

Stage Fright on a Summer Night

by Mary Pope Osborne

When the *Magic Tree House* whisks Jack and Annie back to Elizabethan England, they meet William Shakespeare himself and get a chance to go on stage and perform for a queen.

THEMES

history, theater, animal rights, problem-solving, time travel, responsibility, courage

Young Listener Unabridged Audio

I. PRE-TEACHING

A. These terms should be defined and discussed:

lightning, hovered, weird, thundering, squinted, ragged, rumbled, cobblestones, clinked, neighed, building, arena, slumped, whirled, midsummer, electricity, performed, audience, galleries, nudged, tilted, memorize, dimly, whispering, costume, crammed, disguises, scroll, wanderer, guided, tattered, arch, horror, rowdy, briar, sphere, blushed, shadowy, rare, vision, congratulate, streamed, odd, scowling, lumbered, slanted, glided, shimmering, ripples, swooped

B. Consider the following questions:

1. Do you or does someone you know suffer from stage fright? How can it be overcome?
2. Have you heard of William Shakespeare? What do you know about him? Have you ever seen a play by him? What was it about?
3. If you could travel to the past, where and when would you like to go?

II. PRESENTATION

A. Understanding the Story:

1. Begin with Chapters 1 - 3: How do Jack and Annie know it's time to go to the woods? Who is waiting for them? What does Annie ask her? What does she say they are going to learn? What does Jack think this means? What will guide them on their journey? What does the first rhyme say? Describe how Morgan Le Fay leaves. What is the title of the book they find? Describe the clothes they are wearing. What does Jack learn about England from the book? What does he learn about the bridge? What do Jack and Annie notice about the river? Why do they hurry across the bridge? What do they see on the bridge? What is supposed to happen in the Bear Garden?
2. Advance to Chapters 4 - 7: What is Annie determined to do about Dan the Dancing Bear? How does Jack get her to leave? What does Jack learn about the Globe Theater from his book? What does the man say to Jack when he hears him reading? Why can't Annie be in the play? How does Annie get Jack to agree to be in

it? How does Jack feel when they go backstage? How does Will help Jack overcome his stage fright? How does Jack calm down the groundlings? How does he feel after he finishes his speeches? What is the funniest part of the play?

3. Complete the story with Chapters 8 - 10: Describe the woman sitting in the gallery. How does everyone react when they see her? Who is she? What does she say about the play? How has Annie gotten the bear away from the cart? How does Will help save the bear? How do they get to the other side of the river? What does Will tell them about Queen Elizabeth? What do Annie and Jack tell Will about how they got there? What has Will written on their scrolls? Who was he? What does Jack say as they go through the woods towards home?

B. For Discussion:

1. How does Will help Jack overcome stage fright? Compare how he feels before and after he goes on stage. What made the difference?
2. Annie tells Jack she isn't stealing the bear, but saving it. Is she right? Why or why not?
3. When Will tells them, "All the world's a stage," what does he mean?
4. What is the "special magic" Jack and Annie find? How does it turn daytime into night?

III. EXTENDING THE LESSON

Give students the opportunity to work with partners, groups, the whole class, or alone.

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS:

A. Language Arts:

1. Have students listen to the sounds Jack and Annie hear as they pass through the gateway leading onto London Bridge. How many do they notice?
2. Have students write a booklet telling people how to overcome stage fright.
3. Have students keep a "Book of Memories" like Jack's and Will's.
4. Have students listen to the Shakespearean quotes at the end of the story and write what they think they mean.

5. Have students make up questions based on “More Facts for Jack and Annie and You” at the back of the book and put on a quiz program.
6. Have students act out a scene from *Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

B. Art and Music:

1. Have students study the cover of the book. Have them find at least two things wrong with it. [Hint: The people in front are dressed too well for “groundlings” and Annie would not curtsy because she’s pretending to be a boy.]
2. Have students make a bulletin board about the story. Find pictures of the Globe Theater, London during Elizabethan times, and Queen Elizabeth the First. Show Jack and Annie in the play. Show the rescue of Dan, the Dancing Bear.
3. Have students learn about the clothes worn during Elizabethan times and draw pictures of their favorite ones.
4. Have students make masks that might be used in a play.

