Ripsnorting Whoppers!

For Use With Ripsnorting Whoppers!
By Aimee S. Reid
Based on the book by Rick Sowash

October 15-December 10, 2013

To Use This Packet
Treehouse Troupe has put together a collection of information about us, our play, and education-based activities you can do with your students to prepare them for the production.

Meet Our Team!
Grandpa Frank.................................Justin Betancourt
Ella.................................................Brittany Albrecht
Young Cy Gatton..............................Griffin Coldiron
Young Etta Pearl..............................Ilana Milberg
Wildcat/Catfish...............................Zack Robb
Cy Gatton.......................................Jeffrey Guion
Etta Pearl.......................................Sarah Maxwell

Director........................................Aimee S. Reid
Stage Manager...............................Jailyan Harris

Plot Synopsis
One summer, Ella is sent out to the middle of nowhere (Read: Jefferson Township, Ohio) to stay with her Grandpa Frank, and the two couldn’t be more different. Worst. Summer. Ever. Grandpa Frank starts telling some tall tales, though, and the two are taken back to the pioneer days of Ohio, where corn stalks grow as high as flagpoles, mosquitoes are so mean and big they drill through cast iron, and a catfish proves to be the most ornery pet a man could have.
Theatre Etiquette

A live theatre performance can be very exciting. Since this may be some of our audience member’s first show, please go over the following prior to the performance:

♦ Arrive at the performance on time.
♦ Please stay seated during the performance. After the play is over, remain seated—the actors will be conducting a brief talk-back.
♦ Visit the restroom before the performance begins.
♦ The use of cell phones (phone calls or texting) and recording devices are not allowed during the performances at any time.
♦ Please do not talk to your neighbor during the performance. If you like something you see, go ahead and applaud for the actors—it lets them know you like what they’re doing!

Questions To Ask Before The Performance

♦ What is the difference between a live theatre show and television?
♦ What are some pieces of Ohio history that you know?
♦ What is the difference between a fairy tale and a tall tale? Between a folk tale and a tall tale?
♦ What are some family traditions you have that you’re particularly proud of?

Questions To Ask After The Performance

♦ Grandpa Frank assures Ella that Cy was a storyteller, not a liar. What’s the difference?
♦ What are some of your favorite stories that your family likes to tell?
♦ The stories in Ripsnorting Whoppers are special to Ohio. What are some other Ohio traits you could tell a story about?
Pre- and Post-show materials

Word Bank

Copse  leisure  hybrid  sluice  loitering  prodigious  aspiration
Metamorphosis  merciless  homestead  vengeful  mucking out  squeamish  bearings
Slosh  coax  Etta Pearl  Cy Gatton  Wildcat Hollow  Catfish  Grandpa Frank
Ella  Jefferson Township  Ohio  mosquito  yarn  fertile
**Ripsnorting Whoppers Word Search Definitions**

- Copse: a cluster of trees or bushes
- Hybrid: the offspring of two different plants or animals
- Sluice: artificial channel for water, usually with a gate
- Loitering: lingering aimlessly
- Prodigious: extraordinary in size, amount, or degree
- Aspirations: strong desire, ambition, longing
- Metamorphosis: profound change from one form to the next
- Merciless: pitiless, cruel
- Homestead: a dwelling with its land and surrounding buildings
- Vengeful: seeking revenge
- Mucking out: to remove manure from
- Squeamish: easily shocked
- Slosh: to splash through water or mud
- Coax: to influence through persuasion or flattery

**Classroom Activity: Oh, the Places You’ll Go!**

Ella desperately wants to travel the world, thinking that Ohio is the most boring place in the world. Brainstorm places in Ohio that are interesting to visit—consider researching online as a class to get some ideas going.

Split the class into groups of 3-5. Assign each group a place in Ohio. Give each group time to research or brainstorm the place assigned to them. Once they’ve researched, instruct them to create a commercial for these places. Review what commercials do, how long they are, what sorts of tactics they employ, etc. Give them time to rehearse their commercials.

Step into role as a television host for *Oh, the Places You’ll Go*, the hottest travel TV show on television these days, and go through each commercial. Encourage TV things like studio applause.

