LIVE THEATRE IS AN ACTIVE EXPERIENCE!

Ground Rules:

As members of the audience, you play an important part in the success of a theatrical performance. Please review the following theatre rules with your students prior to your LKTYP visit.

- Food, drinks, candy and gum are not permitted in the theatre.
- LKTYP is a nut-free zone. Many children have severe life-threatening allergies; NO PEANUTS or NUT products may be brought to our theatre.
- No electronic devices are permitted in the theatre because they affect our sound system. Photography, audio and video recording during a performance is prohibited by the Canadian Theatre Agreement.
- Students are not permitted to leave the theatre unless they are accompanied by an adult.

Theatre is a two-way exchange:

Actors are thrilled when the audience is engaged and responsive. We want you to laugh, cheer, clap and really enjoy your time at the theatre. However, please be considerate audience members. Talking, whispering and excessive movement during a live performance is distracting for the actors, and disruptive for other audience members.

Enhance your visit by encouraging your students to look at different aspects of the production. Before the show, identify tasks for your class. Have one group of students looking at the set, another listening for the music and sound effects, a third watching the lighting and a fourth, the costumes. Compare notes after the show about what they observed. Your students will be more informed and they’ll be surprised by how much they noticed. Ask them to be prepared with one question for the actors after the show. Brainstorm with them about possible topics to get the most out of the experience!
Identifying fears and emotions and dealing with conflicts can feel precarious, not only for children but for adults as well. Sometimes, in an effort to mitigate these feelings, we attempt to avoid, reject or not fully acknowledge the extent to which we are affected by these situations. This reaction can lead to more anxiety and can begin to impede the way we go about our daily lives. This is where we find Ben. Ben’s father is away on military duty; before he left he gave Ben a pair of binoculars that have become extremely important to him. Vince, Ben’s friend has taken these binoculars and won’t give them back. Fortunately for Ben, he has a Monster, Luke, living under his bed who would give anything to go to school and retrieve Ben’s binoculars. Luke has no fear, only excitement. His experience at Ben’s school shows how the absence of any kind of fear can also be problematic. Further complicating the story is Luke’s dad, also a Monster who is afraid of everything and needs Ben’s help to overcome those fears.

In this study guide you will find exercises that help students identify their fears and determine ways in which to overcome them. Students will also be asked to think creatively about conflict and how to best to deal with confrontation while keeping in mind that avoidance (while perhaps comforting in the moment) is not a very useful long-term coping strategy. As always you will find Jon Kaplan’s article on student reviewing on page 19.

This season, LKYP is exploring the theme of True Character. *The Monster Under the Bed* is a play that investigates how young people negotiate and conquer their fears and worries through perseverance, honesty, and kindness.

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**THE STUDY GUIDE**

**Thematic Overview**

In this study guide you will find exercises that help students identify their fears and determine ways in which to overcome them. Students will also be asked to think creatively about conflict and how to best to deal with confrontation while keeping in mind that avoidance (while perhaps comforting in the moment) is not a very useful long-term coping strategy. As always you will find Jon Kaplan’s article on student reviewing on page 19.

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**STRANDS AND CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

**Curriculum Connections:** Social Studies, The Arts

**Character Development Connections:** Relationships; Rules and Responsibilities, Awareness of Surroundings, Self-Awareness and Self Reliance

In addition to Drama and Language Arts, *The Monster Under the Bed* directly relates to student development in the areas of:

**Social Studies:** Relationships, Rules and Responsibilities.

**The Arts:** Drama - Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing.
The Monster Under the Bed Study Guide

THE COMPANY

The Cast

Celine/Miss Rowlands/Mum | Marie Beath Badian
Ben | Darrel Gamotin
Monster | Danny MacDonald
Dad Monster/Dad | Paul Sun-Hyung Lee
Vince/Anthony/Danny | David Yee

Creative Team

Director | Nina Lee Aquino
Playwright | Kevin Dyer
Set & Costume Designer | Camellia Koo
Lighting Designer | Michael Walton
Original Music & Sound Designer | Romeo Candido
Assistant Sound Designer | Kevin Centeno
Movement Designer | Clare Preuss
Stage Manager | Stephanie Nakamura
Assistant Director | Keith Barker
Assistant Stage Manager | Kat Chin

