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## **James and the Giant Peach**

Music and lyrics: Benj Pasek and Justin Paul

Book: Timothy Allen McDonald

Based on the book by Roald Dahl

Directed by Rosemary Newcott

### **Study Guide, grades K-3**

Created as part of the Alliance Theatre Institute for Educators and Teaching Artists

Dramaturgy by Students program

Mrs. Lampkin's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Jr. Dramaturgs

Sawyer Road Elementary School

Under the guidance of Alliance Institute Teaching Artist Sarah Cave

With special thanks to of Nik Philmon, Literacy Integration Specialist, Marietta City Schools  
and Kim Bowers-Rheay Baran, Alliance Institute Resident Teaching Artist



On the Alliance Theatre stage  
March 14-March 29, 2015

Dear Educators:

Welcome to the Alliance Theatre's production of *James and the Giant Peach*! This study guide was created by the Jr. Dramaturgs of Sawyer Road Elementary for use by the teacher and student audience of the play. We hope this helps you prepare to see the play and to reflect together afterward.

**Questions for the audience from the director, Rosemary Newcott, the Sally G. Tomlinson Artistic Director of Theatre for Youth and Families:**

- What does James learn about himself as he takes this journey with his 'insect' friends?
- What are the qualities that make up a great family?
- What did you do when you found yourself in a leadership position?

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**James is holding the green crocodile tongues.**

**Language Arts Core Curriculum Standards**

**CCRR3.** Analyze how and why individuals, events and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

**CCRR4.** Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative and figurative meanings and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

**CCRL3.** Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

**CCRS12.** Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

**Theatre Standards (GPS)**

**TAES 1.** Analyzing and constructing meaning from theatrical experiences, dramatic literature, and electronic media

**TAES 8.** Examining the roles of theatre as a reflection of past and present civilizations.

**TAES 11.** Engaging actively and appropriately as an audience member in theatre or other media experiences,



Additional suggested curriculum connections: Social Studies, Science, and Geography

# Roald Dahl

## About the author of the source material

Roald Dahl was a British writer.

He was a short story writer, poet, playwright, and fighter pilot.

Roald Dahl was born on September 13, 1916 in Llandaff, Cardiff, United Kingdom.

He had children named Lucy, Ophelia, Olivia, Tessa, and Theo.

His books made into the movies *Matilda*, *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, and more.

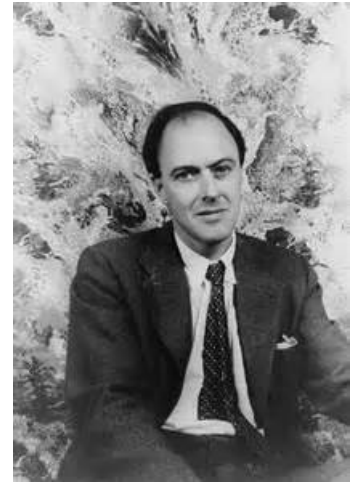
He went to Brayan College.

He is 6 feet 6 inches tall.

His favorite color was yellow.

He served in the Royal Air Force during World War II.

He died on November 23, 1990.



“If my books can help children become readers, then I feel I have accomplished something important.” Roald Dahl



### Books by Roald Dahl:

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Danny, the Champion of the World

