A Study Guide for:

Maggie Lumières
and the Ghost Train

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Welcome!

A Very Special Thank You!

Performances are made possible by a generous community of funders who support our efforts to make theater accessible, relevant, exciting and fun. Please join us in thanking them for their support of the arts and their commitment to education.

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Using This Guide...

Dear Teachers,

Welcome to the Idaho Theater for Youth study guide for *Maggie Lumiè re and the Ghost Train*. These materials have been designed to expand your students’ engagement with the performance as well as provide some background on the and the influential literature wrote.

This resource includes a range of information, discussion topics, and activities that can stand on their own or serve as building blocks for a larger unit. The activities are designed to be mixed, matched, and modified to suit the needs of your particular students.

Inside, you’ll find activities to share with your students both *before the show* and *after the show*. These are designed to help focus your students’ engagement with the performance by giving them specific themes to watch out for, as well as to foster critical thinking and discussion following the performance. Each activity is designed to meet Idaho Standards of Education to foster critical thinking and problem solving skills.

We encourage you and your students to share your thoughts with us! Any of the artwork or activities your students send will be shared with the artists who created *Maggie Lumiè re and the Ghost Train*, and any feedback from you will help to improve our study guides for future audiences! Our mailing address is located on page 17.

Thank you so much!
Welcome!

About our education program...

The Idaho Shakespeare Festival has become an integral part of arts education throughout Idaho. The Festival’s annual *Shakespearience* tour brings live theater to more than 25,000 high-school students in more than 50 Idaho communities each year. Since it began touring in 1986, *Shakespearience* has enriched the lives of nearly 500,000 students.

In 1999, the Festival assumed the operations of Idaho Theater for Youth. This alliance has more than doubled the Festival’s annual educational programming, resulting in the Festival becoming the largest provider of professional, performing arts outreach in the state of Idaho. In addition to the statewide *Idaho Theater for Youth* school tour, which brings professional productions to nearly 30,000 students in grades K-6 across Idaho, the Festival oversees year-round *School of Theater* programs. This series of classes in acting, playwriting and production, for students of all ages, enrolls over 300 Treasure Valley students each year. Look for upcoming student productions throughout the summer, fall and spring.

For more information on any of the Festival’s educational activities, please contact the Director of Education at the Festival offices or by email at renee@idahoshakespeare.org.

A Note From the Director...

I have worked with the two authors in a number of forms over many years. When they came to me with the script, I knew that I wanted to make it work. I loved the idea of using a script for our Idaho Theater for Youth touring show written by actors who not only had been on tour, but are also incredibly loyal to the Idaho Shakespeare Festival. What really solidified my excitement was being able to work with a deaf actor and extending our outreach with the deaf community.

I love the bleeding of the worlds: fantasy and real life. I think we all allow our fantasy lives to bleed into our real lives. It's what makes life interesting. What I cherish about this play is that the children learn a very valuable lesson in their fantasy lives that they desperately needed in their real lives. I believe it was the only way that they were going to be able to really understand that they have control over the way they are treated in their lives.

Sometimes the only way we are able to accept lessons are through the eyes of someone or something else.

Please explore all this study guide has to offer. It will enrich the experience of your students watching the performance and allow them to, perhaps, learn a thing or too as well.

Enjoy your time spent with *Maggie Lumièrê and the Ghost Train*.

-Renee K. Vomocil, Director
Dear Kids,

*Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train* is a play written about trust and friendship, written by trusted friends. When we started out, we really just sat down over breakfast for dinner and made a list of all the stuff we loved from when we were kids. And then we made a list of all the stuff we love now. You know what? A lot of the stuff we love has stayed the same. So. We wrote a play that’s really just a love letter. So here’s to what we love. To those long summer afternoons spent in the woods when we were kids and when anything was possible. To the nerds who dreamed up stuff. To hidden talents. To the Lumière brothers and those first filmmakers who captured light in a box and changed the world. To Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Harold Lloyd, funny folks you should know. To the person you might overlook, but who will save your life. To Saturday morning cartoons, to Scooby and Shaggy and the gang, to Encyclopedia Brown and all those goofball mysteries. (Zoinks!) To the old silent films and a really good chase scene. To making friends even if we don’t speak the same language. And to you. The kid that you are and the kid we hope you remain. Keep dreaming.

