

Here comes SUZY SNOWFLAKE

STUDY GUIDE



Play by Catherine Bush
Presented by The Barter Players

HERE COMES SUZY SNOWFLAKE

By Catherine Bush

By the Barter Players, Barter Theatre, 2026 Holiday Season

NOTE: Standards listed below are seeing a performance of Here Comes Suzy Snowflake and completing the study guide

Virginia SOLs

English – K.1, K.5, K.6, K.8, K.9, 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.8, 1.9, 2.1, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.12, 2.14, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.9, 3.11, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, 5.9, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 6.7, 6.9

Music – K.11, K.13, 1.12, 1.16, 2.8, 2.9, 2.11, 2.13, 3.9, 3.10, 3.12, 4.8, 4.9, 4.13, 5.8, 5.9, 5.12, 6.7, 6.9, 6.10

Theatre Arts – 6.5, 6.18, 6.23, 6.24, 6.25

Tennessee / North Carolina Common Core State Standards

English/Language Arts – Reading Literacy: K.1, K.3, K.5, K.7, 1.1, 1.3, 1.6, 1.7, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 6.4, 6.6, 6.7

English Language Arts – Writing: K.1, K.3, 1.1, 1.3, 1.8, 2.1, 2.3, 2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.7, 5.9, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.7, 6.9.

Tennessee Fine Arts Curriculum Standards Theatre – K.4.1, K.4.3, 1.4.1, 1.4.3, 2.4.1, 2.4.3, 3.6.2, 3.6.4, 3.7.1, 3.7.2, 3.8.1, 4.6.1, 4.6.4, 4.7.1, 4.7.2, 4.8.1, 5.6.1, 5.6.4, 5.7.1, 5.7.2, 5.8.1, 6.1, 6.2

Music – K.7.1, K.7.2, 1.7.1, 1.7.2, 2.7.1, 2.7.2, 3.7.1, 3.7.2, 4.7.1, 4.7.2, 5.7.1, 5.7.2

North Carolina Essential Standards Theatre Arts – K.A.1, K.CU.1, 1.A.1, 1.CU.2, 2.A.1, 3.A.1, 3.CU.1, 3.CU.2, 4.A.1, 5.A.1, 5.CU.1, 6.C.1, 6.C.2, 6.A.1, 6.CU.2

Music – K.MR.1, 1.MR.1, 2.MR.1, 3.MR.1, 3.CR.1, 4.MR.1, 5.MR.1, 6.MR.1



BARTER THEATRE

A BRIEF HISTORY

Barter Theatre was founded during the Great Depression by Robert Porterfield, an enterprising young actor. When Porterfield and some of his actor friends found themselves out of work and hungry in New York City, Porterfield suggested they sojourn to his home in southwest Virginia where there was an abundance of food but no live theatre. He returned to Washington County with an extraordinary proposition: bartering produce from the farms and gardens of the area to gain admission to see a play.

Barter Theatre opened its doors on June 10, 1933 proclaiming, "With vegetables you cannot sell, you can buy a good laugh." The price of admission was 40 cents or the equivalent in produce; the concept of trading "ham for Hamlet" caught on quickly. At the end of the first season, the Barter Company cleared \$4.35 in cash, two barrels of jelly and enjoyed a collective weight gain of over 300 pounds.

In 1946, Barter Theatre was designated the state theatre of Virginia and became a launching pad for the careers of many iconic actors and actresses. Barter has also become one of the nation's longest running professional theatres, receiving countless awards and accolades.

Robert Porterfield passed away in 1971. His successor, Rex Partington, a former Barter actor and stage manager, became Barter's chief administrator from 1972 until his retirement in 1992. In October 1992, Richard Rose was named the Producing Artistic Director. During his tenure, attendance grew from 42,000 to more than 163,000 annual patrons. Significant capital improvements were also made, including renovation of the main stage (now Gilliam Stage) in 1995 and the 2006 addition of The Barter Café at Stage II (now the Smith Theatre).



Rose also created Barter's Equity Resident Acting Company, who performs year-round, as well as a company of designers and technicians. Rose retired in December of 2019 and Katy Brown, who had been at Barter since 1998 as the Director of the Barter Players and Associate Artistic Director, was named the fourth Producing Artistic Director – and is the first woman to hold the position.

