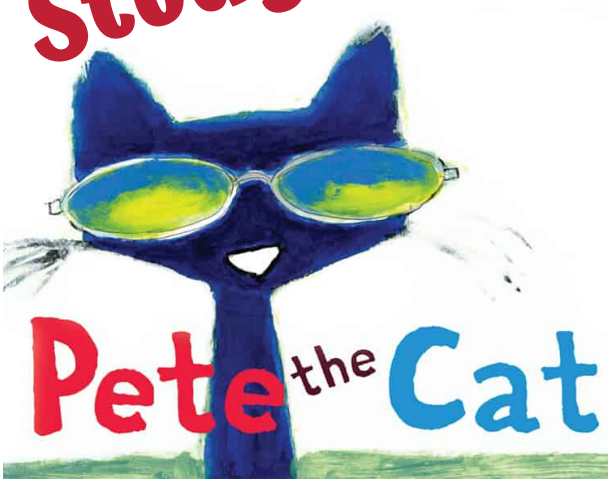
Study Guide



Thank you for attending TheaterWorksUSA's production of *Pete the Cat*. We hope this guide will help your students learn more about the musical and its content, as well as give you creative ways to make the show part of your curriculum. A trip to the theater is always very special and unique, and it can create a lifelong passion for performance and storytelling. We hope our production will inspire your students. You may want to review some basic theater etiquette with your class, as this might be one of their first theater experiences. Talking or being disruptive during the performance is distracting to the actors and fellow audience members. However, we highly encourage clapping, laughing, and cheering at the parts they enjoy.

Feel free to use this guide as a starting point for you and your students to explore the show and its rich content. This study guide is designed to enhance your students' experience in seeing *Pete the Cat*. It will provide discussion points after your class has seen the production, along with lessons and in-class activities. These activities will extend the topic-specific ideas within the show, and engage the students in a hands-on classroom project. Feel free to adapt or change any discussion prompts or material to suit your classroom and style!

The Story

Our show is based on the *Pete the Cat* series of books by James and Kimberly Dean. Pete, a rock and roll cat, and his animal friends are living a life of freedom and jam sessions when they wander into a yard and Pete is caught by the cat-catcher and sent to spend a week as a house cat with a family. Pete meets his host family, the Biddles. He becomes roommates with Jimmy Biddle, a second grader who is nervous about the idea and has a lot of rules about behavior he wants Pete to follow. However, Pete likes to play it cool and is not a rule-follower. Jimmy brings Pete to school and his math test turns into an art class. Jimmy is flustered and copies another student's painting because he can't think of his own idea for a picture. He gets in trouble and has to create an original picture in order to pass second grade. To help him, Pete takes Jimmy in the VW (Very Wonderful) bus to find inspiration for his perfect picture. They travel to the beach, the moon, and Paris. When Jimmy finally learns to let loose and jam with magic sunglasses on, he paints the perfect picture!

L-R: Samantha Owen, Travis Artz, Kevin Zak. Photo by Jeremy Daniel

Before Seeing the Show

1. Read some of the *Pete the Cat* books and review the plots and characters with your students.

2. Ask your students about their pets. Have them describe some activities they do with them.

3. One character in the play has a list of rules he likes to follow. What sort of rules do you have in your classroom? Discuss with your students why rules are important. What happens when someone breaks the rules?

After Seeing the Show

1. Ask your students how the musical was different from the *Pete the Cat* books you read. How was it the same? Discuss the actor who played Pete. How do you think he/she prepared for the role? How would you portray a cat on stage?

2. If your cat or pet could speak, what would you ask him? What do you think he would want to talk about? How would your family life change with a talking animal in the house?

3. Why did Jimmy copy the painting? What happens if you copy someone's work at school? Why do you think it was hard for Jimmy to come up with a painting of his own?

4. Jimmy had a lot of rules for being a roommate. Pete didn't follow rules. What do you think is better: to have rules or not? Discuss how rules are important in some cases and maybe not important in others.