SYNOPSIS

Ben has two problems: First of all, his best friend Vince has stolen his prized binoculars and secondly there is a monster under his bed. On the last day of school before holidays, Ben is reluctantly getting ready when he encounters a strange new world – with a strange inhabitant – right under his bed. With some trepidation, Ben befriends the boy monster living there. The two agree to swap places when Luke, the boy monster convinces Ben that he can retrieve the binoculars from Vince. A plan that initially seems foolproof, it quickly falls apart as Luke grapples with pretending to be human around the other boys and girls. Meanwhile, Ben discovers another monster under his bed, Luke's Dad! Now the clock starts ticking for both boys as Luke repeatedly fails to retrieve the binoculars and Ben attempts to appease the hungry dad monster who thinks Ben has done away with his son.

GLOSSARY

The words in the Glossary appear in blue throughout the study guide.

Gesture: A movement or position of the face and body that expresses an emotion or an idea.

Heirloom: a family possession that is handed down from generation to generation

Inner Monologue: The inner thoughts (or subtext) of a character. Inner monologues express what the character is really thinking in any given situation. The inner monologue can often be quite different from the character's outward actions and speech.

Mime: the art/technique of portraying a character, emotion, narration and objects through physical movements

Monologue: a prolonged speech in drama where one character speaks

“Physicalize”: Is a word that drama practitioners use to embody an idea, emotion or character in a performer's body.
What is the job of a playwright?
To create a character that everyone in the audience really believes in; then to work out what that character really wants, really really wants; then to put the character in the situation where they are not ready, not at all ready, but they still have to get the thing they want… (that is the quest that the character has to go on…) then the playwright's job is to put as many obstacles in the way as possible.

Or, simply: A character wants something – the play stops them.

This play is all about obstacles – blindness, bullies, monsters that imprison you, ignorance, the job that stops you loving your children properly, or the war that takes your dad away. But, in drama, the biggest obstacle, of course, is not things outside us, but ourselves.

If only we can overcome our limitations then we can achieve great things.

Of course, in the world, not only do we have our own self-imposed limitations, but people are putting them on us all the time as well. That is what stories (and plays are only stories acted out) explore: how we overcome. That is why we follow the story, to see the hero overcome her obstacles.

Children's stories are very easy to write in some ways. Because children have so little power in the world, that means they have the potential of great journeys ahead of them - as they climb on that peach, as they go down that rabbit hole, as they push the fur coats aside and go through the other side. On the other hand, because children don't have the freedom, doesn't that mean they make pretty useless heroes. They can never be as powerful as Rambo, or fly like superman or find Private Ryan.

The truth, however, is that little fears are often the most potent. There is nothing more frightening than the non-existent monster under the bed, nothing more sad-making (if that is a word) than losing the friendship of your best friend, than watching the person who cares for you most walk out the door.

In this play I've tried to give all the characters strong internal wants, needs, drives. And even though it's a play about a monster (well two actually. Or maybe three, or four, or five?) I've tried to anchor all the emotions of the characters in feelings I or my sons have. Hopefully, by doing that, by starting the play off with real emotions, I can make my story leap across the gap from the actors and the audience. It's like a chain: my oldest son told my youngest that there were monsters under the bed. The little one was scared, insecure, wanted his daddy; I felt his fear; I put it in the play; the actors connect the story with the fears they feel in their own lives, and put it in the hearts of their characters. You, the audience, see it, recognise it, feel it (a bit) and the chain, from me in Wales, to you in Canada is complete.

Lastly, on the subject of what characters want… This play is very simple. Ben has lost the binoculars and the play is about how he gets them back. Or maybe that isn't what he's lost? Maybe what he gets at the end of his quest is different, better?
Pre-Show Unit of Study—All Grades

Curriculum Expectations

By participating in the pre-show activities, students will:

• Be able to recognize and choose different movements for dramatizing their responses to different stimuli.

• Engage actively in dramatic exploration using moments from their own lives.

• Imitate movements found in their natural environment and incorporate them into a movement phrase.