Love,

*Dwayne And Tracy*
The Cast of Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train

Lia Chapman as Maggie Lumière

Chris Canfield as Harry

Jaime Nebeker as Charlie

Dakotah Brown as Buster

Meet the Artists!
Silent films and today’s films have one obvious difference: the presence or absence of sound. While silent films are just that, silent, modern day films are full of a chorus of sounds. However, if you take a closer look, there are many more aspects that differentiate the films of the present and the past. To explain these differences, I will be using scenes from a silent film, *The Circus*, and a modern film, *Elf*. These films are both comedies that were aimed at broad audiences.

Since there is no dialogue in a silent film, you have to use your imagination. In order to understand the film, you need to put your brain to work to think of what the characters are saying, what they are doing, and what their opinions are. For example, in *The Circus*, Charlie Chaplin was running around panicking. He could have been calling for help, yelping swear words, or just simply screaming at the top of his lungs. It is up to you to decide what he is saying. On the contrary, films of today tend to do all the thinking for you. Since you are not only seeing but also hearing everything that is happening, you only have to observe the film, not think about it.

Also, silent films have much simpler storylines than speaking films. The plots are fairly straightforward because it is obviously easy to confuse viewers if there is no dialogue. The plot is limited because the only way words are incorporated into the film is through dialogue boxes, which have to be kept sparse. Writers can delve into mysteries, thrillers, and twists when the actors can use words to move the production along. In *Elf*, Buddy is a boy that was raised by elves and when he grows up goes on a comedic adventure to find his father in New York City. While this is not exactly a movie that stimulates your mind, it does contain many fast-paced events at varying locations that would be hard to follow with no noise. When only using dialogue boxes, though, the films have to keep the story clear-cut and simple, such as a man being trapped in a lion cage.

Actors in silent films have to convey so much more with so much less than speaking actors. They have to over exaggerate everything they do since they have to tell a story by sight, not through words. If you’ve ever watched a silent film you probably notice that the actors need to be dramatic by making theatrical facial expressions and hand gestures. Today actors do not have to rely on non-verbal communication because audiences can pick up what is occurring through their words, tone of voice, and mood. The power of speech is powerful in conveying emotion so, in a sense, modern day actors have an easier job. Music and other sounds present in today’s movies are another way to incorporate emotion into a production. For example, horror movies will use suspenseful music to create a sense of foreboding. Or a sad moment will be accompanied by a slow song. Also, footsteps, knocking, wind gusts, and so on will have an effect on the audience. Of course, silent films do not have these advantages so this emphasizes the fact that those actors need to work harder to convey emotions to the viewers. Keep in mind, though, that some silent films were accompanied by musicians, so they were able to utilize the advantages of music in certain cases.
About Charlie Chaplin

Born Charles Spencer Chaplin in London, England, on April 16, 1889, Charlie Chaplin's rise to fame is a true rags-to-riches story. His father, a notorious drinker, abandoned Chaplin, his mother and his older half-brother, Sydney, not long after Chaplin's birth. That left Chaplin and his brother in the hands of their mother, a vaudevillian and music hall singer who went by the stage name Lily Harley.

Famous for his character "The Tramp," the sweet little man with a bowler hat, mustache and cane, Charlie Chaplin was an iconic figure of the silent-film era and one of film's first superstars, elevating the industry in a way few could have ever imagined.

Armed with his mother's love of the stage, Chaplin was determined to make it in show business himself and in 1897 using his mother's contacts landed with a clog dancing troupe named the Eight Lancashire Lads. It was a short stint, and not a terribly profitable one, forcing the go-getter Chaplin to make ends meet. Eventually other stage work did come his way. Chaplin made his acting debut as a pageboy in a production of Sherlock Holmes. From there he toured with a vaudeville outfit named Casey's Court Circus and in 1908 teamed up with the Fred Karno pantomime troupe, where Chaplin became one of its stars as The Drunk in the comedic sketch, A Night in an English Music Hall.