Activities

Creative Dramatics

ELA Common Core Standard SL.4 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Have your students reenact scenes from the play. First, have the students discuss specific scenes: who were the characters, where did it take place, what happened? Examples of scenes might be:

1) Pete and his friends jamming on their instruments
2) Riding a VW bus to different places in the world
3) Trying magic sunglasses for the first time
4) Playing an air instrument (guitar, drums, piano, trumpet, etc)

Creative Writing

Character Maps

ELA Common Core Standard W.3 Text Type and Purposes

Use the attached character maps to describe Jimmy and Pete. After students have listed some traits in the bubbles, have them write a paragraph describing the characters using the trait words. Discuss what traits are the same and different for Pete and Jimmy. Students can combine their paragraphs into a story and bind it into a classroom book for all to share.

Journal Writing

ELA Common Core Standard W.3 Text Type and Purposes

In the show, Jimmy needs inspiration to create the perfect painting. Have students write a journal entry using one of the following prompts:

1) If I could go anywhere in the world...
2) I would use my magic sunglasses to...
3) My perfect pet would be...

Vocabulary Review

ELA Common Core Standard L.4 Vocabulary and Acquisition Use

Use the attached sheet to complete the sentences using the words in the text box.

Artistic Expression

ELA Common Core Standard SL.5 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Jimmy gets inspiration to paint his picture when he wears the magic sunglasses. Talk about what things would look like if you had magic sunglasses. Students can then illustrate their visions and create a bulletin board or poster of the magic pictures of the whole class.

Activities

All About Cats

ELA Common Core Standard W7 Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Learn about cats by doing some research. Do cats really act like Pete does in the play? Explore your library or the Internet for information. Students can work individually or in groups and create presentations displaying their work. Here are some facts to get you started:

1) Cats can sleep up to 16 hours a day
2) Cats can make 100 different sounds (dogs can only make 10)
3) The proper name for a hairball is a bezour

Travis Artz. Photo by Jeremy Daniel

Breeds of Cats

The International Cat Association lists 53 different breeds of cats. According to Catster, the 10 most popular breeds are:

1) Persian	6) Ragdoll
2) Maine Coon	7) Birman
3) Exotic	3) American Shorthair
4) Siamese	4) Oriental
5) Abyssinian	5) Sphynx

Click here to learn more about Cats with Animal Facts for Kids

Read On!

James and Kimberly Dean have collaborated on 30 *Pete the Cat* Books including collections of Picture Books, Song Books, I Can Read Books, and Storybooks.

More Pete the Cat Books

Pete the Cat: I Love my White Shoes
Pete the Cat: Rockin in My School Shoes
Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons
Pete the Cat and His Magic Sunglasses
Pete the Cat and the New Guy
Pete the Cat Saves Christmas
Pete the Cat and the Bedtime Blues