Pre-Show Questions—All Grades

• What kind of different monsters have you seen or heard of?

• When you hear the word “monster”, what emotions come to mind?

• What is an object that you have been given that is very special to you?

• Why is it special?

• What would you do if that object was taken from you?

• Have you ever made a plan with your friend that did not go the way you wanted?

• What happened when your plan went awry?

Activity #1: Identifying Fears

Facing your Fears

The Monster Under the Bed examines how Ben, a 9 year old overcomes his fears not only of the monster that is living under his bed but also his fear of facing the conflict between him and his friend, Vince. In this exercise students will look at fear; how it affects them physically and emotionally and in doing so will try and understand the stages of identifying a fear and learning how to overcome it.

Directions:

• Spend some time with students brainstorming possible fears.

• When a list has been created, have students assemble in a circle, standing shoulder to shoulder but with their backs facing in.

• When you call out a fear from the list, ask students to quickly create a physical representation of that fear and turn in to show it to the group (everyone shows at the same time).

• Repeat the activity until students have physicalized a number of different fears.

Activity #2: Steps to Overcoming Your Fears

Discuss with students some of the possible stages in facing and overcoming a fear using the following questions:

• What happens to your body when you are afraid of something (butterflies in tummy, sweaty palms, shortness of breath, dizziness, etc.)?

• What can you do to calm yourself?

• How can you face the fear? (Note: avoiding fears generally makes them worse. Ask students to think about how they can take steps to overcome the fear.)
Activity #3: Overcoming Fear Worksheet
Ask students to draw the stages in overcoming a fear that they have identified using the worksheet provided on pg. 8.

As they complete the worksheets, ask students to consider how they would represent each stage using different colours, patterns, facial expressions to show the process of overcoming a fear (i.e. at the first stage of approaching a fear perhaps the students will use shaky lines to indicate butterflies in the tummy, or concentric circles to show dizziness and shortness of breath. Once the figure has overcome the fear students could think about a colour that reminds them of pride, relief etc.) It might help to think of a character from a story they are familiar with who has to undergo this process.

Culminating Activity: Presenting the Stages
Using the worksheets as inspiration, have students physicalize the process of overcoming the fear.

Directions:
• Separate the classroom into a playing space and an area for the audience.
• Ask students to (one at a time) enter the playing space from stage left and move through the space to stage right showing a full body gesture that represents the first stage of overcoming a fear: recognizing what happens to your body when you are afraid.
• Once complete ask the student to move on to a gesture indicating a self-soothing technique.
• Once the self-soothing gesture is complete have students show a gesture indicating that they have overcome their fear.

Teacher prompt:
Try choosing a piece of music first! How does this inform the way the students proceed through the exercises?

Choose a piece of music that relates to the theme of overcoming fears and repeat the culminating activity but this time ask students to move through the space in groups of four or five, showing their gestures. This will create an interesting movement piece examining how fear affects the body.

Extension #1 Grades 4—6: Physical Vocabulary:
• Have students complete the culminating activity above and then assemble in the groups of four to continue working on their gestures.
• Each student should have three gestures that they created for the culminating activity. Ask students to show each other their gestures.
• Once everyone has shown their gestures ask the group to choose the two strongest from each member of the group. They will end up with a total of eight gestures.
• Have each member of the group memorize the eight gestures (as a group they should determine the order of the gestures).
• The group should rehearse the eight gestures until they easily flow together creating a physical vocabulary describing the process of overcoming a fear.

Teacher prompt:
Think about the pacing when moving from one gesture to the next. How does this change the effect of the vocabulary?

• Ask the groups to choose a piece of music that complements their physical vocabularies.

Extension #2
Have students choose a word to describe each gesture. Using this vocabulary, have them create a short poem to go with their movement piece.
OVERCOMING FEAR WORKSHEET
**POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES**

**Curriculum Expectations:**

By participating in the post-show activities, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of role playing by communicating thoughts and feelings appropriate to that role
- Use visual arts as a means to express ideas
- Examine and explore differences, similarities and relationships

**Discussion Questions — All Grades:**

- How does Ben change from the beginning of the play to the end?
- Are Ben and Vince friends? Why? Why not?
- How do Ben and Vince deal with their conflicts? Are there more/other constructive ways they could deal with their conflicts? (Have students give examples).
Activity #1: Grades 1-3
My Monster and Me
In *The Monster Under the Bed*, Ben and Luke share some things in common and have some differences.

