

Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People

Feb 27—Mar 20,
2005

Artistic Director **Allen MacInnis**
Managing Director **Nancy J. Webster**

Where the Wild Things Are

Study Guide



David Warburton as Max; Photo by Hubert Pantel

Co-produced by **Carousel Players and Manitoba Theatre for Young People**
Based in the award-winning book
Written by **Maurice Sendak**
Adapted by **TAG Theatre of Glasgow**
Direction by **Kim Selody**

CAST

Linda Carson Narrator
Blair Keyzer Max

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Linda Leon Set and Costume Designer
Cathy Nosaty Composer and Musical Director
Giselle B. Clarke Stage Manager
Bradley A. Trenaman Lighting Designer

Study Guide by Bev Haskins

Now available online: www.lktyp.ca



LKTYP Educational Services Department
165 Front St. East, Toronto, ON M5A 3Z4
T 416 947-1027 F 416 363-5136
E edservices@lktyp.ca W www.lktyp.ca

THEATRE ETIQUETTE

As members of the audience, you play an important part in the success of a theatrical performance. Students accustomed to watching television in their own homes and those who attend rock concerts and movies are used to eating snacks, moving around, getting in and out of their seats or sharing comments aloud during a show. Movies and TV shows are not affected by the audience. Please make clear to students that the rules are different at a live theatre performance.

We want you to laugh, cheer, clap and really enjoy your time at the theatre but there are a few rules that need to be followed. Students' behaviour is the responsibility of school staff and volunteers. LKTYP staff cannot discipline your students but will insist on their removal if they disrupt other groups.

Please review the following theatre rules with your students prior to your LKTYP visit:

- **Food, drinks, candy and gum chewing are not permitted in the theatre.** The LKTYP snack bar is not open at school performances. NO PEANUTS or NUT products may be brought to our theatre as so many children have severe life-threatening allergies.
- **No electronic devices are permitted in the theatre – they affect our sound system.** This includes walkmans, radios, pagers, cell phones, etc. Students seen with such equipment will be asked to leave them at the Box Office for pick-up after the show.
- **Photography and both audio or video recording during a performance is strictly prohibited by the Canadian Theatre Agreement regulations.** Film or video cassettes will be confiscated by LKTYP staff.
- **Please be considerate audience members.** Talking, whispering, shuffling about in your seats or rattling candy papers during a live performance are rude and disruptive behaviours that are disturbing for other audience members and distressing to the actors.
- **Please do not leave your seat and re-enter the theatre during the performance.** Try to plan washroom visits before the show and during intermission.
- **Do not throw anything onto the stage or into the audience.**
- **Students are not permitted to leave the building during intermission** unless accompanied by a teacher or parent supervisor.
- **Be respectful of the LKTYP staff.** They are available to ensure that ALL audience members have the best possible theatre experience.
- **Please report any disturbances or disruptive behaviour** during the performance to a LKTYP staff member.

Remember, your students are ambassadors of your school when you are out on a field trip. A cast of actors and a host of talented theatre artists, technicians and craftspeople have worked hard to create an enjoyable and entertaining theatre experience for our school and family audiences. With your co-operation in following these guidelines, we are sure it will be just that!

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ONTARIO CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

What do you do when you are a small child and you have exhausted your mother’s patience to the point where you are sent to your room without your supper? Well, if you are Max, in Maurice Sendak’s picture book “Where The Wild Things Are” you use your imagination to both explain your deeds and occupy the time .

The following Study Guide will help you take your students into the world of their imagination. Along with Max, they will brave any fears they may have of imaginary “wild things” lurking in the shadows. The activities presented here involve visual arts, imagination, personal reflections, role playing, movement exercises and creative expression.

The *Ontario Curriculum Expectations* listed here are a compilation of expectations from the primary grades. They will be addressed more or less depending on how many of the activities you engage your students in and the depth and quality that you put into each activity.

ONTARIO CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS/THE ARTS/PRIMARY

DRAMA AND DANCE

The students will...

