TEACHER’S RESOURCE GUIDE

SEPT 27-OCT 27, 2019
The possibilities are numerous for using both the book and musical of *Spookley the Square Pumpkin* as a jumping off point for cross-curriculum and interdisciplinary study in your classroom.

From lessons on pumpkin growing to acting out pumpkin poems or units on bullying prevention this book and play offer a platform for reaching any number of educational goals.

Below are a few curriculum suggestions to incorporate both the book and play *Spookley the Square Pumpkin* into your classroom studies.

Please also refer to the ADDITIONAL RESOURCE section at the end of this guide for links and resources to more curriculum ideas and lesson plans.
PLAY SYNOPSIS

Our story begins just before Halloween in the Holiday Hill Farm Pumpkin Patch with Jack Scarecrow and Big Tom, Little Tom, and Bobo all pumpkins, and the Honeydoos, a duo of singing melons. Everyone is excited for the upcoming holiday. Soon they hear a small voice, and Jack discovers Spookley, a square pumpkin, under a large leaf. He is excited to find Spookley and tells him he could be the Pick of the Patch this year. The other pumpkins, however, don’t like the fact that Spookley looks different from them. As Jack leaves to finish some chores on the farm, he tells the other pumpkins to be nice to Spookley. Once Jack leaves, however, Little Tom insults Spookley and tells him that he is going to ruin Halloween because he is not a real pumpkin as real pumpkins are round.

Spookley is left alone, and becomes very sad and worries that he will ruin Halloween for everyone. Suddenly, three spiders appear and introduce themselves as Edgar, Allan and Poe. They tell Spookley that he can’t worry about what the other pumpkins say and encourage him to believe in himself. Spookley still isn’t convinced and only remembers Little Tom telling him he’s different. Edgar reminds Spookley that everyone and everything is different. Being different isn’t a bad thing. Edgar tells Spookley he can be the Pick of the Patch if he sets his mind to it.

Meanwhile, the other pumpkins are getting ready for Halloween and all think they will be chosen as Pick of the Patch. Jack returns and lines everyone up for the Pick of the Patch. He says something nice about everyone. But, suddenly, a storm starts up! Everyone is blown around by the wind and rain toward the dangerous river, except for Spookley. He decides to help the other pumpkins and blocks a large hole in the fence with his body. The pumpkins and Jack are blown toward him and all pile up in front of the broken fence until Spookley cannot be seen anymore. After the storm passes, Spookley doesn’t wake up and everyone is worried, even the pumpkins that made fun of him. Luckily though, he opens his eyes and smiles, letting everyone know he’s okay. Jack tells Spookley that he is quite the hero. All the other pumpkins apologize to Spookley for bullying him because of his differences; even Little Tom. Farmer Hill arrives to choose the Pick of the Patch and picks...Spookley! He loves the fact that Spookley is square. Finally, everyone celebrates Halloween together in the patch.
ABOUT THE PLAY & ITS HISTORY

The book, *The Legend of Spookley the Square Pumpkin* by Joe Toniano was first published in 2003. In 2005 the author teamed up with composer, Jeff Zahn to create the animated television musical movie *Spookley the Square Pumpkin*. In 2015, First Stage Milwaukee teamed up with Holiday Hill Enterprises to create the stage version, which premiered in October 2015 at First Stage. This October, Stages Theatre Company brings this lovely story to life in our Jaycee Studio through music, puppetry and imagination. Spookley’s story is about embracing what makes us unique and we hope it helps our young audiences embrace everything that makes them and those around them special.
The ideas and questions in this section are designed as a springboard for student discussion before and after attending the play.

**BIG IDEAS**

- Embracing our unique qualities
- Individuality
- Bullying
- Believing in yourself
- Friendship

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Spookley uses his differences to save the other pumpkins in the patch. How are you unique? What are some of your special qualities? How can you use your uniqueness to help others? What are some of the special qualities of those you know—parents, siblings, cousins, grandparents, friends, teachers, etc.? Why do you think these qualities are unique or special? How do they help people? Why is it important to embrace what makes us special or unique?
2. When Little Tom teases Spookley, Big Tom and Bobo go along with it and don’t stop him from being mean to Spookley. Have you ever seen someone being teased? How can you stand up to a bully, even if you aren’t the one being made fun of?
3. The three spiders, Edgar, Allan and Poe are good friends to Spookley because they encourage him even when he is feeling sad. What are qualities of a good friend? Do you have an example of when you were a good friend to someone? What is an example of someone being a good friend to you?
Predictions and Expectations

**BEFORE THE PLAY:** Read the book *The Legend of Spookley the Square Pumpkin* by Joe Troiano. With student input, establish the expectations for the upcoming play. What actions or events might be seen on stage? What characters might the play include from the book? What set or sound or costume elements might they see on stage? It is a good time to cover some of these stage elements with your students to enhance their enjoyment and understanding of live theatre. Students may draw or write about what they anticipate seeing.