With the Karno troupe, Chaplin got his first taste of the United States, where he caught the eye of film producer Mack Sennett, who signed Chaplin to a contract for a $150 a week. Through his work, Chaplin came to be known as a grueling perfectionist. His love for experimentation often meant countless retakes and it was not uncommon for him to order the rebuilding of an entire set. It also wasn't rare for him to begin with one leading actor, realize he'd made a mistake in his casting, and start again with someone new.

But the results were hard to refute. During the 1920s Chaplin's career blossomed even more. During the decade he made some landmark films, including The Kid (1921), The Pilgrim (1923), A Woman in Paris (1923), The Gold Rush (1925), a movie Chaplin would later say he wanted to be remembered by, and The Circus (1928). The latter three were released by United Artists, a company Chaplin co-founded in 1919 with Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, and D.W. Griffith.

Nearing the end of his life, Chaplin did make one last return to visit to the United States in 1972, when he was awarded a special Academy Award from the Motion Picture Academy. The trip came just six years after Chaplin's final film, A Countess from Hong Kong (1966), the filmmaker's first and only color movie. Despite a cast that included Sophia Loren and Marlon Brando, the film did poorly at the box office. In 1975, Chaplin received more recognition when Queen Elizabeth knighted him.

In the early morning hours of December 25, 1977, Charlie Chaplin died at his home in Corsier-sur-Vevey, Vaud, Switzerland. His wife Oona and seven of his children were at his bedside at the time of his passing. In a twist that might very well have come out of one of his films, Chaplin's body was stolen not long after he was buried from his grave near Lake Geneva in Switzerland by two men who demanded $400,000 for its return. The men were arrested and Chaplin's body was recovered 11 weeks later.
About Charlie Chaplins’ film The Kid

The Kid is a 1921 American silent comedy-drama film written by, produced by, directed by and starring Charlie Chaplin, and features Jackie Coogan as his adopted son and sidekick. This was Chaplin’s first full-length film as a director (he had been a co-star in 1914's Tillie's Punctured Romance). It was a huge success, and was the second-highest grossing film in 1921, behind The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. In 2011, The Kid was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant." One of the first major films to combine comedic moments with dramatic elements, The Kid is widely considered one of the greatest films in cinematic history.

The Plot of The Kid

An unwed woman (Purviance) leaves a charity hospital carrying her newborn son. An artist (Miller), the apparent father, is shown with the woman’s photograph. When it falls into the fireplace, he first picks it up, then throws it back in to burn up. The woman decides to abandon her child in the back seat of an expensive automobile with a handwritten note imploring the finder to care for and love the baby. However, the car is stolen. When the two thieves discover the child, they leave him on the street. The Tramp (Chaplin) finds the baby. Unwilling at first to take on the responsibility, he eventually softens and names the boy John.

Five years pass, and the child (Coogan) becomes the Tramp’s partner in minor crime, throwing stones to break windows that the Tramp, working as a glazier, can then repair. Meanwhile, the woman becomes a wealthy star. She does charity work among the poor to fill the void of her missing child. By chance, mother and child cross paths, but do not recognize each other.

When the boy becomes sick, a doctor comes to see him. He discovers that the Tramp is not the boy’s father. The Tramp shows him the note left by the mother, but the doctor merely takes it and notifies the authorities. Two men come to take the boy to an orphanage, but after a fight and a chase, the Tramp regains his boy. When the woman comes back to see how the boy is doing, the doctor tells her what has happened, then shows her the note, which she recognizes.

