MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR EXPERIENCE

This guide is to assist you in making the most of your experience of attending the musical of **SPOOKLEY THE SQUARE PUMPKIN**. Below is a summary of the play and activities to do before and after seeing the show.
THE PLAY’S BIG IDEAS

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

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.

**THE BOOK, 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.
BEFORE SEEING THE PLAY

READ THE BOOK

*The Legend of Spookley the Square Pumpkin* is a picture book written by Joe Troiano and is available at the library or for purchase online, at bookstores and through our box office.

Before seeing the play, read the book and discuss what you may see in the upcoming production.

WATCH THE ANIMATED TV VERSION

An animated adaptation of the book was released in 2004. Before the play you can watch the animated version of the story. And then, compare and contrast it to the book and the musical.

PREVIEW SOME OF THE MUSIC FROM THE SHOW

You can listen to some of the songs from the musical before seeing the show. [http://www.spookleyfarmprogram.com/music-cd---sample-tracks.html](http://www.spookleyfarmprogram.com/music-cd---sample-tracks.html)

CHECK OUT SPOOKLEY’S OFFICIAL WEBSITE

DISCUSS THE PLAY’S THEME

A FEW IDEAS:

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? 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?

VISIT A LOCAL PUMPKIN PATCH

https://www.pumpkinpatchesandmore.org/MNpumpkins.php
https://www.familyfuntwincities.com/twin-cities-pumpkin-patches/

READ RELATED BOOKS

See resources below.
RESOURCES ON BULLY PREVENTION

Spookley the Square Pumpkin is the perfect story to use to talk with your young one about bullying. The Pacer Foundation has used the book, movie and play as a vehicle for lessons on bully prevention.

IDEAS ON BULLY PREVENTION

• [http://www.eyesonbullying.org/activities.html](http://www.eyesonbullying.org/activities.html)

ANTI-BULLYING WEBSITES & PROGRAMS:

• [http://standforthesilent.org/](http://standforthesilent.org/)

FURTHER READING FOR PARENTS

• 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
FURTHER READING

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

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.
- Mousekin’s Golden House by Edna Miller.
- Apples and Pumpkins by Anne Rockwell.
- Big Pumpkin by Erica Silverman.
- Pumpkin, Pumpkin by Jeanne Titherington

(NON-FICTION)

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