C. Social Studies:

1. Have students find out about Queen Elizabeth the First. How did she become queen?
2. Have students find out about London Bridge. Why do children chant the rhyme “London Bridge is Falling Down”?
3. Jack and Annie discover that the Londoners enjoy watching bears fight dogs. Have students find out how animals were used for sport in the past. Can they find examples of this today? What can be done to stop it?
4. Have students find out about Shakespeare’s Globe Theater. How were plays different from those put on today?
5. Shakespeare approaches Jack because he hears him read. Have students find out about education during Shakespearean time. How many people could read and write?

6. Shakespeare tells Annie that it’s against the law for girls to go on stage. Have students find out why. Who played the parts of women?
7. Have students listen and write down Shakespearean words, like “wither.” How are Shakespeare’s words different from ours?

D. Science:

1. Have students find out about lightning bugs. How do they make their light? When can you expect to see them? Students might capture one in a jar and watch it for a while before letting it go.
2. Have students find out what causes shooting stars. Have they ever seen one? Did they make a wish?
3. The Magic Tree House is in an oak tree. Have students find out about oak trees. What makes them grow so tall? What are their seeds like? Have students collect seeds or leaves and bring them to class.
4. How many people lived in London in 1600? How many live there now? Why has the population grown so much larger in just four hundred years?
5. Have students find out why the Thames smelled so bad during these times. When was it cleaned up? Why is it good to have clean water and sanitary conditions? What diseases were caused by the unsanitary conditions of the times?

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Good Morning, Gorillas

by Mary Pope Osborne

When Jack and Annie are whisked in the Magic Tree House to the mountains of Africa, they meet a group of amazing and frightening gorillas and learn a special language.

THEMES

animal research, evolution, problem-solving, time travel, responsibility, courage

I. PRE-TEACHING

A. These terms should be defined and discussed:

peeked, umbrella, flashlight, dangling, beam, aloud, apart, language, crocodiles, jaguar, vampire, scientist, bounded, leopard, whispery, cushions, moss, shaggy, screeched, hiccuped, spiderwebs, huddled, miserable, nightmare, dawn, glared, nervously, nibbled, crouched, gnashed, bashed, scrambled, maniac, knuckles, gasped, darting, jealous, ramble, bamboo, drizzly, vinegar, clearing, language, headlock, panicked, awe, rustling, opposite, drizzle, primates

B. Consider the following questions:

1. Have you ever seen gorillas in a zoo? What did you noticed about them? Would you like to know more about gorillas?
2. Have you seen the movie version of *King Kong*? Are gorillas really this large? This fierce?
3. Have you ever been lost? What would it be like to be lost in a huge forest? How would you survive?
4. What language is used to communicate with someone who can't hear? How else might this language be used?

II. PRESENTATION

A. Understanding the Story:

1. Begin with Chapters 1 - 3: What is the proof that Jack and Annie found special magic on their journey to Shakespeare's time? What secret rhyme has Morgan Le Fay left Jack and Annie this time? What is the title of the book Jack finds? What is the name of the misty rain forest in the mountains of Central Africa? What animals live there? What does Jack picture when he thinks of gorillas? Describe the small gorilla they meet in the forest. What game does she play with them? What does Annie name her? What does Jack write in his notebook? What does he notice about her? What happens to Annie?
2. Advance to Chapters 4 - 7: What happens to Jack when he goes back for his notebook and flashlight? How does he spend the night? In what way has their journey turned into a nightmare? Where does the

small gorilla take Jack in the morning? What does Jack learn about mountain gorillas from his book?