**AFTER THE PLAY:** Revisit the expectations to see how many were realized. Discuss the similarities and differences from the book to the play, in terms of plot, characters, and action. Were the characters as portrayed on the stage faithful to the characters in the book? How or why? How would you describe the main “message” of the play? How was it similar or different from the book? Did they see what they expected? What were some of the stage elements that they remember seeing? Set? Costumes? Props? Lights? Sound? Music? How did these elements support the story of the play?
PUMPKINS TAKE THE STAGE: CHANTING, PUPPETRY, AND DRAMATIZATION (Pre-k—1st Grade)

This classic and familiar traditional chant is great for reinforcing ordinal numbers as well as working on oral presentation skills and speaking with confidence. It is lots of fun to act out.

**LESSON PLAN**
- Have students learn and chant the poem many times during the course of several weeks. You can use sentence strips to keep it in your pocket chart, or print it on chart paper and laminate for display.
- Once the students know the chant well have them play around with acting it out.
- The “script” can be acted out in a circle with everyone participating or with some students being actors and others being audience.
- You may select five children to be pumpkins while the class chants the poem and the players speak the quoted lines.
- As a variation students could make pumpkin finger or stick puppets to dramatize the poem.

**Five Little Pumpkins**
- **Five** Little pumpkins sitting on a gate (show five fingers)
- The **First** one said, "Oh my ... it’s getting late!" (Hands on cheeks, "Home Alone" expression)
- The **Second** one said, "There are witches in the air!" (Look scared)
- The **Third** one said, "I don’t care!" (Hands out, palms up)
- The **Fourth** one said, "Let’s run and run and run!" (Stomp feet to feign running)
- The **Fifth** one said, "It’s only Halloween fun!" (shake pointer finger)
- Then whooooooo went the wind... (sway arms back and forth)
- And out (clap) went the lights
- And the **Five** little pumpkins (show five fingers) Rolled out of sight! (roll arms)

A link to other pumpkin songs and poems for Pre-k—1st Grade:
MATH AND SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

Spookley the Square Pumpkin is set on a farm in autumn and provides the perfect jumping off point for lessons and activities centered on pumpkins, garden harvesting, and the changing of the seasons.

What is a pumpkin?

HERE ARE SOME GREAT FACTS ABOUT PUMPKINS TO SHARE WITH YOUR STUDENTS

- Pumpkins are usually orange, but can also be yellow, white, green, or red.
- Pumpkins are a fruit! This is because they contain seeds and develop from a flower. However, in cooking, they are often incorrectly referred to as a vegetable.
- The average pumpkin weighs about 13 pounds.
- Giant pumpkins are grown for competitions; in 2014, a new world record was set with a pumpkin that weighed in at 2,058 pounds! (WOWEEE!!)
- The largest pumpkin pie ever baked was 2,020 pounds.
- Pumpkins are 90% water.
- Pumpkins are grown on every continent except Antarctica. They are even grown in Alaska!
- Pumpkins can be made into soup, stews, pies, and the seeds can be toasted and eaten.
- There are over 100 varieties of pumpkins that come in all shapes, sizes, and colors.

Taken in part from: http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/food/pumpkins.html
PREDICTING PUMPKINS

Brief Description
Make and test predictions about pumpkins in this hands-on activity.

Objectives
Students will—
- Make a prediction and test it.
- Build place-value understanding as they count pumpkin seeds.
- Write a concluding statement that describes what they learned.

FULL LESSON PLAN AT: http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/03/lp323-02.shtml

PUMPKIN MATH

- Students can pick up three pumpkins, one at a time, and predict the weights: heaviest, middle, and lightest. Invite them to record their pumpkin weight predictions. Then weigh the pumpkins. Do the predictions match the weights? Encourage students to create a chart to organize their information.
- Measure the circumference of the same three pumpkins. Does the heaviest pumpkin have the largest circumference? Students can weigh and measure pumpkins at home, record the results and contribute to a group chart of pumpkin weights and measurements. What conclusions can students draw about the relationship between weight and circumference?
- Find the relationship between the size of a pumpkin and the number of ribs. In how many ways can this relationship be expressed?
- Challenge younger students to find a way to divide the pumpkin seeds so each class member has the same number.

Taken in part from: http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson028.shtml#sthash.2biimRni.dpuf

MORE IDEAS
Links to science and math lessons that incorporate the theme of pumpkins, harvesting and changing seasons:
- http://www.everythingesl.net/lessons/pumpkinscience2.php (Lessons for ELL students.)
- http://lessonplanspage.com/seasonal-lesson-plans/ (Grades K-2)
- http://www.hometrainingtools.com/a/seasons-lesson-plan (Grades 2-4)
- https://educators.brainpop.com/lesson-plan/seasons-activities-kids/ (Grades K-3)
- http://www.kidsparkz.com/harvest.html (Harvest themed activities and printables that are mostly free for Pre-k & K)
FALL SIMILES
(Grades 3-6)

OBJECTIVE:
Students create descriptive autumn similes and write them on fall-themed paper.