- *interpret the meaning of stories...drawn from a variety of sources and cultures, using some basic drama and dance techniques (e.g. role playing, movement sequences)*
- *solve problems through role playing and movement in drama and dance*
- *describe some basic ways in which the body can be used in space and time*
- *communicate their responses to a variety of dramatic stimuli*
- *demonstrate control of their bodies when moving like different objects and animals*
- *describe ways in which the experiences of characters in simple performances relate to their own experiences*
- *identify themes and subjects used in works of drama*
- *defend a point of view through speaking in role*
- *distinguish between real and imaginary situations in drama and dance*
- *perform a “soundscape” or sound collage based on a theme or topic*
- *communicate understanding of works of drama through discussion, writing, movement and visual art work*

VISUAL ART

- *produce two and three-dimensional works of art that communicate ideas for specific purposes*
- *identify a variety of art tools, materials, and techniques and demonstrate understanding of their proper and safe use*

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Note from Kim Selody, Artistic Director, Carousel Players:

*During our play some of your students will be using masks as the 'wild things'. Although we can supply the masks used in the play by the children, you can choose to make and use your own. We suggest that you make them out of paper plates, cut in half and held on with an elastic band stapled to the plate. **It is important that the child have both hands free while wearing the mask.** That way the child's hands will be free to make claws. We also ask that the child's mouth be exposed, so they can gnash their teeth and roar. Mask drawings by the designer are attached, which you are free to photocopy and use [see page 5 and 6]. They can decorate the mask any way they wish. We suggest that the teacher collect all the masks and keep them until the Narrator asks for them. That way they are less likely to get damaged before they are needed. Then you can continue with the suggestion to retell the story with their masks in the AFTER THE PLAY Section. Thanks, Kim*

PROPER ETIQUETTE

Before watching any performance, it is important to discuss with your students how to be a good audience member. This is a participation play and so there will be times when the students are asked to make noises and perform actions. Discuss with them the difference between moments of participation and times when they need to be quiet and listen to the actors. Discuss proper clapping procedures. Young children do not clap automatically after a performance and need some "rehearsals" to do it right. Practice beforehand. Talk about remaining in their seats (unless there is an emergency) and make sure bathroom chores are taken care of just before entering the theatre space. To further expand these ideas, please review with your students the "Theatre Etiquette" page on the inside cover.

WHERE THE WILD THINGS LIVE

In the play, a magical forest of "fantastic colours and shapes" grows up in Max's bedroom. Before seeing the forest the actors and children will create on stage, invent one of your own in the classroom. This can be done in one of several ways. Choose paint, cut and paste, crayon, or pastels as your medium.

Before starting, discuss with the students what might be present in their forest. Ask the students the following exploratory questions to encourage them to be specific:

- 1) What colours are in the forest?
- 2) What do the trees look like? How tall are they?
- 4) Is it a jungle?
- 5) What is the ground like? Is it muddy or hard or quicksand?
- 6) What kinds of birds or animals live there?
- 7) Where do the "wild things" live?

Students can individually create drawings of their imaginary forest, work in small groups to create larger murals of an imaginary forest or work together as a class to create an imaginary forest environment in the classroom.

SOUNDS OF THE FOREST

Now that your forest is created, brainstorm a list of possible sounds that might be heard in this magical place. Individually and in small groups assign students to each type of sound listed and suggest that they find instruments in the classroom to create that particular sound. Encourage the use of “found” instruments from home and around the school (i.e. things that you would not normally think of as musical instruments like a comb or a kitchen utensil or even parts of your body). When the individual sounds are perfected, sit in a circle and “orchestrate” the soundscape, calling in various sounds at different times and fading others out, etc. You may even create a story around the sounds and have the students use their sounds as they are mentioned in your story.

SO, WHAT DID YOU THINK?

It is important as soon as possible after viewing a performance to hold an open-ended discussion with your class about the play. You can direct the questioning in the following ways, but make sure that the students feel comfortable expressing their own opinions without judgement from anyone else. Encourage students to justify why they feel and think as they do. Possible topics of discussion:

- 1) What was the theme of this play?
- 2) What was your favourite part? What was your least favourite part? Why?
- 3) Describe how they created the forest on stage. Did you think it was well done?
- 4) Did you like taking part in the play? Why or why not?
- 5) If you were the director, what would you have done differently?

