

Main
Street
Theater

THEATER FOR ^{all}
YOUTH

KENNETH GRAHAME'S

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

STUDY GUIDE





THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

The Wind in the Willows is an exciting play for kids of all ages! Join Mole, Rat, Toad, and Badger as they have the most thrilling adventures in the Wild Wood! In this fun play, you'll watch as these animal friends explore rivers, face challenges, and learn important lessons about friendship, kindness, and bravery.

Toad is full of wild ideas, but sometimes he needs his friends to help him out of trouble! From boating down the river to saving Toad's home from the tricky weasels, every moment is full of laughter and surprises. Get ready to cheer for these lovable characters in a magical world full of fun and excitement!



GUIDE CREDITS

Vivienne St John, *Theater for Youth Artistic Director*
Jenn Wigle, *Guide Editor*
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Illustration by E.H. Shepard

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Kenneth Grahame was born in 1859 in Scotland, and he is best known for writing the famous book *The Wind in the Willows*. The story and characters came from the bedtime stories Grahame would tell his son, Alastair.

In *The Wind in the Willows*, we meet characters like Toad, Mole, Ratty, and Badger, who take us on fun and exciting adventures. Even though *The Wind in the Willows* was written many years ago, it still brings smiles to children around the world today. Kenneth Grahame's stories remind us to be kind, explore nature, and enjoy the simple things in life. To make this book come to life on stage, a writer named Joseph Baldwin made a special script to tell the story in a play. Not much is known about Joseph Baldwin, unfortunately, but he helped turn this fun story into a great show for everyone to enjoy!

ABOUT THE SHOW

Length: approximately 1 hour including a short talk back with actors

Audio Description is available at all school performances with advance notice. Using a single earpiece connected to an infrared headset, patrons who are blind or have low vision can listen to trained audio describers give live, verbal descriptions of actions, costumes, scenery, and other visual elements of a performance.

The theater is equipped with Listening Technologies to help patrons who require additional audio support in performances. Patrons can request use of an assisted hearing device.

**THE ACTORS LOVE TO RECEIVE FAN MAIL
FROM THE CHILDREN!**

(send to)

Main Street Theater
Attn: School Bookings
3400 Main Street, Suite 283
Houston, TX 77002

CAST OF CHARACTERS



TOAD

Toad is a very funny and silly character. He loves going on big adventures and gets into trouble because he doesn't always think things through. Eventhough he makes mistakes, he is still a good friend.



MOLE

Mole is a kind, shy animal. He is new to the world above the ground and he loves spending time with his friends. He is always ready to help and he cares a lot about his friends.



RATTY

Ratty is a water rat who is Mole's best friend. He loves to spend his time on the water, boating and having fun. Ratty is friendly, wise, and always there to help his friends when they need it.



BADGER

Badger is a smart and serious animal who lives in the wild woods. He knows alot about nature and is always ready to help his friends when things gettough. He can be a little grumpy, but he also has a big heart.



OTTER

Otter is a friendly and caring animal. He has a family and is very loyal to hisfriends. Otter loves to spend time by the river and always helps his friends by request.



WEASELS

The weasels are not very nice animals. They like to cause trouble and make things hard for Toad and his friends. They are the "bad guys" in this story.

TOAD'S SHOPPING ADVENTURE

CAN YOU HELP TOAD COUNT AND ADD UP HIS DOLLAR BILLS FROM HIS WALLET?



TOAD HAS _____ DOLLARS

USING THE DOLLARS YOU COUNTED ABOVE, DOES TOAD HAVE ENOUGH TO BUY THE ITEMS IN THE BOXES BELOW? FOR EACH NEW BOX, START OVER WITH THE FULL AMOUNT OF DOLLARS THAT TOAD HAS IN HIS WALLET?








CAR \$5 BOAT \$6 HAT \$1 SHOES \$2



TRAIN \$7 DRUM \$6 ROCKET \$8 WATCH \$4

YES NO

	+		=		
	+		=		
	+		=		
	+		=		

ANTHROPOMORPHISM

In *The Wind in the Willows*, animals don't just live in the forest or river—they act like people! They talk to each other, go on adventures, and even drive cars. Giving animals human traits is something called **anthropomorphism**.

Draw your favorite animal and imagine what it would be like if it had some human qualities! What would it do? Would it talk, wear clothes, or maybe have a job? Write about the funny things your animal might do if it were just like a person!



ECOSYSTEM EXPLORATION

WITH TOAD AND FRIENDS

In *The Wind in the Willows*, the characters like Mole, Rat, Toad, and Badger live in a river ecosystem—a community where plants, animals, and the environment work together. An ecosystem includes all the living things (like animals and plants) and non-living things (like water, rocks, and air) in an area.

Now, it's your turn to explore an ecosystem! Choose any ecosystem you like. You could choose a forest, desert, ocean, or even a city park. Use this form to organize your research.

ECOSYSTEM INFORMATION

Name of Ecosystem:

Location:

Description:

CLIMATE

Temperature:

Seasons:

Precipitation:

HABITAT CHARACTERISTICS

Type of Soil:

Water Sources:

FLORA

What types of plants are found there?

FAUNA

What types of animals are found there?

INTERACTIONS

How do living things in this ecosystem interact with living and non-living things?

THREATS AND PROTECTION

What is putting this ecosystem in danger?
What is being done to protect it?