The Giraffe and Pelly and Me

Matilda

The Minpins

The BFG

The Enormous Crocodile

Fantastic Mr. Fox

George’s Marvelous Medicine

James and the Giant Peach

The Magic Finger

The Witches

The Gremlins

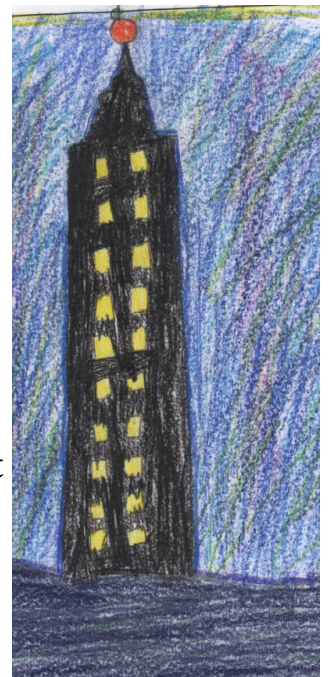
The Twits

Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator



## Summary of the Play

- ◆ James is a boy who lived in England.
- ◆ James' parents were run over in a stampede by a rhinoceros that had escaped from the London Zoo.
- ◆ James had 2 aunts that did not like him at all – their names were Spiker and Sponge.
- ◆ James was given crocodile tongues by a magician. The tongues touched a peach tree and one of the peaches grew giant.
- ◆ James went inside of the peach.
- ◆ The peach rolled over James' 2 aunts. It kept rolling and fell into the ocean.
- ◆ Inside the peach were Centipede, Ladybug, Spider, Green Grasshopper, and Earthworm.
- ◆ The peach floated in the ocean. James had an idea to make it fly.
- ◆ He tied seagulls to the top of the peach to go to New York.
- ◆ The peach landed on the Empire State building. →
- ◆ Spiker and Sponge were in New York. They tried to take James, but he said no. The peach pit fell on Spiker and Sponge!
- ◆ Then all of the creatures became James' family.



## Character Descriptions



**JAMES** – The main character. He is an orphan. He is also brave, smart, curious, peaceful, principled, and a leader.

**SPIKER AND SPONGE** – James' aunts. They are mean, horrible, selfish, grumpy, rude bullies.

**EARTHWORM** – One of the creatures inside the peach. He is nerdy, scared, and ticklish.

**CENTIPEDE** – One of the creatures inside the peach. He is rebel, thinks he's right, and he can be a little annoying.

**SPIDER** – An arachnid inside the peach. She is intelligent, caring and generous.

**LADYBUG** – One of the insects inside the peach. She is cheerful, helpful, and brave.

**GREEN GRASSHOPPER** - One of the insects inside the peach. He is smart, musical, and classy.

## Words from the Peach:

**Atrocious** – very bad

**Cunning** – tricky

**Gajillionaire** – someone who is very rich

**Irrational** – not thinking clearly

**Jaunt** – a short trip or journey

**Notable** – important

**Orphanage** – a place that children live who don't have parents

**Precisely** – exactly the right amount

**Queer** – strange

**Scrumptious** – delicious

**Shilling** – a coin in England (like a dime)

**Stunning** – lovely

**Vermin** – small creature

**Wretched** – very unhappy



Aunt Spiker and Aunt Sponge are **atrocious**.

## Geography Facts

James and his friends travel to different settings during the story.

See if you can find these locations on the map on page 8.

### ENGLAND

England is the most populated country in the United Kingdom.

In 2011, the population of England was around 53 million.

The English drink more tea per person than any other people in the world.

London is the largest city in Europe.

### DOVER

The white cliffs of Dover are made of chalk.

They are 300 feet high and 10 miles long.

There are hidden tunnels behind the cliffs.

On a clear day, you can see France from the top of the cliffs.



### THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

All oceans contain salt water. The Atlantic Ocean contains the most salt water.

The Atlantic Ocean is about 150 million years old.

The Atlantic Ocean is the second biggest ocean in the world.

It is between the continents of America, Europe, and Africa.

### NEW YORK CITY

The nickname for New York City is the big apple (not the giant peach!)

New York is called the Empire State.

The state animal is a beaver.

The New York flower is the rose.

# The Journey of the Peach



Find the settings from the story in order from beginning to end.

England

Dover

Atlantic Ocean

New York City



## Questions to Think About Before and After the Play

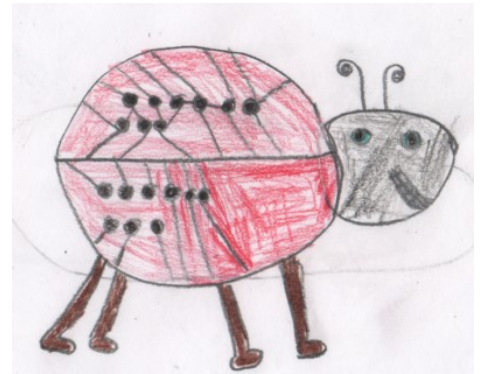
### BEFORE THE PLAY:

Have you ever had to stay with family?

Have you eaten a peach before?

Do you like bugs?

Have you ever been on a boat?



### DURING THE PLAY:

If you were in the peach, what would you do?

What does James learn about himself?

How do the actors make the insects look like they are alive?

### AFTER THE PLAY:

How does James feel when he loses his parents?

How does he feel when he lives with Spiker and Sponge?

How does James feel with his new family?

What kind of fruit would YOU want to live in?



## Science Facts

### **EARTHWORM**

The length of an adult earthworm ranges from 10mm to 3m.

Most earthworms live 1 week.

Earthworms have no teeth.

Earthworms have no eyes, legs or arms.

Earthworms have 5 hearts.

In South Africa earthworms are 22 feet long.