MATERIALS
- Flower blossoms, leaves, ferns, and grasses
- Clean scrap paper
- Heavy books
- Heavy paper (the size and shape you want your final product to be)
- Clear contact paper
- Sharp knife

LESSON PLAN
1. Discuss similes and how they compare things using the words like or as. When students are associating the various elements of autumn, they will need to use comparison words that everyone knows and can relate to.

   **Samples**
   The leaves are as orange as a pumpkin.
   The weather is as crisp as fresh lettuce.
   The scarecrows blow in the wind like big rag dolls.

2. First have the class generate a list of autumn words. Examples might include the months of fall or descriptive words dealing with the sights and sounds of autumn. Then have them create a sample list of simile comparisons. Examples can be written as phrases instead of complete sentences. (Explain to the students that when they are doing their comparisons they must use complete sentences.)
FALL SIMILES (Continued)

Samples
the air is as ........ as ........
the trees are as ........ as ........
the leaves are as ........ as ........
the birds sound like ................
the animal's coat is as ........ as ......
the cider smells as ........ as ........

3. The class then creates a short example together and reviews the properties of similes. You can determine the number of similes and the length of the final product based on the students' ability level.

4. Pressing the flowers: The objects to be pressed must be fresh and dry. Place the plants between sheets of clean paper. Then place them between the pages of your heavy book for about one to two weeks, or until they are completely dry.

5. First write the autumn simile, and then arrange the plants around the border of the paper. When it looks the way you want it to, use a little bit of glue to hold the flowers in place. Let it dry. Then cover the paper with clear contact paper that is a little larger than the paper. As you cover your plants with the contact paper, rub out any air bubbles.

VARIATIONS:
• A collage of the poems on a wall makes a great Back-to-School Night bulletin board. The pressed flowers could also be turned into beautiful fall bookmarks.
• Place autumn-colored leaves or flowers between two layers of wax paper. Cover with an old towel or cloth rag. Press the wax paper with a warm iron, sealing it together with the leaves and flowers in between. Cut them out in any design, leaving a narrow margin of wax paper around the leaf edge.

Taken in part from: https://www.teachervision.com/poetry/lesson-plan/5636.html?for_printing=1
FUN PUMPKIN WRITING EXERCISES

GRADES K-3

• Place one or more pumpkins in view of the students. Ask them to contribute a list of words to describe the pumpkin. Students can write similes and metaphors using words that describe pumpkins.

• Invite students to make their own word search puzzles out of the descriptive adjectives they came up with in the previous activity.

• Invite students to write a paragraph describing a jack-o'-lantern face. When finished, they can exchange assignments and draw the face as described in the paragraph they are handed.

Taken in part from: http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson028.shtml#sthash.2biimRni.dpuf

LINKS TO OTHER LANGUAGE ARTS ACTITIVIES WITH PUMPKIN AND FALL THEMES:

• https://www.theteacherscorner.net/collaboration-projects/project-pumpkin/activities.php - Includes over 30 links to language arts activities for fall, pumpkin and harvest themes.

• https://www.teachervision.com/autumn/teacher-resources/6599.html - Printables and activities for fall.
TEASING IS TOUGH

(Pre-k—1st Grade)

MATERIALS
Crayons
Markers
Paper
Paper circles

LESSON PLAN
1. Give each student two paper circles and a crayon. Demonstrate how to draw a happy face on one circle, and an angry face on the other.
2. Each time you describe a situation, ask students to hold up the appropriate face to show how they would feel. Here are some examples:
   • How would you feel if your best friend invited you to a party?
   • How would you feel if no one would let you use the swing?
   • How would you feel if you and your friends built a beautiful sandcastle together?
   • How would you feel if some kids started teasing you by saying you were a baby?
3. Ask students: What can you do or say when someone teases you?
   Write down students’ ideas on paper. After gathering suggestions, you may want to simplify ideas into a three-step approach.
   For example:
   • Say: Please stop it. I don’t like it.
   • Say: I’m going to tell a teacher/parent.
   • Tell the teacher/parent

*Taken from: http://pbskids.org/arthur/parentsteachers/activities/credits.html
MAKING UP:
RESOLVING CONFLICT
(Pre-k—1st Grade)

MATERIALS

- Markers
- Poster board

LESSON PLAN

1. Brainstorm with your students different ways that friends can "make up" after hurting each other’s feelings (e.g., apologizing, inviting someone to join a game, making a card or picture). On poster board, make a list of positive ways to resolve conflicts and show you’re sorry. Include sentence starters for expressing feelings, like:
   I felt ____ when you ____
   I apologize for ____

2. Share with students a story that involves a dispute between two friends. (You can use a story from a book, or one that you make up.) Stop the story before there is a resolution.