MAX IN TROUBLE

Encourage creative expression and reflection from your students by discussing the following aspects of the play:

- 1) Max has an explanation for everything bad that happened. He blames the dog for messing up the laundry and explains that he needed the spoons for his drumming. Think of some “messes” that you have made at home or at school (or ones that could possibly happen, accidents of course) and brainstorm reasons why they happened. Create a class book or a wall of pictures showing the “messes” and containing the creative explanations. Don’t forget to discuss that creative ideas aside, sometimes you just need to admit your mistake and say you are sorry.
- 2) Max’s mother was so upset with him that to discipline him, she sent him to his room without supper. Have an open-ended honest discussion with your class about discipline techniques, which ones work and which don’t. Discuss with students why discipline is necessary. You may even want to incorporate their ideas into your classroom rules.

THE WILD THINGS COME TO SCHOOL

Use the gym or the playground to allow the class to explore being “wild things” through movement and sound.

Children will create “wild things” according to the following verbal instructions:

- 1) Move like the scariest “wild thing”.
- 2) Add different characteristics such as the largest, the smallest, or the shyest.
- 3) Add movement variations such as fast, slow, lazy, frightened, sad, happy, or worried.
- 4) Describe in words the way your “wild things” move.
- 5) Work in pairs and have one be the sculptor and the other the clay. The sculptor creates the clay into a “wild thing” which then comes “alive” and moves on a signal from the teacher. When all statues are created have the sculptors walk around and view each other’s work. Trade places.

A BOAT THAT CAN FLOAT

Max needs a boat to travel to where the “wild things” live. Students will pretend they are Max and create sailboats. Students will design boats that will float and move across a water table with a small fan. Discuss different design possibilities and materials needed to make the boats and sails. Let the children work individually or in pairs. Encourage students to experiment. Try the boats out and cheer for those that stay afloat. Problem solve for those that don’t. Discuss what would have worked better.

THE FACE IS THE THING

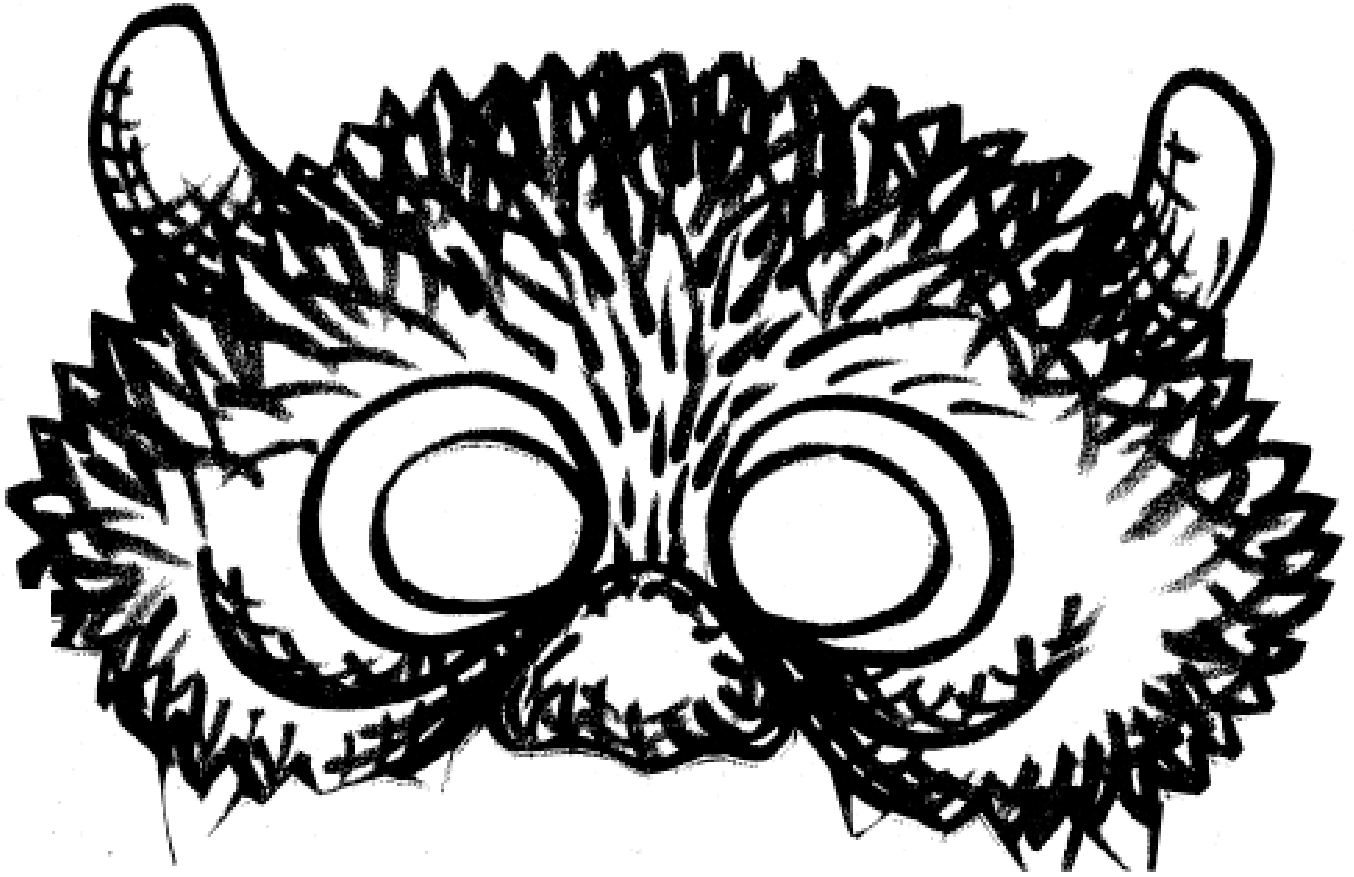
Masks are used in the play and your class will have fun creating their own “wild thing” masks. You can do this in several different ways:

- 1) Paper Bag Masks —facial features can be cut out and additional features added with paint or crayon or paste. These masks are worn over the head.
- 2) Paper Plate Masks —decorate the paper plate using fabric, yarn or paper to create the face of a “wild thing”. Attach an elastic band so the child can have his/her hands free.

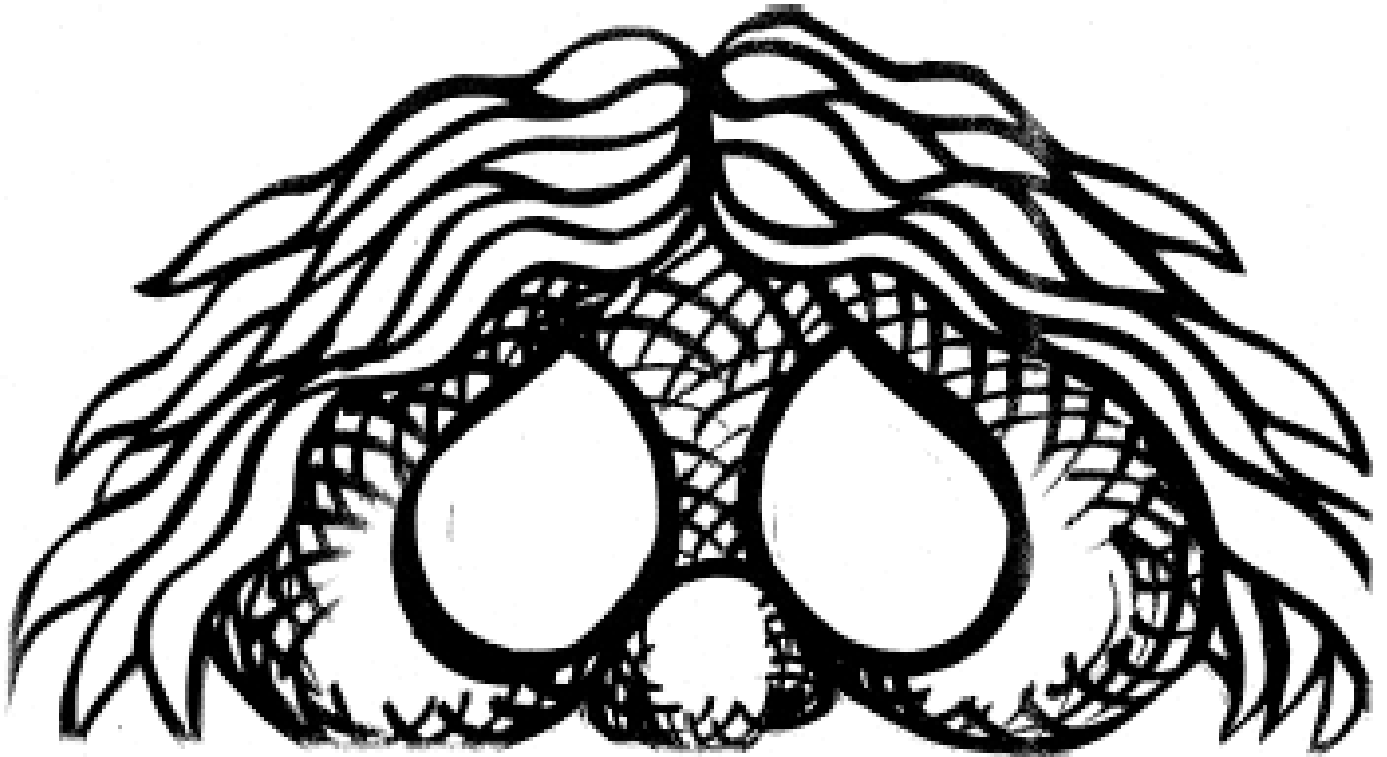
When the masks are created, the children may wish to work in small groups to create plays with their “wild things” masks. Another possibility is to retell the story of the play using their masks.