### **CENTIPEDE**

The first set of legs are fangs. They inject venom and they are poisonous.

A young centipede only has 8 legs. Some centipedes have 30 legs and some have 300 legs.

A centipede is NOT an insect.

### **LADYBUG**

Can eat up to 5,000 insects in their lifetime.

Most ladybugs eat tiny bugs like aphids or mites.

Ladybugs go through metamorphosis.

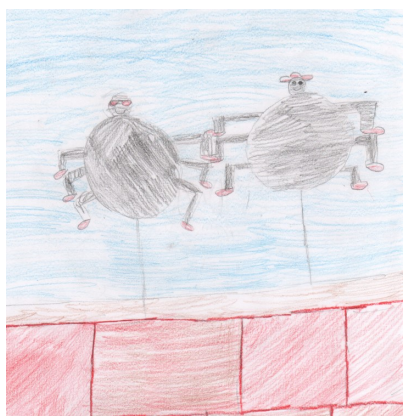
### **GRASSHOPPER**

They have ears on their bellies.

They can be 1-2 inches high and 2-5 inches long.

Most grasshoppers live in fields. Green grasshoppers live among leaves.

Grasshoppers eat all kinds of plants. They often chomp on grass or farm crops.



Young grasshoppers called nymphs hatch from eggs. Nymphs do not have wings. Nymphs must molt and grow wings before it becomes an adult.

### **SPIDER**

Not all spiders spin webs.

Spiders are arachnids NOT insects.

There is a spider that has a skeleton on the outside of their bodies.

### **PEACHES**

Peaches come from China.

The first peach in the USA was established in 1565.

If you have a stomachache, you can eat a peach, and you will feel better!

## Interview with James

Create your own interview of a favorite character from the story.  
Here is one with James:

How did you get inside the peach?

JAMES: I got inside the peach by eating some crocodile tongues and climbing inside.

What was inside the peach?

JAMES: I saw a green grasshopper, a centipede, a ladybug, an earthworm, and a spider.

How did the peach get to New York?

JAMES: We got to New York by catching birds and we used spider's silk.



### Word Jumble

Some words from the story have gotten mixed up! Try to unscramble them.