3. Let students create their own ending to the story. They can write it out, draw pictures, or just tell you out loud. Encourage them to use their list of positive ways to express feelings and resolve conflict.

4. Have students practice acting out this new ending to the story.

5. Share the original ending to the story. Discuss how the characters felt, and why their feelings caused them to act as they did.

*Taken from: http://pbskids.org/arthur/parentsteachers/activities/credits.html
ON

BULLY

PREVENTION

Spookley the Square Pumpkin is the perfect story to share with students as you explore ways of preventing bullying in your school environment. The Pacer Foundation has used the book, movie and play as a vehicle for lessons on bully prevention.

Below are links to sites with lesson plans and ideas on bully prevention:

- [http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/toolkits/activities/](http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/toolkits/activities/) (More from the Pacer Foundation and the National Bullying Prevention Center)
- [http://www.educationworld.com/a_special/bully.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_special/bully.shtml) (Bullying Prevention lesson plans from Education World)
- [http://www.eyesonbullying.org/activities.html](http://www.eyesonbullying.org/activities.html) (Lesson plans and activities for bullying prevention.)
BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES
Please review all links below before sharing with students.

- [http://mrsnelsonsclass.com/lesson-units/thematic-units/pumpkin-unit/](http://mrsnelsonsclass.com/lesson-units/thematic-units/pumpkin-unit/) - A comprehensive guide to a unit on pumpkins for pre-school through 1st Grade.
- [http://www2.ku.edu/~topeka/THEMATIC_UNITS/Pumpkins.pdf](http://www2.ku.edu/~topeka/THEMATIC_UNITS/Pumpkins.pdf) - A full printable PDF for a week-long pumpkin unit, 45 pages long. Very comprehensive and includes printables.

ANTI-BULLYING WEBSITES & PROGRAMS:

- [http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/kab/](http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/kab/)
- [http://standforthesilent.org/](http://standforthesilent.org/)

FURTHER READING FOR CHILDREN

OTHER CHILDREN’S BOOKS BY JOE TROIANO

- The Legend of JellyBean and the Unbreakable Egg
- The Legend of Mistletoe and the Christmas Kittens
- The Legend of Lyla the Lovesick Ladybug
- The Legend of Beacon the Bright Little Firefly
- It’s Your Cloud

OTHER CHILDREN’S BOOKS ABOUT PUMPKINS (FICTION)

- *The Berenstain Bears and the Prize Pumpkin* by Stan and Jan Berenstain.
- *The Pumpkin People* by David and Maggie Cavagnaro.
- *Jeb Scarecrow's Pumpkin Patch* by Jana Dilon
- *The Biggest Pumpkin Ever* by Steven Kroll.
- *Apples and Pumpkins* by Anne Rockwell.
- *Big Pumpkin* by Erica Silverman.
- *Pumpkin, Pumpkin* by Jeanne Titherington
OTHER CHILDREN’S BOOKS ABOUT PUMPKINS (NON-FICTION)

• The All-Around Pumpkin Book by Margery Culyer.
• From Seed to Jack O’Lantern by Hanna Lyons Johnson.

OTHER CHILDREN’S BOOKS ABOUT BULLYING AND SELF-ESTEEM

• Stick and Stone by Tom Lichtenheld
• Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes
• Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon by Patty Lovell
• Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun by Maria Dismondy
• Zink the Zebra by Kelly Weil
• The Juice Box Bully by Bob Sornson and Maria Dismondy
• Thank You, Mr. Falker by Patricia Polacco
• Bully B.E.A.N.S by Julia Cook
• Oliver Button is a Sissy by Tomie dePaola
• The Bully Blockers Club by Teresa Bateman and Jackie Urbanovic
• Don’t Laugh at Me by Steve Seskin, Allen Shamblin and Glin Dibley
• It’s Ok to Be Different by Todd Parr
• The Little Bit Scary People by Emily Jenkins and Alexandra Boiger

FURTHER READING FOR PARENTS & TEACHERS

• The Anti-Bullying and Teasing Book for Preschool Classrooms by Barbara Sprung and Merle Froschl
• Quit It! By Merle Froschl, Barbara Sprung and Nancy Mullin-Rindler
• The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander by Barbara Coloroso
• The Parent’s Guide to Preventing and Responding to Bullying by Dr. Jason Thomas
• When Your Child is Being Bullied: Real Solutions for Parents, Educators, and Other Professionals by M.K. Newman and J.E. DiMarco
• The Bullying Prevention Book: A Guide for Principals, Teachers, and Counselors by John H. Hoover and Ronald L. Oliver