See page 5 and 6 for examples of masks. These masks can be photocopied for students to colour and cut out. Don’t forget to attach a string or an elastic band so that students can have their hands free while they perform.

MASKS



MASKS



PROFESSOR PRESENTS

There's going to be a "wild things" international conference. All expert professors on "wild things" are invited to attend and present at the conference. Students will pretend to be "wild thing" professors and prepare presentations on a "wild thing" that they have been studying.

Here is a list of things required for the presentation:

- 1) You will need a large portrait in full colour of your "wild thing". Use paint or pencil crayons and large art paper to create this portrait. Encourage students to create an original and detailed picture.
- 2) Next you will need some vital information about your "wild thing". Create a profile of your "wild thing" with some or all of the following information: physical description (size, height, weight, hair-eye colour, body covering), where they live, food they eat, how they move, what are their fears, likes and dislikes and what is their personality like.
- 3) When all is ready, stage the conference and have each expert professor present their "wild thing" to an appreciative audience of other experts. Encourage students to ask questions.

Art extension: create a 3-dimensional model of your "wild thing" from clay, play dough or plasticine. Older children could also make a shoe-box diorama of the "wild thing's" habitat.

KING/QUEEN FOR A DAY

Max has a chance to become king of the "wild things" and decide what they will do next. What if you could be king or queen of the country for just one day? What would you change or do during that day?

Younger students can create a pattern book, "*If I was king/queen, I would....*". Students will illustrate their ideas.

Older students can divide a piece of 12" by 18" art paper in half and then on one side draw and write about what they would do as king or queen that is personal, and on the other half, draw or write about something that is more global or for the whole world.

Students are encouraged to share their ideas with the class.

PARTY TIME

Find a simple sugar cookie recipe and make a batch in class with your students. Allow each student to create their own "wild thing" face on their cookie decorating with raisins, M&M's, or small sprinkles. (anything small you can find that is edible). Make some "wild berry" juice to wash them down. Have a party while you read Maurice Sendak's book "Where The Wild Things Are" to your class. Read the book by your forest. Hang green streamers to simulate vines in the forest. Another good Sendak book which has similar ideas is "In Search of the Zipperumpazoo".

SAVE THE WILD THINGS

Scenario: Everyone in the town is upset. The “wild things” in the nearby forest have become very troublesome and everyone is afraid of what might happen next. Rumours and stories are everywhere of all the horrible, scary and nasty things the “wild things” have been doing (or so people say).