Learn more about Pete and his adventures at
PetetheCatBooks.com

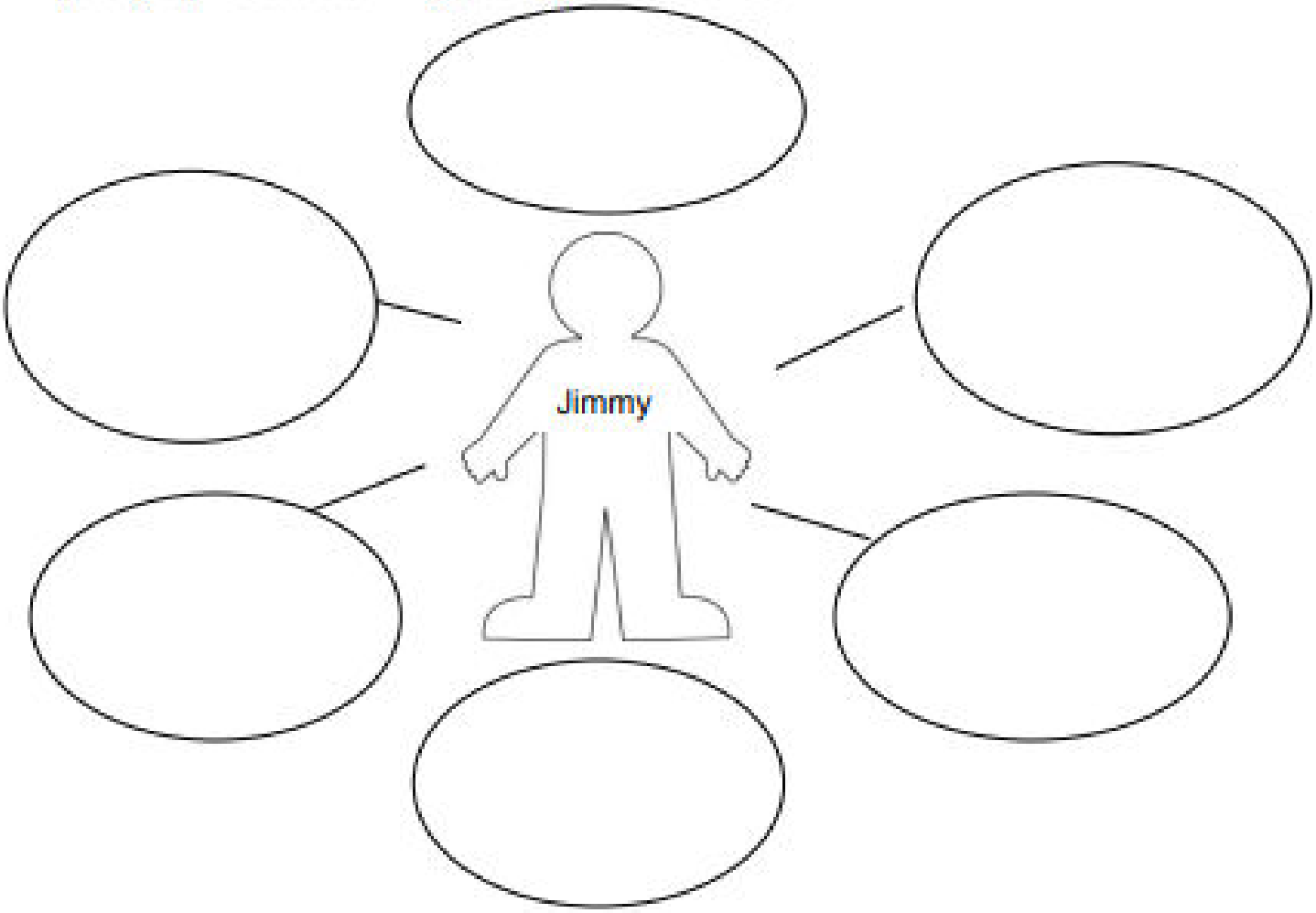
We'd love to hear from you! Please let us know what you thought of *Pete the Cat*. Were your students familiar with the story before seeing the show? Did seeing the production inspire them to read more *Pete the Cat* books? Send comments and suggestions to marketing@twusa.org

L-R: Sam Tedali, Adante Carter, Brandi Porter, Matt Dengler, Kyle Sherman. Photo by Jeremy Daniel

Name: _____ Date: _____

Jimmy
Character Map

Use the character map to write words that describe Jimmy. Then write a paragraph about Jimmy using those words.



