

Go, Dog. Go!

BEFORE YOU SEE THE SHOW

Go, Dog. Go!

By Allison Gregory and Steven Dietz
Adapted from the book by P.D. Eastman

WHAT THE PLAY IS ABOUT

P.D. Eastman's classic children's book comes to life on stage in an exploration of movement, color and space. The dogs delve into life with gusto, creating a visual spectacle for the audience to feast upon. They snorkel. They howl at the moon. They sing and dance and climb trees. There's cars, hats, audience participation, even a wild game of ball as this laugh-a-minute visual spectacle manages to sneak in some important lessons about life. *Go, Dog. Go!* is a musical romp full of surprises, clowning, vaudeville, singing, barking, and of course, six lovable dogs!

A Note from the Playwrights:

P.D. Eastman's timeless work honors the joyous simplicity of the world around us. Therefore in crafting a stage version of *Go, Dog. Go!*, it is not our intention to "fill out" or "open up" the story in the style of many traditional adaptations. We have, in fact, added virtually no words of our own. "Expanding" the book in this way would, we believe, rob it of its essential wondrous and loopy anarchy. Instead, we hope to celebrate and explore the existing words and pictures.

THE BIG IDEA IMAGINATION

VISIT OUR
ONLINE RESOURCE CENTER

www.childsplayaz.org/resources

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.

CONNECTION TO STANDARDS

LITERACY

Reading: Literature

(CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K-2.7): Describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear.

21st CENTURY LEARNING

Social and Cross-Cultural Skills (K-12): Interact Effectively with Others - Know when it is appropriate to listen and when to speak.

S.T.E.A.M.

Mathematical Practice: Counting & Cardinality

(CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.CC.B.5): Count to answer "how many?" questions about as many as 20 things arranged in a line, a rectangular array, or a circle, or as many as 10 things in a scattered configuration; given a number from 1-20, count out that many objects.

BEHIND THE SCENES OF A TOUR

What is a touring show?

Childsplay creates a play with professional actors, a full set, costumes, props, and sound, then packs everything in a van and brings the show to venues across the nation. We perform in theatres, gyms, cafeterias, and multi-purpose rooms.

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 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 on to 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 intermission during our school 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/during the performance. Bottled water is allowed.
- 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 is the difference between seeing a play and seeing a movie?
- If you could be any kind of dog, what kind of dog would you be? What would your name be?
- How are dogs similar to humans? How are they different?
- How can you make a play out of a book with very few words? What do you think the play will be like? What do you think the songs will be about?
- What do you think the dogs in the play will look like? How do you think they will move and sound?



CLOSE READING ACTIVITY

Costume designers are asked to create the look of each character. They start off by reading the script and then have design meetings with the director and the other designers to exchange ideas. The designers pull information about the world of the play from the text to inspire their designs. After several revisions, they create a final rendering (drawing) that is used to aid in the construction of the costume. For *Go, Dog. Go!*, there aren't many words, so the designer has to pay close attention to the illustrations in the book for inspiration.

Activity: What can you learn from a picture?

Look at illustrations in the book *Go, Dog. Go!* Describe what you see. Who are the characters? What are the characters doing? Can you tell how the characters feel? How do you think the costume designer will make the human actors look like dogs? Identify (by circling or pointing) three things you think a costume designer would have to include in her costume design to make the audience understand the actors were playing dog characters.

Extension: Imagine that you were chosen to be the costume designer for *Go, Dog. Go!* Create a costume rendering (drawing) for the director and other designers. Be sure to include the three things you identified to help the audience understand the actors are playing dog characters.

FIND MORE RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

www.pinterest.com/ChildsplayAZ



BOOKS TO CHECK OUT

Mouse Paint by Ellen Stoll Walsh
I Went Walking by Sue Williams
Elephants Aloft by Kathi Appelt
Many Lucious Lollypops by Ruth Heller

In addition to *Go, Dog. Go!*, read these other books by P. D. Eastman:

Are You My Mother?
The Best Nest
Flap Your Wings
Sam and the Firefly
Snow by Roy McKie and P. D. Eastman

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WHERE EDUCATION AND IMAGINATION
TAKE FLIGHT