



BEFORE YOU SEE THE SHOW

Maddi's Fridge

By Ann Negri
Based on the book by Lois Brandt

WHAT THE PLAY IS ABOUT

Maddi and Sofia are best friends. During recess time at school they race each other and climb the rock wall. Maddi is really good at climbing while Sofia is a fast runner. One day Sofia accidentally discovers that Maddi has very little food in her fridge at home. Sofia wants to help her friend, but Maddi makes her promise to keep it a secret between the two of them. Sofia struggles with what to do next; can Sofia find a way to keep her word and also help her best friend? Based on the book by Lois Brandt, this play is a gentle, yet sometimes hilarious exploration of friendship, empathy, and doing the right thing.

THE BIG IDEA:

Lessons in Friendship

CONNECTION TO STANDARDS

Literacy: Craft and Structure (5.RL.6) Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.

21st Century Learning: Solve Problems (K-12)

Health: (3-5.S4.C3.PO1) Asking for Help

ABOUT CHILDSPLAY

Childsplay is a nonprofit professional theatre company of adult actors who perform for young audiences and families.

Our Mission is to create theatre so strikingly original in form, content, or both, that it instills in young people an enduring awe, love, and respect for the medium, thus preserving imagination and wonder, those hallmarks of childhood that are the keys to the future.

For more information:
www.childsplayaz.org

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BEHIND THE SCENES OF A TOUR

What is a touring show?

Childsplay creates a production with professional actors, a full set, costumes, props, and sound, then we pack everything in a van and bring the show to locations across Arizona, the United States, and Canada.

How does it all come together?

The design team and production staff have many challenges when creating a tour. They have to consider how many months the production will be on the road, how to fit all the elements (including the actors) into a van, and how to make the load-in, assembly of the set, pre-set of props and costumes, sound check and load-out as easy for the actors as possible. This is accomplished by countless meetings and planning sessions that occur as much as a year before the first performance.

Where do we go and how do we get there?

We travel all across the city, state, and nation in a large van. In a week's time, a touring company may perform up to 14 shows in as many as 8 different locations. Tours can be on the road anywhere from 6 to 12 months, sometimes even longer. By the end of the tour, the actors may have performed as many as 200 performances.

How do you put everything in just one van?

All of the scenery, props, and costumes that you see in a Childsplay tour must fit into a van. The scenery usually comes apart into several pieces and then stacks, folds or nests together in the van. There is also room in the van for the sound system, toolbox, and the cast – which could be as many as 5 actors. If the cast is lucky there is usually room to squeeze in a few suitcases when they go out of town!

What happens when you arrive at a theatre?

Once the cast arrives at to their destination, they have to set everything up in less than one hour, and depending on the size of the cast, with as few as 3 people. The Childsplay scene shop uses what they like to call “tool-less technology” to create tour shows. This means tour sets get assembled with as few tools as possible, sometimes none! Pieces are held in place by screwing in knobs: pieces interlock or rest on posts and sometimes fabric appliqués are Velcroed onto hard scenery frames. Tours also have a portable sound system with sound effects pre-programed on a computer. Once the sound system is set up, all the actors have to do is hit one button on the computer to run sometimes very complicated sound sequences.

TALK ABOUT THEATRE ETIQUETTE

It's helpful to review the rules of theater etiquette before seeing a show, especially since this may be the first live theater experience for some of your students.

Please take a moment to discuss the following pointers prior to seeing the performance:

- Use the restroom before seeing the show as we do not have an intermission during our student performances.
- Stay seated during the performance.
- Be respectful to the performers and other people in the audience by not talking during the performance.
- Appropriate responses such as applause or laughter are always welcome.
- Food, candy, gum, and beverages will not be allowed in the theater.
- The use of cell phones (including text messaging), cameras, or any other recording device is not allowed during the performance at any time.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE SEEING THE SHOW

- What are your strengths on the playground? What do you do well? Do you share these skills with others? How?
- Have you ever made a promise to a friend? Was it ever in your friend's best interest to break the promise?
- Can any good ever come from breaking a promise?
- Can you think of an example of when you've helped someone? What did you do? How did it feel?
- There are times that we can help people, and times when we cannot. How do you know when someone needs your help?
- Sometimes it is difficult to ask for help. Can you think of a time when you needed help with homework or another problem? Did you ask for help? How did you ask? What was the outcome?

CLOSE READING ACTIVITY

Actors as Close Readers...

Theatre is a collection of choices. A choice is an artistic decision that is made to highlight a component of the character's personality, the story, or the theme. An actor's job is to draw evidence from the text to make choices that bring characters to life on stage.

Activity: Vocal Choices

Page four of this document contains a cutting of a scene between Maddi and Sofia. Have the students read the play synopsis on page one to learn more about the story and characters. Next, have them read the scene in groups of three and then make vocal choices for their characters based on the text. Students should pay close attention to the stage directions to find information about what the characters are feeling and doing. When making a vocal choice, think about pacing (fast or slow), pitch (high or low), emotion (what the character is feeling), and subtext (underlying meaning).

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BOOKS TO CHECK OUT

Our amazing volunteer librarian Sharon Ewers has put together a great list of books connected to ideas and themes in *Maddi's Fridge*.

You can find it by going to

<https://goo.gl/gTgUgY>

and clicking on "Maddi's Fridge Book List"

At the rock climbing wall. SOFIA and MADDI enter. SOFIA is carrying her backpack.

SOFIA: Oh no! How could I forget?!

MADDI: What?

SOFIA: I forgot to eat part of my lunch. And now I'm so full!

MADDI: What is it?

SOFIA: Just some leftovers from dinner last night. Fish.

MADDI: Fish sticks?

SOFIA: No, real fish. (beat) Do you want it?

MADDI: Oh? (beat) No thanks.

SOFIA: Well, I guess I'll just have to throw it away then. (sighs) Too bad.

SOFIA stands up slowly.

MADDI: Wait! I might try it. If, if you're sure you aren't going to eat it?

SOFIA: I'm not. It's extra.

MADDI approaches. SOFIA grins as she begins to unzip her backpack.

MADDI: What's that smell?

SOFIA sniffs the air and wrinkles her nose. She sniffs her armpit.

SOFIA: Not me.

MADDI sniffs her armpits.

MADDI: Don't look at me!

SOFIA: I don't know.

SOFIA continues to unzip her backpack.

MADDI: It's getting worse!

SOFIA and MADDI look around in confusion. SOFIA reaches into her backpack and pulls out the baggie of fish and holds it up.

MADDI (CONT'D): OH NO!!!!

SOFIA: IT'S THE FISH!!!

SOFIA doesn't know what to do with it. She holds it out as far as she can with one outstretched arm. She pinches her nose closed with her other hand. MADDI holds her nose too.

SOFIA: Its worse than a dumpster!!!!

MADDI: Its worse than a garbage truck!!!!

SOFIA: Its worse than a dumpster and a garbage truck COMBINED!!!!

MADDI: I AM NOT EATING THAT!

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