Now fugitives, the Tramp and the boy spend the night in a flophouse, but the manager (Bergman), having read of the $1000 reward offered for the child, takes him to the police station to be united with his ecstatic mother. When the Tramp wakes up, he searches frantically for the missing boy, then returns to doze beside the now-locked doorway to their humble home. In his sleep, he enters "Dreamland," with angels in residence and devilish interlopers. He is awakened by a policeman, who places the Tramp in a car and rides with him to a house. When the door opens, the woman and John emerge, reuniting the elated adoptive father and son. The policeman, happy for the family,
About The Lumière Brothers

Auguste and Louis Lumière were French inventors and pioneer manufacturers of photographic equipment who devised an early motion-picture camera and projector called the Cinématographe (“cinema” is derived from this name). Auguste Lumière (b. Oct. 19, 1862, Besançon, France—d. April 10, 1954, Lyon) and his brother Louis Lumière (b. Oct. 5, 1864, Besançon, France—d. June 6, 1948, Bandol) created the film La Sortie des ouvriers de l’usine Lumière (1895; “Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory”), which is considered the first motion picture.

Sons of a painter turned photographer, the two boys displayed brilliance in science at school in Lyon, where their father had settled. Louis worked on the problem of commercially satisfactory development of film; at 18 he had succeeded so well that with his father’s financial aid he opened a factory for producing photographic plates, which gained immediate success. By 1894 the Lumières were producing some 15 million plates a year. That year the father, Antoine, was invited to a showing of Thomas Edison’s Kinetoscope in Paris; his description of the peephole machine on his return to Lyon set Louis and Auguste to work on the problem of combining animation with projection. Louis found the solution, which was patented in 1895. At that time they attached less importance to this invention than to improvements they had made simultaneously in color photography. But on Dec. 28, 1895, a showing at the Grand Café on the boulevard des Capucines in Paris brought wide public acclaim and the beginning of cinema history.

The Lumière apparatus consisted of a single camera used for both photographing and projecting at 16 frames per second. Their first films (they made more than 40 during 1896) recorded everyday French life—e.g., the arrival of a train, a game of cards, a toiling blacksmith, the feeding of a baby, soldiers marching, the activity of a city street. Others were early comedy shorts. The Lumières presented the first newsreel, a film of the French Photographic Society Conference, and the first documentaries, four films about the Lyon fire department. Beginning in 1896 they sent a trained crew of innovative cameraman-projectionists to cities throughout the world to show films and shoot new material.
Synopsis of Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train

Maggie Lumière loves making movies. She has always seen what others miss; the intricacies of Charlie Chaplin’s walk or the way shadow gives way to light. She’s also deaf, but this has never stopped her from pursuing anything in life. Determined to make a silent film masterpiece, Maggie, gathers her intrepid posse of moviemaking pals, Charlie, Buster, and Harry, on the last day of summer break, to finish what they have started. No matter how well you think you know a friend, there is always more to learn. Deeply engrossed in making their masterpiece, the friends have to work to find trust as they learn more about who each other are.
Costume Design in Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train

Costume designers create the look of each character by designing clothes and accessories the actors will wear in the performance. Their designs need to faithfully reflect the personalities of the characters in the script. Creative collaboration among the costume designer, the director and the set and lighting designers ensures that the costumes are smoothly integrated into the production as a whole.

On this page and the next page, you will see the renderings or drawings of the costumes you will see in the production and how they come to life from beginning as a drawing to being created on stage.
Here are additional renderings of the costumes that you will see in the production of Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train. While watching the performance, see how many you can recognize from these drawings.
In the play *Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train*, Maggie is deaf and the way that she communicates with her friends is through sign language. You will be seeing a lot of this sign language used in this production. This part of the guide is intended to assist you in understanding some of the common phrases, letters and numbers used in sign language. There is also a way in sign language to applaud. Use these picture examples to get familiar with sign language before the production.
In the play *Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train*, Maggie is directing a silent movie. A director is responsible for determining how they want the story to be told and the voice that the story should be told in. In this case, the movie is silent and since there is no dialogue in a silent film, you have to use your imagination. In order to understand the film, you need to put your brain to work to think of what the characters are saying, what they are doing, and what their opinions are. If you were going to direct a silent film, what would the film be about? How many characters would be in the film and how would you make sure that your story was told in a way that people would understand without the use of words? Remember to use your imagination and have fun.
Vocabulary