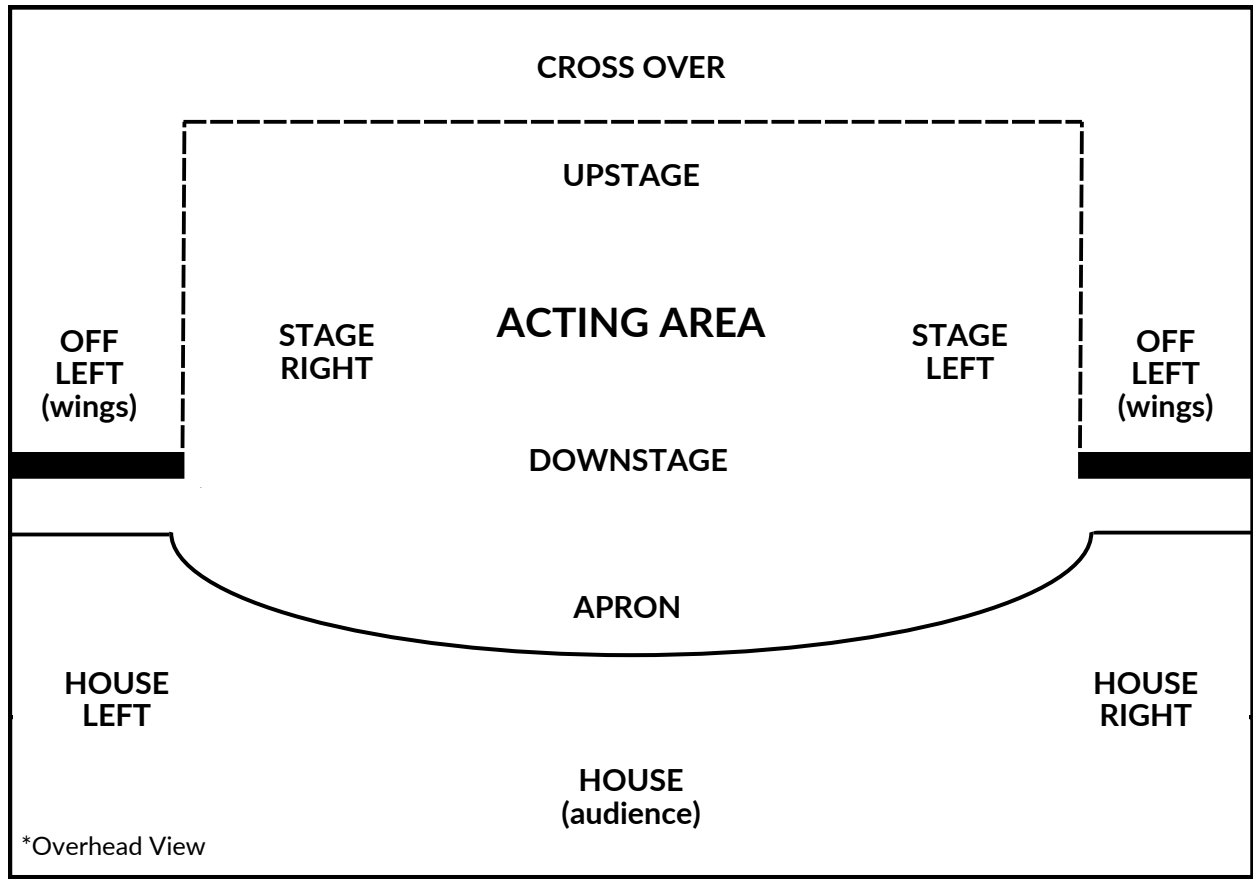
Barter represents two distinct venues of live theatre: Barter Theatre's Gilliam Stage, and Barter's Smith Theatre. Gilliam Stage, with over 500 seats, features traditional theatre in a luxurious setting. Barter's Smith Theatre offers seating for 167 around a thrust stage in an intimate setting and is perfect for more adventurous productions. Barter Theatre is also home to The Barter Players, a talented ensemble of actors who produce plays for young audiences throughout the year.

In 2020, during the global pandemic, Barter was able to continue producing by creating a new venue at the Moonlite Drive-in, where the audience sat safely distanced in their parking spots while watching the actors on stage/simulcast on the big screen. History is always in the making at Barter Theatre, building on legends of the past; Barter looks forward to the challenge of growth in the future.



Bartering for tickets with Robert Porterfield

ANATOMY OF A THEATRE



TYPES OF STAGES

PROSCENIUM STAGE - The classic type of stage most commonly used in theatre. It is framed on all sides and raised higher than the audience.