- What happens when the silverback gorilla sees Jack? How does it react when Jack holds up his hand? How does Jack get past him to find Annie? Why does the large silverback growl at Jack? How do the young gorillas travel? What do the gorillas eat for breakfast?
3. Complete the story with Chapters 8 - 10: Why does the mother gorilla grab Annie's pigtail? What does Jack learn about gorillas from his book? How does reading about Koko solve Morgan's rhyme? What does Jack do that upsets Bu-bu? How do they make up? What does Jack do to stop the leopard from attacking? How does Jack do to stop the leopard from attacking? How does Big Guy show he is proud of what Jack did? How does Big Guy say goodbye to them? What has Jack brought back to show Morgan? Why does Jack decide not to put on his jacket or put up the umbrella as they head for home?

B. For Discussion:

1. Why can't Annie swing through the trees like Bu-bu? In what ways are we different from other primates? In what ways are we the same?
2. What causes Jack to get lost? What would you do if you were lost in a forest?
3. How are Jack and Annie different in this book than in the others? Who is the more reluctant to leave this time? Why?
4. What does Jack mean when he says, "But sometimes lists don't tell you much"?
5. What is the magic Jack and Annie find in the rain forest?

III. EXTENDING THE LESSON

Give students the opportunity to work with partners, groups, the whole class, or alone.

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS:

A. Language Arts:

1. Have students put together a character list featuring the different traits of the main characters. Compare Jack and Annie. What is Big Guy like? What is his role in the gorilla family? What are the other gorillas like?

2. Have students learn simple phrases in America Sign Language, like “Hello” and “I love you.” They might watch a television program that includes signing and see if they can understand it.
3. Have students take a walk in the rain without an umbrella. How does this make them feel? Have them write a poem about walking in the rain.
4. Have students make up questions about gorillas and other primates from the “More Facts for Jack and Annie and You” section at the end of the book and hold a quiz program in class.

B. Art and Music:

1. Assign a group to select records, tapes, or CDs from the library that will serve as appropriate background music to some of the scenes. The soundtrack from *Gorillas in the Mist* might capture the feeling of the forest.
2. Have students make a bulletin board about the story. Cover the board with pale green and use cotton batting to show the fog and mist. Show the giant trees, the clearing where the gorillas sleep, Jack and Annie playing with the young gorillas. Big Guy walking on his knuckle toward Jack, the black leopard trying to attack and Jack scaring him off, the gorillas learning to sign.
3. Have students go out with a sketch pad and draw a tree. How does drawing a tree help them really see it?

C. Social Studies:

1. Jack tries to make peace with the silverback gorilla by holding up his hand. Have students learn about gestures various cultures have used to tell a stranger they come in peace.
2. Gorillas live in social groups. How might this reflect the way early humans lived?
3. When Charles Darwin proposed the theory of evolution, many people were upset by the idea that we are related to other primates. Have students learn how Darwin’s theory was received and why certain groups today reject it and insist it not be taught in classrooms.

D. Science:

1. Have students learn about the different kinds of rain forests. What causes rain forests? What kinds of

animals and plants live in them? What is happening to them? What can be done to save them? Why is it important to save the rain forests?

2. Have students find out what to do to keep from getting lost in the woods. Another group might learn how to find your way home when you are lost in the woods.
3. Have students learn about gorillas, what they eat, where they live, how they protect themselves from predators, how they communicate with each other.
4. Have students learn how Penny Patterson used American Sign Language to communicate with the gorilla, Koko. What did he learn to “say”? What did scientists learn about animal communication from working with Koko?
5. Have students learn what is causing gorillas to be endangered. What can be done to help save them?
6. Have students learn about people who have studied gorillas or other primates in the wild, like Dian Fossey or Jane Goodall.

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Thanksgiving on Thursday

by Mary Pope Osborne

When Jack and Annie arrive on the first Thanksgiving Day in 1621, the Pilgrims ask them to help get things ready, but they soon discover they don't know how to do anything.