Git: noun — twit or idiot

Perambulator: noun — device to transport a baby, stroller

Sieve: noun — sifter, strainer separating wanted elements from unwanted elements

Superfund Site: noun — polluted locations requiring a long term response to clean-up hazardous material contaminations

Zut Alors!: Shucks! (French)

Billow: verb, noun — rise up as if in wave; a great wave or flood

Method Acting: noun — a group of techniques actors use to create in themselves the thoughts and feelings of their characters, so as to develop lifelike performances

Boxcar: noun — a railroad freight car with a roof and sliding doors on the side

Annihilate: adjective — to reduce to nothing or destroy the existence of

Light Meter: noun — photographic equipment that measures the intensity of light

“As I walked towards the boxcar, I noticed smoke billowing out.”

Create five sentences that use a vocabulary word to help illustrate its meaning.

1. __________________________
   __________________________

2. __________________________
   __________________________

3. __________________________
   __________________________

4. __________________________
   __________________________

5. __________________________
   __________________________
The set of *Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train* was designed to look and feel like a boxcar! In the space below, design your own boxcar for *Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train*. You can draw the set of the ITY production, or design your very own! What would your boxcar look like?
Below is a list of quotations from the Idaho Theater for Youth production of *Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train*. Read each line, and see if you can remember which character said it! Write the character’s name on the line next to the quotation. Some characters may be used more than once.

1. “No way. I thought we’d never finish. Food, food, food, I’m gonna get some real food, food, food” ___________________

2. “That’s exactly what it is, you sieve! It’s a big, fat secret! We swore to Maggie that we wouldn’t tell anyone what we were doing!” __________________________

3. “It’s her! The ghost of the ghost train! Looking for her long lost ghost child!” ______________________

4. “Ha-tee-tah-tee I think Harry Potter is soooooo dreamy” _________________________

5. “I say, don’t you love how I’m speaking with an English accent in a SILENT MOVIE!! “_______________________

6. “I dare you to say that to her, Romeo!” ____________________________
Think like a critic!

This is your students’ opportunity to express their thoughts and opinions about the performance of *Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train* that they just saw! Invite them to think about their experience and answer the following questions:

1. What is the name of your school?
2. Have you ever seen a play before?
3. Would you recommend this play to your friends?
4. Do you think it is important for people to see plays? Why or why not?
5. Was the story of *Maggie Lumiere and the Ghost Train* clear to you?
6. Did you learn something from this play that you did not expect to learn?
7. What was your favorite part of the performance? What did you like about it?
8. Did you have a least favorite part of the performance? Why?
9. Were there any additional aspects of the show that stood out to you (i.e. music, costumes, jokes, etc.)? What did you like most about those aspects of the show?
10. Would you like for *ITY* to perform at your school again next year?

Expanding the activity

Have your students pretend that they are reviewers for a major newspaper. They can name the newspaper, format their article, add headlines and “photographs,” and display their publications around the classroom!
Additional Materials

Suggested films for students who enjoyed *Maggie Lumière and the Ghost Train*

*The Kid* starring Charlie Chaplin

*Chaplin* starring Robert Downey Jr.

*Steamboat Bill, Jr.* starring Buster Keaton

*A Trip to the Moon* a Georges Méliès film

*The Boxcar Children* based on the books by Gertrude Chandler Warner
Here are some recommendations for reading materials for students. These selections will keep you entertained as well as teach you about movie making, freight trains and fantasy.

**Kids Guide to Movie Making** by Shelley Frost

**Light, Camera, Action!** By Lisa O’Brien

**Movie Maker** by Tim Grabham, Suridh Hassan, Dave Reeve and Clare Richards

**The Boxcar Children** by Gertrude Chandler Warner

**Sources**


https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Kid_(1921_film)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auguste_and_Louis_Lumi%C3%A8re

http://blackdiamondcomedies.org/2012/10/19/silent-films-vs-films-of-today/

http://www.aact.org/people/costumedesigner.html
“A day without laughter is a day wasted!”

-Charlie Chaplin