THRUST STAGE - This type of stage is literally thrust into the audience on 3 or 4 sides and is often not raised or is raised very little. One of the most common thrust stages in the world is Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. Barter Theatre's Smith Theatre is a 3/4 thrust stage with the first row of audience seating on the same level as the actors.

ARENA STAGE - Also called "theatre-in-the-round" an arena stage is surrounded by the audience on all sides.

BLACKBOX THEATRE - A simple, flexible space that is typically used for smaller performances with minimal sets, props, and technical pieces. It is usually painted black and is draped with black curtains

AMPHITHEATRE - An open-air, outdoor venue made famous by ancient Romans. The stepped seating arrangement allows for perfect views from any area of the audience.



THEATRE TERMS

STAGE TERMS

Apron: The front part of the stage that is closest to the audience

Backstage: The area of the stage that is not visible to the audience

Backdrop: A large curtain or drop that hangs at the back of the stage

Proscenium: An arched opening in the stage that the audience looks through

Wings: The areas to the left and right of the stage that are not visible to the audience

AUDIENCE TERMS

Auditorium: The part of the theater where the audience sits

Balcony: An elevated area of seating in the back of the auditorium

House: The area of the theater where the audience sits

Front of House: The part of the theater that is used by the audience. For example, a theater's lobby, box office, and refreshment stand are front-of-house areas.

Pit: Where the orchestra sits

PERFORMANCE TERMS

Act: A division of a play, which may be further divided into scenes

Ad-lib: When an actor improvises a line on stage

Aside: A line spoken by an actor directly to the audience, but not heard by the other actors

Audition: When actors perform for the director or casting director to get a role in a production

Line: The words actors speak during a performance

OTHER TERMS

Ensemble: The collaboration between the artists involved in the production

Genre: A specific type of drama, such as a comedy, tragedy, or melodrama

Preview: A final dress rehearsal where the audience is invited to see the show

Tech Week: The week before the show opens

Up Stage: The part of the stage that is furthest from the audience. It is called “up” because many stages are raked, or sloped, toward the audience and that is the highest part of the stage



ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Catherine Bush

Catherine Bush lives in Abingdon, Virginia where she is Barter Theatre's Playwright-in-Residence. Her plays for young audiences include *Cry Wolf!*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Rapunzel*, *Frosty*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth*, *My Imaginary Pirate*, *The Legend of Sleepy*

Hollow, *The Call of the Wild*, *The Princess and the Pea*, *The Red Badge of Courage*, *Aesop's Fables*, *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*, *Mother Goose: The Musical*, *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, *Old Turtle and the Broken Truth*, *Jingle All the Way*, *Antigone*, *Robin Hood*, *Great Expectations*, *Clementine the Musical*, and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.



ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Dax Dupuy

Dax Dupuy is a native of Alexandria, Louisiana. She grew up studying classical piano, until her brother showed her how to improv at age twelve –she has been creating her own melodies ever since. She has had the pleasure of composing for several Barter Player musicals, including *Mother Goose: The Musical*, *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*, *Rudolph*, *Frosty*, *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, *Jingle All the Way*, and *Old Turtle and the Broken Truth* (music & lyrics). Dax holds a B.A. in Theatre from Louisiana College.



Here Comes Suzy Snowflake

Written by Catherine Bush
Performed by The Barter Players

Synopsis

Of all the residents in Christmastown, New York, no one looks forward to the first Christmas snow more than seven-year-old Maggie Rose Tuggle. The first snow means that her best friend – a snowflake named Suzy – will be coming to play all Christmas long. Then tragedy strikes when Maggie Rose's parents decide to spend the holiday season in warm and sunny Florida. Will Maggie Rose and Suzy survive being apart from each other during the most wonderful time of the year? This brand new musical tale of an unlikely friendship will set your heart aglow and is the perfect Christmas gift for the whole family.

Cast of Characters

Jack Frost – the harbinger of winter and our narrator

Suzy Snowflake – responsible for bringing a white Christmas to Wintertown

Fridge – the North Wind

Maggie Rose Tuggle – 7-year-old schoolgirl; Suzy is her best friend

Flex – a sled

Elmer – a snowman

Mr. Tuggle – Maggie Rose's father

Mrs. Tuggle – Maggie Rose's mother

Zephyr – the South Wind

Boy – Maggie Rose's classmate

Girl - Maggie Rose's classmate

Old Man Winter – being responsible for all winter

Businessman - crotchety; hates winter

Crossing Guard - grumpy; hates winter

Children - various children the world over

Citizens - citizens of Christmastown

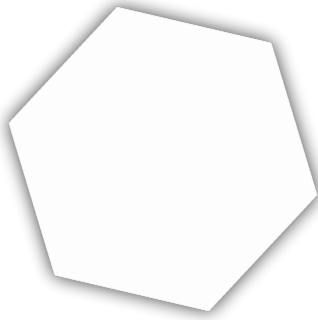
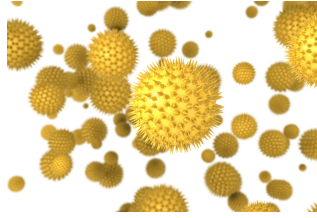
Butch Tuggle – Maggie Rose's cousin in Florida; a bully