Meeting # 1: Gather together as the people of the town to share stories and rumours about the “wild things” that live in the nearby forest. The teacher should be in role as one of the townspeople who joins in the discussion, encouraging everyone to share their story. The teacher may start by giving an example: *“Well, I’m really upset about my garden. I had wonderful vegetables growing ready to eat and I came out the other morning and there wasn’t a tomato or bean to be seen. Something had eaten everything!”* The teacher eventually leads the discussion around to the fact that the townspeople want something done about this. They want the Town Officials to have all the “wild things” captured and put in cages at the zoo (note: discourage strongly the idea of killing all the “wild things”).

Meeting # 2: The “wild things” professors/experts gather to discuss the rumours they have heard. It is said that the people of the town want to capture all the “wild things”. The experts are very upset about this and want to do something to prevent this from happening. They need to speak to the Town Officials to persuade them that the “wild things” are not dangerous and can be prevented from doing damage. How will they guarantee the people’s safety?

The Final Confrontation: Divide the class into two sections and then each section into smaller groups to plan their arguments. One section will represent the townspeople and the other section consists of experts. The teacher will portray in role the Town Official who will listen to all arguments. S/he will then take the information back to the rest of the Officials for a decision. While the arguments are being prepared the teacher stays out of role and moves from group to group helping students formulate their ideas and how best to present them.

When all is ready, conduct the meeting. From a position of authority, the teacher can ask each group to speak, question them and thank them when they have said enough. S/he can also “remove” any people who are disturbing the peace. If the arguments are strong enough one way or the other a decision may be made during the meeting, assuming all are in agreement. If it is indecisive, close the meeting without any solution. Tell the students that you will “get back” to them later. Out-of-role, have a discussion about how everyone thinks the Town should decide, based on the arguments that were heard.

Note: For younger children, the planning sessions may not be effective. Put the students in role and then

HOW TO TAME A WILD THING

Max casts a spell by staring at the “wild things”. How would you tame a “wild thing”? List different ideas on chart paper. Create a magic spell or incantation (poem) to tame a “wild thing” and perform it.

I NEED YOU AND YOU NEED ME

Eventually, Max says he has to go home because, “my mom and dad need me at home”. Brainstorm with your class ways their parents “need” them.

Do you think Max needed his parents too? Make a list of the ways in which you need your mom and/or dad.

IT WAS IMAGINATION, I KNOW

When Max ends up in his room without supper, he uses his imagination to pass the time and creates a wonderful story about sailing to the land of the “wild things”. Suppose you were spending time in your bedroom. Where could your imagination take you? Draw a picture of this place. Write or tell a story about an adventure you had in this place. Who or what did you meet there? What exciting things happened? How did you get back safely?

This is an excerpt from Sendak’s Caldecott Medal acceptance speech which describes the importance of children using their imaginations:

Max, the hero of my book, discharges his anger against his mother, and returns to the real world sleepy, hungry, and at peace with himself.

Certainly we want to protect our children from new and painful experiences that are beyond their emotional comprehension and that intensify anxiety; and to a point we can prevent premature exposure to such experiences. That is obvious. But what is just as obvious—and what is too often overlooked—is the fact that from their earliest years children live on familiar terms with disrupting emotions, that fear and anxiety are an intrinsic part of their everyday lives, that they continually cope with frustration as best they can. And it is through fantasy that children achieve catharsis. It is the best means they have for taming Wild Things.

It is my involvement with this inescapable fact of childhood—the awful vulnerability of children and their struggle to make themselves King of all Wild Things—that gives my work whatever truth and passion it may have.

Carousel Players is a not-for-profit charitable organization, a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres, an engager of artists under the Canadian Theatre Agreement who are members of the Canadian Actors’ Equity Association, a member of the Theatre for Young Audience Association, Theatre Ontario and the Toronto Theatre Alliance.

Carousel Players Staff
Artistic Director - Kim Selody
Administrative Director - Leslie Francombe
Tour/Sales Manager - Ann MacDougall
Production Manager - Jason Woodgate
Accounts Manager - Donna Vandecoevering
Co-op Student - Barbara Kearns

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PLAYING AN ACTIVE ROLE

We applaud the support of our partners and sponsors whose generosity ensures the artistic integrity of Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People.

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Educational Services Department

Phone: 416 947-1027

Fax: 416 363-5136

Email: edservices@lktyp.ca

Web site: www.lktyp.ca