THEMES

American history, holidays problem-solving, time travel, responsibility, caring

Young Listener Unabridged Audio

I. PRE-TEACHING

A. These terms should be defined and discussed:

slanted, toil, crisp, frilly, scrambled, rattled, bay, crunched, crackled, steep, thatched, survived, tightened, strangled, burly, weary, puzzled, nervous, clutching, stretch (n.), swooped, eels, squishing, pebbles, slithered, slimy, squirmed, wiggled, tumbled, quahog, sparkled, barrels, hearth, chowder, herbs, rafters, haste, muskets, occasions, fondly, grease, sputtered, roared, sizzled, billowed, oysters, harvest, cured, stalks, fiery

B. Consider the following questions:

1. How does your family celebrate Thanksgiving? What do you like about this holiday?
2. How did Thanksgiving come about? Do other countries celebrate it? Why or why not?
3. If you could visit the past, where and when would you like to visit?

II. PRESENTATION

A. Understanding the Story:

1. Begin with Chapters 1 - 3: Why is Jack hesitant to go to the woods? What makes him decide to go? What magic have Jack and Annie found on earlier trips? What rhyme do they find this time? What does Jack learn from the research book about why people came to America? Why did they land at Plymouth? What does Jack realize about the feast they are preparing? What role did Jack have in his school play about the first Thanksgiving? Who are some of the people Jack and Annie hope to meet? Describe the man who is dressed differently from the others. What does Annie say that puzzles Priscilla? What does Jack say to convince the Pilgrims they belong to the colony?
2. Advance to Chapters 4 - 7: What does Squanto say about them? What does Governor Bradford say about children? How do the Pilgrims feel about when so many Indians come to the feast? How do they solve the problem? How does Annie solve the problem of what they are to do? Why does Jack feel they shouldn't stay? Why does Annie feel they must? What does Jack learn from his book about catching eels? Why can't they catch

the eel? Why does Annie feel they shouldn't catch the clams? What are some of the chores Pilgrim children had to do? Why does Jack feel they'd make lousy Pilgrim children? Where does Priscilla take them? What surprises Jack about the hearth? What job does Priscilla give Jack? What does Jack learn from his book about vegetables? Why does Jack enjoy stirring the pot? What does Priscilla tell them about Squanto? Why does Jack think Priscilla is beautiful? What does Jack do that makes Priscilla laugh? What job are Jack and Annie given next? How do they feel about it? What happens?

3. Complete the story with Chapters 8 - 10: Why does Priscilla say it doesn't matter about the burned turkey? In what ways does Priscilla feel Jack helped her? What is the special magic Jack and Annie find? Why doesn't Jack want to go home yet? Why is Jack afraid to walk back with Squanto? What does Squanto teach them about planting corn? What proof has Annie brought for Morgan Le Fay to show they found the special magic?

B. For Discussion:

1. Even though Jack and Annie and the Pilgrims both speak English, they have trouble understanding each other. What words do Jack and Annie say that Priscilla doesn't understand? What words does Priscilla use that Jack and Annie don't understand? Why?
2. What does Governor Bradford mean when he talks about "three worlds becoming one"?
3. Why does the food taste especially good to Jack? How does where you eat and who with make a difference in how food tastes?
4. Why does Squanto tell the Pilgrims he remembered Jack and Annie? What does he say they must do when they meet someone who feels different and afraid? How has he learned this himself?
5. What do Jack and Annie feel they should be thankful for this Thanksgiving?

III. EXTENDING THE LESSON

Give students the opportunity to work with partners, groups, the whole class, or alone.

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS:

A. Language Arts:

1. Have students discuss what it's like to feel different and afraid. Have them write about ways they would help someone new to school who might have trouble adjusting.
2. When Annie says, "Wow!" and Jack says "nuts" and "Oh, brother!" the Pilgrims don't understand what they are saying. Have students find out about how our language has evolved. Have them come up with other words and expressions the Pilgrims wouldn't know. Have them notice words with different meanings, like "arms" and "spit."
3. Have students listen to all the food that was brought for the feast. How many items can they remember?