Directions:

Have students use the diagram below to list the traits that Ben and Luke share and the traits that make them different.
Have students complete this worksheet while creating a monster of their own using the Monster Profile on pages 12 and 13. What traits would they share with the monster they have created? What traits would be different? How would they be like their monster? How would they be different?
Create a character sketch of the monster using the monster profile below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monster Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monster Age:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monster Likes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monster Dislikes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monster’s Favourite Food:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Monster Self-Portrait

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Monster Family Tree
In the play, Ben charges Luke with the task of retrieving the binoculars his father gave him.

What would students ask their monster to do for them?
Write a story about the adventure the monster would go on while trying to achieve this task.
Curriculum Expectations

By participating in the post-show activities, students will:

• Engage actively in drama exploration and role play with a focus on examining issues and themes.

• Communicate thoughts, feelings and ideas to a specific audience.

• Develop interpretations about the play/characters/script using stated and implied ideas to support their interpretations.

• Identify their point of view and others’ point of views through writing and use of expressive language.

Activity #1 Playing with Objects and Text:

The play opens with the following stage directions and dialogue between Ben and Vince:

...Then another boy, Vince, runs on and the two boys play with the, still unwrapped present. They play the game where an object is made into other objects — so the parcel is a ball, an airplane, anything and everything.

Ben: Vince! Let go.
Vince: No.
Ben: Let go.
Vince: I am only looking.
Ben: Just look then.
Vince: Come on, I’m your mate.
Ben: Let go then. Give it back.
Vince: (smiling) O all right.

Vince lets go. Ben relaxes. Vince snatches it, laughs and runs off with the parcel.

Directions:

• Have students stand in a circle.

• One student starts the exercise by creating a mimed object and holding it in his/her hand. It should be clear to the rest of the group what the object is so ask students to be specific in their movements, by showing the weight of the object, and using gestures to help the group understand the object being mimed.

• Once the first person has created the object and the rest of the group has figured out what it is, he/she will pass the object.

• The person receiving the object must handle it as it has been given to them before turning the object into something else and passing it on.

• The exercise continues until everyone has had a chance to create a new object.
Activity #2: Inner Monologues:

Directions:

• Using the text provided have students find a partner to play the roles of Vince and Ben.

• Once students have each had a chance to play both characters ask for four volunteers.

• Create a play space and an area for an audience

• One student will play the role of Ben, the other the role of Vince. The other two volunteers will act as the inner voices for the characters explaining with a couple of short sentences how the characters might be feeling.

Example:

Ben’s Inner Voice: why does Vince always have to tease me? He knows that I am not as strong as him and he always uses that against me.

Ben: Vince! Let go.

Vince’s Inner Voice: I deserve to look at those binoculars. He is my best friend; he should do what I say!

Vince: No.

• Once the four volunteers have worked through the text, have students work in groups of four to try out using the character’s inner voices.

• Ask students to think about how they might change the text knowing what they now know about how the characters feel during this exchange.

• Have students re-write the scene using the template on page 17. Once completed, have students perform their new scenes for the class.

• How did the scene change once the inner monologues were considered?
Ben:

Vince:

Ben:

Vince:

Ben:

Vince:
Extension: Writing in Role

Ask students to write a letter in role as one of the characters to another character describing how the events from the play have affected them.

Note: If they are writing from the perspective of either Luke or Monster Dad make sure they are using monster-speak from the play!

Debrief:

• Which character’s inner monologue was easiest to write? why?
• Is it easy or difficult to think about someone else’s inner monologue?
• How do you think that thinking in someone else’s perspective could help solve a problem in real life? Give some examples.
• Why do you think people don’t just say what they are thinking all the time?
• How did you choose the character that you wanted to write as/to?
• What was easy/difficult about writing a letter as someone else?
The Monster Under the Bed

Arts Impact: Making a difference in the lives of students

LKTYP is proud to have Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life as lead sponsors for its Arts Impact programme, which provides opportunities for schools in low-income areas of Toronto to participate in quality arts education. Arts Impact’s goal is to deepen students’ understanding of theatre, allowing them to be inspired by the material presented on stage and to think in ways that challenge their own perceptions.