Setting

Various locations in Christmastown, NY and Cocoa Beach, FL including the wintry fields, the clouds in the atmosphere, the Tuggle home, and a beach.

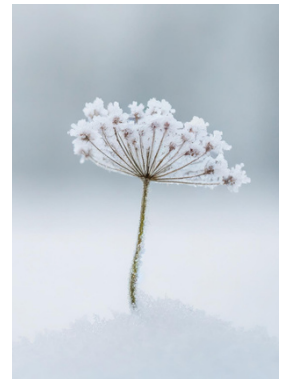
FUN FACTS ABOUT SNOWFLAKES

Snowflakes are complex ice crystals that form around tiny particles of dust or pollen in freezing clouds



Did you know: Water molecules bond in a hexagonal arrangement due to hydrogen angles, which gives every snow crystal a six-fold symmetry and six distinct arms.

Snowflakes are made of clear, translucent ice. They look white because their complex surfaces scatter light in all directions, blending the light spectrum



Most snowflakes fall at a gentle speed of about 3 to 4 miles per hour. The largest recorded snowflake reached 15 inches wide, according to observations noted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and historical records.



Because snow is comprised of 90 to 95 percent trapped air, it means it's a great insulator. This is the reason many animals burrow deep into the snow during winter in order to hibernate. It's also the reason that igloos, that use only body heat to warm them, can be 100 degrees warmer inside than outside.

Writing Exercise

You can't build a snowman from sand. In Florida, Maggie Rose tries to build a snowman out of sand and it falls apart. Write about something you tried to do in the wrong place or at the wrong time. What happened, and what did you learn?

[illegible]

Vocabulary

Look up and define the following vocabulary words found in the play.

1. **Crotchety** _____
2. **Prestigious** _____
3. **Determined** _____
4. **Stubborn** _____
5. **Territory** _____
6. **Frigid** _____
7. **Genteel** _____
8. **Assignment** _____
9. **Dreary** _____
10. **Workload** _____

Character Matching

Match each character to their job or role in the story.

Jack Frost

The North Wind

Suzy Snowflake

The South Wind

Fridge

The narrator, and harbinger of winter

Zephyr

In charge of all winter, everywhere

Old Man Winter

Brings winter to Christmastown



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (K-2ND GRADES)

What is Suzy Snowflake's job?

Name three things Maggie Rose gets to try for the first time once she moves to Christmastown.

Who is Jack Frost, and what does he do in the story?

What does Maggie Rose build with Suzy's help, and what does she name it?

How does Butch treat Maggie Rose at the start of the play? How does he treat her by the end?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (3RD-6TH GRADES)

Old Man Winter gives Suzy three rules to follow. Why do you think rule three exists? What happens when Suzy breaks it?

Fridge and Zephyr don't get along, but Jack Frost convinces them to strike a deal anyway. What do they agree to, and why does it matter for Suzy and Maggie Rose?

Butch changes a lot between the beginning and the end of the play. What causes that change?

The Tuggles decide to stay in Christmastown for Christmas next year instead of going back to Florida. Why do you think they made that choice?

Maggie Rose and Suzy can only see each other once a year, yet they call each other best friends forever. Can distance change a friendship? How do you stay close to someone who lives far away?

Time to Draw!

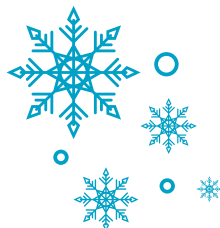
Based on what you know from the story, draw what you think Suzy Snowflake looks like when she twirls into Christmastown.



GROUP ACTIVITIES

Three Rules

Old Man Winter gives Suzy three rules to follow while she does her job. As a class or group, come up with three rules for a job you'd like to have someday. Share and discuss why each rule matters. Use the space below for your notes.



Here comes SUZY SNOWFLAKE

Did you enjoy our show?
Let us know!



Barter Theatre
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