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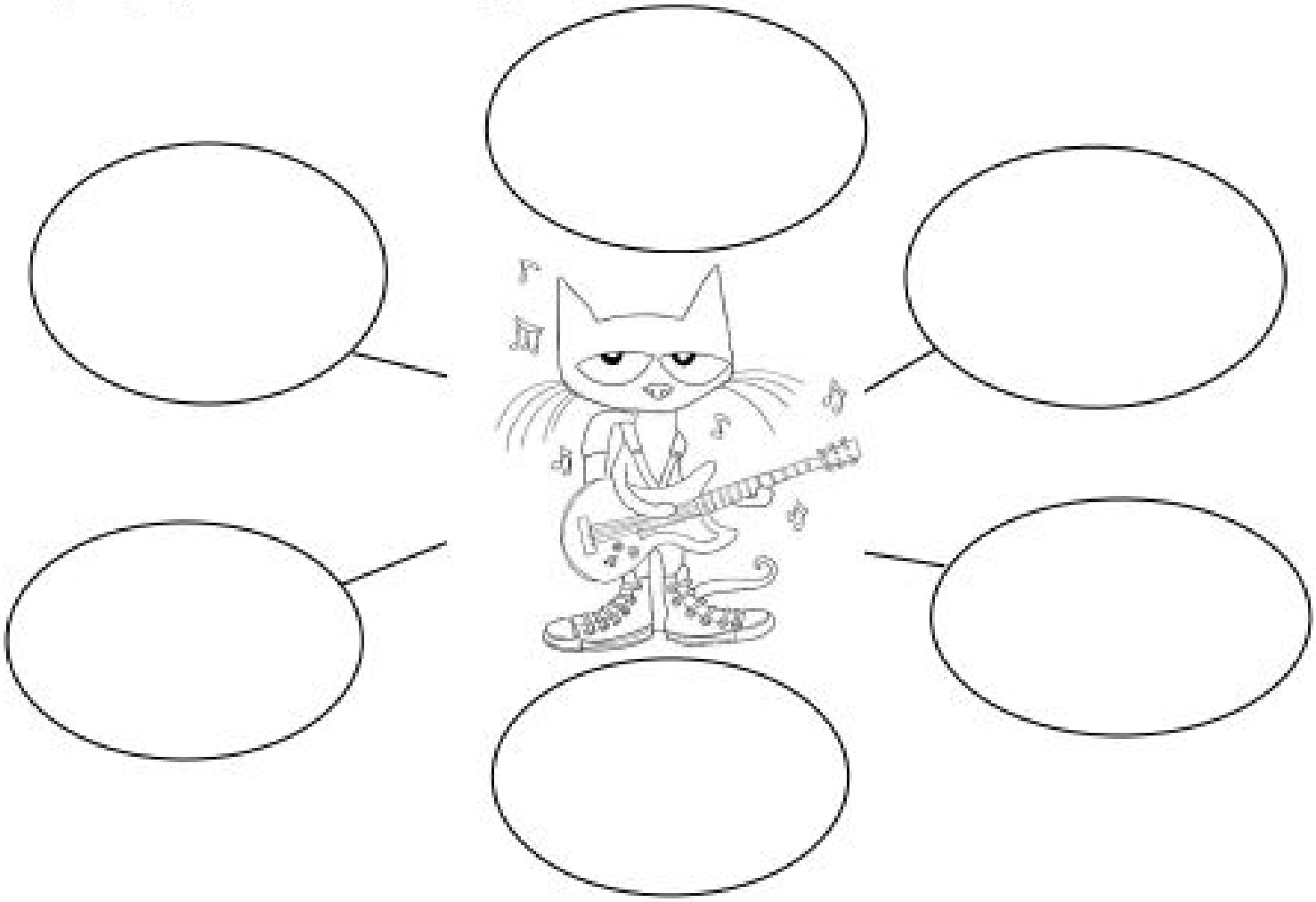
Name: _____ Date: _____

Pete the Cat
Character Map

Use the character map to write words that describe Pete. Then write a paragraph about Pete using those words.



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Name: _____ Date: _____

Complete the sentences using a word from the text box:

Wonderful	disguises	couch	rules	housecat
astronaut	allergic	magic	painting	copied

1. Olive sneezed because she was _____ to Pete.
2. Jimmy explained his _____ to Pete when he moved into his room.
3. Jimmy _____ another student's picture in class.
4. When Jimmy was hiding, they found him under the _____.
5. Pete took Jimmy for a ride in the Very _____ bus.
6. When Pete and Jimmy took the bus to the moon, they spoke to an _____.
7. Jimmy thought he could paint the perfect picture if he could use the _____ sunglasses.
8. To sneak into the café, Jimmy and Olive had to put on _____ to make them look like grown-ups.
9. When he put on the sunglasses, Jimmy suddenly began _____ a beautiful picture.
10. Being a _____ was a pretty cool thing, thought Pete at the end of the day.