ejmas

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skipre

\_\_\_\_\_

epcah

\_\_\_\_\_

psnoeg

\_\_\_\_\_

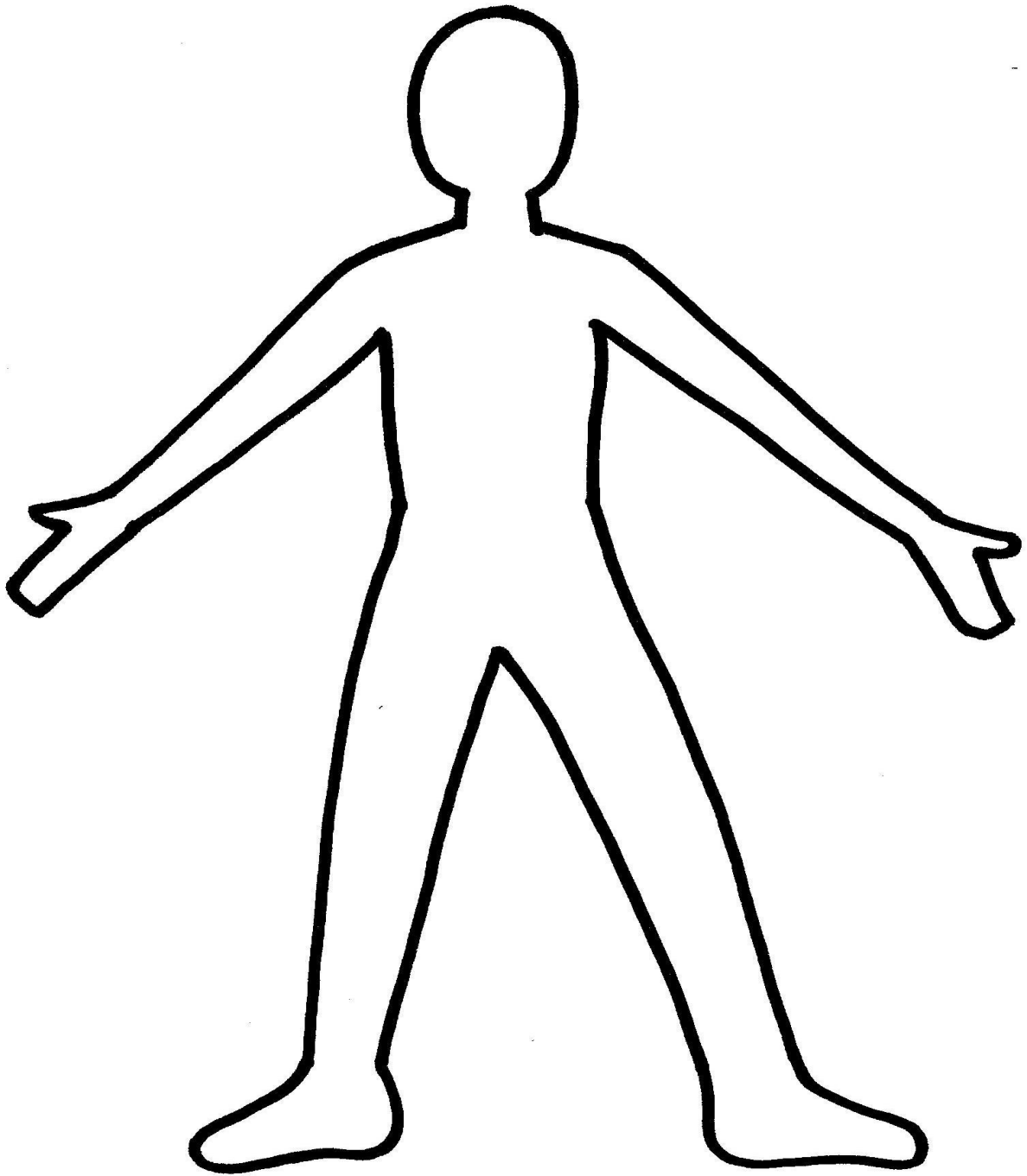
alydubg

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**After the play**

**Design your own costume!**

How would you design the costume for your favorite character from  
*James and the Giant Peach*?



# Word Search

## James and the Giant Peach

G C L K N L L C S E Z D X O L  
C R Z A W E D O D P L A F Y A  
Y E A O D P W E N P I D J Y D  
K N E S V Y P Y B D E K D B A  
K V I Y S I B L O Y O A E T A  
R W K D T H D U Z R X N C R L  
H O E N B N O P G Z K U N H O  
I F E G A U I P S P I D E R R  
N C M L T A O E P W W M E E D  
O O G U C O M I X E X D G N J  
M N G J L S K F J U R N X U A  
E T R I L G A C A H O C Q G M  
E A R T H W O R M P H C T T E  
I M I A T U D U S F M A N B S  
F I I R H L C J K T R K K U N

CENTIPEDE  
ENGLAND  
LADALORD  
MOM  
RHINO  
SPONGE

DAD  
GRASSHOPPER  
LADYBUG  
NEW YORK  
SPIDER

EARTHWORM  
JAMES  
LONDON  
PEACH  
SPIKER

Answer key on page 14



## Resources

[www.Dictionary.com](http://www.Dictionary.com)

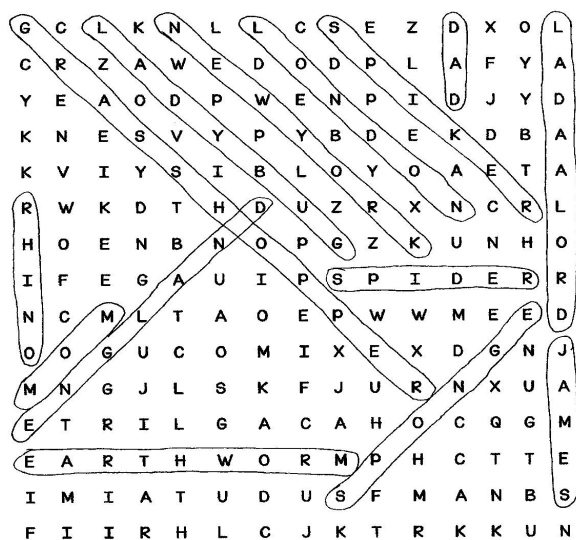
[kids.nationalgeographic.com](http://kids.nationalgeographic.com)

[Worldatlas.com](http://Worldatlas.com)

[www.Projectbritain.com](http://www.Projectbritain.com)

Visit your local or school library to find books by Roald Dahl, including his autobiography, **BOY**.

James and the Giant Peach



CENTIPEDE  
ENGLAND  
LADALORD  
MOM  
RHINO  
SPONGE

DAD  
GRASSHOPPER  
LADYBUG  
NEW YORK  
SPIDER

EARTHWORM  
JAMES  
LONDON  
PEACH  
SPIKER