B. Art and Music:

1. Assign a group to select records, tapes, or CDs from the library that serve as appropriate background music to some of the scenes. Hymns the Pilgrims sang, or Thanksgiving hymns like "We Gather Together" would be appropriate.
2. Have students make models of the small log houses with thatched roofs in the Plymouth settlement.
3. Have students find various vegetable recipes for Thanksgiving and make a small feast for the class.
4. Have students make a bulletin board about the story. Show the first Thanksgiving with the Pilgrims and Indians gathered around the table, Jack and Annie trying to catch the eel and clams, burning the turkey, Squanto teaching them how to plant corn.

C. Social Studies:

1. Have students learn about the first Thanksgiving and the people who came for the feast.
2. Annie feels strongly that they shouldn't catch the clams because they have lived so long. Have students do some research and talk about the pros and cons of killing and eating animals. Have them learn about the animal rights movement.
3. The Pilgrim view of childhood is quite different from our own. Have students find out what Pilgrim children had to do and compare this with how children are treated today.

4. During the first Thanksgiving, the Pilgrims were grateful to the Indians for all the help they gave and both peoples lived in peace. Have students find out why this changed later in American history. How do we feel about Native Americans today?
5. Have students find out about Squanto and what happened to him when he went to Europe. How did Europeans act toward Indians during this time?

D. Science and Math:

1. Have students figure out how many pounds of food they would need to feed 150 people.
2. Have students bring various vegetables to class and talk about which grow underground and are roots and which grow above ground and are herbs. What kinds of plants do we call "herbs" today? Which vegetables come from stems and which from the leaves of plants? Have students bring various dried herbs and vegetables to class to study and discuss.
3. Have students find out why President Franklin D. Roosevelt designated Thanksgiving to be the fourth rather than the last Thursday in November. What difference would it have made?

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High Tide in Hawaii

by Mary Pope Osborne

When the Magic Tree House whisks Jack and Annie to a Hawaiian island, they learn to dance the hula, go surfing, and eat bananas with coconut milk. But then, Jack discovers a tsunami is headed straight for them and he must find a way to save Annie and their new friends from certain death.

THEMES

Hawaiian history, problem-solving, friendship, responsibility, courage

I. PRE-TEACHING

A. Have the class define and discuss these terms:

meadow, misty, peaks, gushed, volcanic, guided, building, golden, glow, wreaths, feathery, chanting, gourds, musicians, clutching, looming, scooped, twilight, rustled, paradise, weaving, slanting, coconuts, lugging, struggled, breakers, paddle, balance, zoomed, soaring, churning, bruised, battered, drowned, heaved, rumbling, tsunamis, gigantic, gripped, shallow, surging, sprayed, confused, enchantress, encounter, everyday, realm, fantasy, swirl, challenges

B. Before beginning the story, discuss the following questions with the class:

1. Have you ever been to Hawaii? What did you do there? If you haven't been, do you think you'd like to visit there?
2. How were the Hawaiian Islands formed? What is their history?
3. If you could visit the past, where and what era would you like to visit?

II. PRESENTATION

A. Understanding the Story:

1. Begin with Chapters 1 - 3: How does Annie know the Magic Tree House is back? What does Morgan Le Fay's rhyme say this time? What do they see on the cover of the book? What does Annie say about Hawaii? Where do they find themselves? Describe the scene. How were the islands formed? What are the people doing when Jack and Annie come upon them? How do Hawaiians learn their history? How do the people react when they discover Jack and Annie? What does Boka give Jack? How do they greet Jack and Annie? What food do they serve? How does Jack feel about it?
2. Advance to Chapters 4 - 7: What confuses their new friends when Jack asks about building a ship? What do they eat for breakfast? How does Jack feel about going surfing? What happens when he tries? How does he feel about his new friends after that? What does he find out from his book? How does he save the others?

