowstorm with a very strong wind

Cattails- Wetland plants with a tall (3-10') flowering spike, flat blade like leaves

Cob- A male swan

Clutch- A group of eggs

Cygnets - A baby swan

Dabbling- When a duck puts its head in the water and its bottom up to eat

Diving- When a duck puts its whole body in the water while eating

Down- The soft under feathers a ducks, swans and geese

Drake- A male duck

Duckling- A baby duck

Formation- A pattern during movement

Fowl- A bird of any kind

Gander- A male goose

Habitat- Natural home of plants and animals

Hatch- To come out of an egg

Hen- A female duck or goose

Migrate- Move from one place to another

Molt- When a bird loses its feathers

Pen- A female swan

Poultry- Fowls used for food

River- A large Body of water

Waterfowl- A bird that lives around the water

Wetland- Land that is partly underwater, i.e.: swamps & bogs



Cattails in wetlands



A molting cygnet

Before the Play

Honk! Bibliography

Recommended Versions of Hans Christian Andersen’s “The Ugly Duckling”

- Braun, Sebastian; The Ugly Duckling; Sterling Publishing. New York; 2010
- Cauley, Lorinda Bryan (re-told & illustrated); The Ugly Duckling; Voyager Books, New York; 1979
- Chih-Yuan Chen, Guji Guji, La Jolla, California: Kane/Miller Book Publishers, Inc., 2004
- Furukawa, Masumi (re-told and illustrated); The Ugly Duckling; Child’s Play International, Sydney, Australia; 2006
- Gauch, Patricia Lee, illustrated by Ichikawa, Satomi, Presenting Tanya the Ugly Duckling; Philomel Books, New York; 1999
- Napoli, Donna Jo; Ugly; Hyperion Books for Children, New York, 2006
- Pinkney, Jerry (adapted and illustrated); Hans Christian Andersen’s The Ugly Duckling; Morrow Junior Books, New York; 1999
- Zeifert, Harriet;(adapted) The Ugly Duckling (Puffin Easy to Read); Puffin Books, New York; 1997

Books by and about Hans Christian Andersen

- Andersen, Hans Christian; Andersen’s Fairy Tales; New American Library, New York; 1966
- Brust, Beth Wagner and Andersen, Hans Christian; The Amazing Paper Cuttings of Hans Christian Andersen; Houghton Mifflin Co. Boston; 2003
- Varmer, Hjordis /Lillian Brogger; Hans Christian Andersen His Fairy Tale Life; Publishers Group West; 2005

Note to the educator:

*Read aloud several versions of the Ugly Duckling to prepare to see the play. If you don’t want to ‘spoil’ the story, don’t read the end until **AFTER** the play. Read more versions of the story after the play to compare and contrast the source story to the play, Honk! Jr..*

Another suggestion: Read other stories by Hans Christian Andersen: The Emperor’s New Clothes, The Little Mermaid, The Little Match Girl, Thumbelina. You have 168 to choose from!