Connections: Addressing the pattern of poverty

There is empirical evidence that children who live in poverty are at greater risk of dropping out of school. Studies have also proven that exposure to the arts improves scholastic ability and attendance. Thanks to the generosity of CIBC Children's Foundation, LKTYP can offer special subsidized tickets to qualifying schools.

REVIEWSING A PLAY
Jon Kaplan’s Introduction to Student Reviewers

Theatre is, for me, an art form that tells me something about myself or gets me thinking about the world in which I live.

Whether going to the theatre as a reviewer or simply an audience member, I think that watching a play is an emotional experience and not just an intellectual one. I always let a show wash over me, letting it touch my feelings, and only later, after the show, do I try to analyze those feelings.

That's when I start to think about some of the basic questions you ask when you're writing a review — what did I see (story, characters, themes); how did I respond to what I saw; what parts of the production (script, performances, direction, design and possibly other elements) made me feel and think what I did; why was I supposed to respond in that fashion?

When you go to the theatre to review, take a few notes during a show if you feel comfortable doing so, but don’t spend your time writing the review during the show; you'll miss what's happening onstage.

Writing a review doesn’t mean providing a plot summary. That’s only part of the job; you have to discuss your reaction to what you saw and try to explore some of the reasons for that reaction.

I don't believe that there's any such thing as a totally objective piece of criticism. We are all individuals, bringing our own backgrounds, experiences and beliefs to a production. In some fashion, every one of us sitting in the theatre is a critic, no matter whether we're writing a review or not; we all react to and form judgments about what we see on the stage.

When I go to a production, I always keep in mind that the people involved in putting it on have worked long and hard — weeks, months, sometimes years — getting it onto the stage. Even if I have problems with the result, it's important to respect the efforts that went into the show.

Jon Kaplan is senior theatre writer at NOW Magazine, where he’s worked for the past 29 years.

LKTYP would like to acknowledge and thank Pat McCarthy for her expertise and advice on this season's study guides.
Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People (formerly Young Peoples Theatre) is the largest Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) company in Canada and a significant institution in the Canadian professional theatre community. Over our 44-year history we have produced many of the most important works that now form the canon of plays for young audiences in this country. At the heart of founder Susan Rubes’ idea for Young Peoples Theatre (YPT) was a belief that children deserve a theatre of their own – with resources and standards no lesser than those for adults. She believed – as we do today – that young people deserve good theatre because theatre is good for young people.

Through the communal experience of the theatre we create for them, children can receive indications of what is important, funny, trivial; positive, negative, wrong, right, rightish, wrongish; frightening, reassuring, empowering, unavoidable; familiar, new, eternal …. We strongly believe that even through the most playful of plays, we are speaking powerfully to children about the community and the world in which they live.

Therefore, at the centre of the artistic policy of LKTP is a desire to have a positive and lasting impact on the emotional, social, and intellectual development of young people.

We want children to be imprinted with experiences that will increase their access to the world, in order for them to grow into the unique and wonderful people they were born to be. To do this, our programming is drawn from the world classics of children’s stories, from contemporary works, from the new plays we develop, and from productions showcasing the most innovative and accomplished theatre for young audiences by other Canadian and international theatre companies.

At LKTP, because we are serious about child development through theatre art, children can experience our work as either audience members or theatre creators. We extend the learning opportunities of our professional productions through our substantial Education & Participation Department. The Department’s services for teachers and students helps connect curriculum objectives and learning outcomes to the content of our professional productions; its Community Participation projects link our theatre skill with the educational aspirations of partners who are dedicated to the growth of young people; our interest-based Drama School offers young people the chance to engage deeply in the excitement of theatre art; and our Community Volunteer programme offers everyone who wants it, the opportunity to participate in the mission of LKTP.

LKTP is not only a professional theatre for young audiences but a vital community-based centre of arts education.