Afterwards, take a vote in the class on which two places in Ohio they’d like most to visit. Discuss why those are the class’s favorites.
Lesson Plan: Creating Heritage

Target Grades: 3-5

Lesson Overview:
Students will use personal items to start a conversation on what defines them. Definition conversation will lead to a personal history narrative.

Length of Lesson: 30-45 minutes

Drama Standard
Responding/Reflecting. Grade 4. 2: Apply creative and critical reasoning processes to make personal connections to the drama material they encounter.

Social Studies Standard
HIS.35.2b Create a personal history narrative, including photographs and personal artifacts.

Instructional Plan
The day before this lesson, ask students to bring in 3-5 personal items they feel truly represent who they are. Ask them to include at least one photograph.

Framing:
Ask students to think about what defines who they are: is it their families? Their friends? Things they can do well?

Ask students to stand next to their desks. Ask them to imagine if they had one photograph to show people before they met them, what it would look like. Ask them to, as you count down from 5, to strike the pose that they would have in that photograph. Make some observations out loud of what frozen poses you see—what expressions people are using, how they are standing (or not), what they’re doing with their arms, what kind of personality you see.

Ask students to explain, if they choose, why they wanted people to have that particular impression of them.

Main Activity:
Ask students to take out their items. Give them a few minutes to arrange their items in a display on their desks—prompt them to create a sort of shrine to themselves.

Take the class on a brief tour of these shrines. Encourage them to speak out loud what they think is most remarkable about the items, and answer the questions: “What kind of person do you think this shrine represents? What is most important to them?”

Afterward, allow some students to comment on what they heard people perceive about their shrines, versus what they actually were trying to say about themselves. What was communicated clearly? What did people misunderstand?

Closing Activity:
Discuss: Grandpa Frank tells Ella “You poke fun at this, you poke fun at your roots. What’s that mean about you?” How important is your heritage? What does it mean about who you are? What does it not mean? How much of your history happens to you, and how much can you control?

At their desks, ask students to create a timeline of their lives to this point, including the most important events. Instruct them to include a paragraph describing how these important events help shape what kind of person they are and want to be. Include a second paragraph describing an important piece of their heritage and how that affects who they are and want to be.
Want to Read More? Here Are Some Books Like Ripsnorting Whoppers!

Weasel by Cynthia DeFelice
The Beaded Moccasins by Lynda Durrant
The Wondrous Whirlygig: The Wright Brothers’ First Flying Machine by Andrew Glass

How I Became an American by Karin Gundisch
Trail of Apple Blossoms by Irene Hunt
Crooked River by Shelley Pearsall

Out of the Storm by Patricia Willis
Call Me Margaret by Mary Helen Wright
Borning Room by Paul Fleischman

Ripsnorting Whoppers Post-Show Science Activity
ESS.35.2a Investigate how different soils absorb or hold water

Materials Needed: 4 different types of dry dirt (rocky, clay, sand, topsoil), water, coffee filters, rubber bands, Bell jars (or the like), scale, measuring spoons

Activity:
Split class into 4 groups. Give each group a type of dirt. Ask them to write down observations on the dirt: color, texture, etc. Measure out a set amount (3 tablespoons, for example) of dirt into a filter and place it on the scale. Weigh the dirt and write it down.

Instruct them to place the filter over the mouth of the jar and fasten it in place with the rubber bands. Place the dirt on top of the coffee filter.

Slowly pour a set amount of water (3 tablespoons, perhaps) over the dirt. Instruct class to observe what happens to the dirt and the water.

After 1 minute, take the dirt off the filter and place on a clean filter. Weigh the dirt and write down the weight. Wait 5 minutes. Place dirt on clean filter and weigh. Write down the weight.

Share findings and draw conclusions about the types of dirt.

Grandpa Frank claims the Gatton farm has the best dirt in Ohio. What kind do you think he had based on these findings?
We’re looking forward to coming to your school!

Back row, left to right: Jailyn Harris, Brittany Albrecht
Middle row: Ilana Milberg, Justin Betancourt, Sarah Maxwell, Jeffrey Guion
Front row: Griffin Coldiron, Zack Robb