3. Complete the story with Chapters 8 - 10: What does the big wave look like? What does Kama's mother say about books? Why does she say a book can't tell a story? How does Jack tell them what happened to him, Annie, and the others? What does Kama say about friendship? What does Annie suddenly realize about their search for a ship? Why do the Hawaiians say "aloha" for both "hello" and "goodbye"? What does Morgan Le Fay tell them about their four journeys? What kind of everyday magic does Jack think of as they head for home?

B. For Discussion:

1. How does Jack feel about going to Hawaii? How is his attitude different from Annie's? Why does he get angry when he can't surf like the others?
2. Why does Jack feel comfortable telling his new friends exactly where they came from and how they got there?
3. What makes Jack forget his anger? How does his knowledge from his book help save the others? What do the Hawaiians think about books? If you don't have books, what do you miss out on?
4. What might be some of the drawbacks of living in a paradise like Hawaii?
5. Kama says "friendship is like riding the waves. Sometimes you ride low, gentle waves. Sometimes you ride high, rough ones." What elements in a friendship could be compared to low, gentle waves? What could be compared to high, rough ones?
6. When Jack and Annie return to the Magic Tree House, Morgan Le Fay tells them they have become "Magicians of Everyday Magic." What does she mean? In what ways are everyday things magic?

III. EXTENDING THE LESSON

Give students the opportunity to work with partners, groups, the whole class, or alone.

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS:

A. Language Arts:

1. Have students read legends from Hawaii and from Polynesia. What do they have in common? Students might enjoy learning to tell some of these stories.

2. Have students write about a friendship they enjoy that has had rough times. How can you mend a friendship when a quarrel takes place?
3. Have students listen to the description of the flowers when Jack and Annie first see the Hawaiians. How many can they remember?
4. Have students write about what it would be like not to have books. How would the world be different if we didn't have ideas from the past or from other cultures?
5. What have Jack and Annie learned about everyday magic? Have students write about a kind of everyday magic they encounter. You might read them the poem, "Miracles" by Walt Whitman and discuss. What does Whitman consider a miracle?
6. Have students list the four kinds of magic Jack and Annie find in each of the four books. How many can they remember? How do they tie together?

B. Art and Music:

1. Assign a group to select records, tapes, or CDs from the library that might serve as appropriate background music to some of the scenes. The most appropriate, of course, would be Hawaiian music.
2. Have students make a bulletin board about the story. Cover the board with blue to show the ocean and white to show the surf. Show the beach, the flowers, the birds, the colorful insects, the palm trees and the simple huts. Add Hawaiian print material and paper leis. Show the tsunami as a huge wave engulfing the island.
3. Have students learn to tell a story with their hands.
4. Have students write and illustrate a brochure to promote a trip to Hawaii.
5. Hold a luau in class and have students bring foods that would be appropriate, dress in Hawaiian clothes, and learn to do the hula.

C. Social Studies:

1. Have students find out how the Hawaiian people came to the islands. How were they able to travel so far in wooden canoes?
2. Have students learn about Captain James Cook. How did he discover the Hawaiian Islands? What did he name them? What happened to him?

3. Have students find out what happened when Europeans came to Hawaii. How were the lives of the Hawaiian people changed?
4. Have students learn about Hawaiian religious beliefs. Who was Pele? What other gods did the people worship?
5. Have students find out how the custom of riding surfboards began. When did it become popular in the United States?

D. Science and Math:

1. Have students learn how the Hawaiian Islands were formed. Will there be more islands there in the future?
2. Have students find out about tsunamis. Why are tsunamis no longer called "tidal waves"? What causes them? What kind of damage can they do? Why are earthquakes so common in this region?
3. Have students plot how far it is from the Polynesian Islands to Hawaii. How long would it take in a wooden canoe to travel that distance?
4. Have students learn about the birds, plants, and insects found in Hawaii. Which can be found nowhere else on earth? Which are on the endangered species list? Why?

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