RIVERBANK ANIMAL TRAITS

Hi, young scientist! Today, we're going to explore how cool animals are because of the special traits they have. You can think about the animals from the play or pick a new one.

Does your animal have special traits like claws, sharp teeth, or thick fur to help it survive in the wild? Does it have special senses like great hearing or eyesight?

What does your animal eat? How does it get its food?

**How does your animal move?
Can it fly? Can it swim? Can it climb?**



Illustration by E.H. Shepard

WHO'S WHO IN THE WILD WOOD

Below, you'll find pictures of real animals. Your task is to match each animal to its name using the word bank at the bottom.

Look at the pictures carefully, and then write the correct name in the boxes below each image.



WORD BANK

TOAD

MOLE

OTTER

BADGER

WATER VOLE

WEASEL

WHAT MAKES ME A GOOD FRIEND

Think about what your friends like most about you. In this activity, you will write about the special things that make you a great friend. Maybe you're kind like Mole, adventurous like Toad, or wise like Ratty. Write a few sentences about why your friends like you and what makes you a good friend to them.





YES OR NO FRIENDSHIP GAME

Join Toad, Mole, Ratty, and all their friends for the "Yes or No" Friendship Game! Look at each question below about what makes a good friend. For every question, decide if a good friend would do it by circling "Yes" or "No." When you're finished, take a moment to think about why each answer is important.

If your friend is sad, do you help them to feel better?	YES	NO
If your friend has a toy that you want, do you take it without asking?	YES	NO
If you have a snack and your friend does not, should you share your snack?	YES	NO
If your friend makes a mistake should you laugh at them?	YES	NO
If your friend is talking, should you interrupt them?	YES	NO
Should you tell the truth even when it is hard?	YES	NO
If your friend gets something that you wanted, should you cheer them on?	YES	NO
Should you help your friend clean up a mess that you both made together?	YES	NO

ADVENTURES IN FRIENDSHIP

One sunny day, Mole and Rat decided to go boating on the river. They invited Toad and Badger to join them. Toad was excited but wanted to drive the boat very fast, while Badger preferred a calm and peaceful ride. Mole felt nervous about the speed, and Rat was worried about Toad's safety. They needed to find a way to enjoy the trip together.

SHARING AND TAKING TURNS

How can Mole, Rat, Toad, and Badger share the boat so everyone has fun?

HELPING EACH OTHER

If Toad doesn't know how to steer the boat safely, how can Badger help him?

RESOLVING CONFLICT

If Toad wants to go fast but Rat is scared, how can they talk to each other to solve the problem?

TOAD'S FOREST WORD HUNT

Join Toad, Mole, Ratty, and Badger as they embark on their exciting adventures in the magical world of *The Wind in the Willows*! Can you find all the characters, items, and themes?

B	W	A	Y	G	C	A	W	B	S	P	Q	G	O	E
H	C	D	V	K	S	T	O	A	D	F	W	K	F	D
B	P	V	O	O	V	R	E	X	N	R	R	R	O	P
O	R	E	T	W	C	K	L	F	P	I	M	A	R	N
A	K	N	T	E	A	A	P	I	J	E	S	T	E	S
T	E	T	E	A	A	M	Y	L	L	N	M	T	S	X
I	N	U	R	S	D	R	E	O	W	D	M	Y	T	N
B	T	R	Q	E	F	V	T	Y	M	S	J	T	C	R
A	Y	E	D	L	N	N	M	A	O	H	D	O	I	I
D	G	D	G	Q	S	M	R	L	L	I	H	A	P	V
G	M	D	L	R	W	J	T	T	E	P	O	D	B	E
E	O	U	B	C	C	O	E	Y	E	M	M	H	C	R
R	M	D	B	R	A	V	E	R	Y	X	E	A	P	S
E	A	A	V	U	R	N	V	O	L	O	X	L	A	D
R	T	W	Z	L	O	T	M	S	R	Q	V	L	F	M

FRIENDSHIP	ADVENTURE	TOAD HALL	RATTY
BRAVERY	LOYALTY	BADGER	OTTER
FOREST	WEASEL	TOAD	RIVER
MOLE	BOAT	HOME	CAR

STORY ANALYSIS

PROBLEM

What was the main problem in
The Wind in the Willows?

SOLUTION

How did the problem
get solved?

CHARACTERS

Who are the main characters
in the play?

EVENTS

Write about some of the events that happened in the story. What happened first?
What were some things that happened in the middle? What happened last?

LET'S PACK THE PICNIC BASKET

Imagine you're going on a picnic with Mole, Ratty, and Toad in *The Wind in the Willows*.
It's a sunny day, and everyone is bringing something delicious to eat!

Let's get creative! Draw a picture of your picnic basket and everything you are bringing with you. Think of foods, supplies, drinks, and anything else you want! When you are finished, write a few sentences about what you brought and why.



THE PAST AND PRESENT WITH MOLE AND FRIENDS



What do you imagine it was like a long time ago? Do you think Toad had a car like the ones we see today? Were there lights and electricity? Draw two things from the past and then draw the same thing as it may look today.

A few ideas: Mole's house, Toad's car, Ratty's boat

DRAW TWO ITEMS FROM THE PAST IN BOX 1 AND 2

1

2

DRAW THE SAME ITEMS AS THEY MIGHT LOOK TODAY IN BOX 3 AND 4

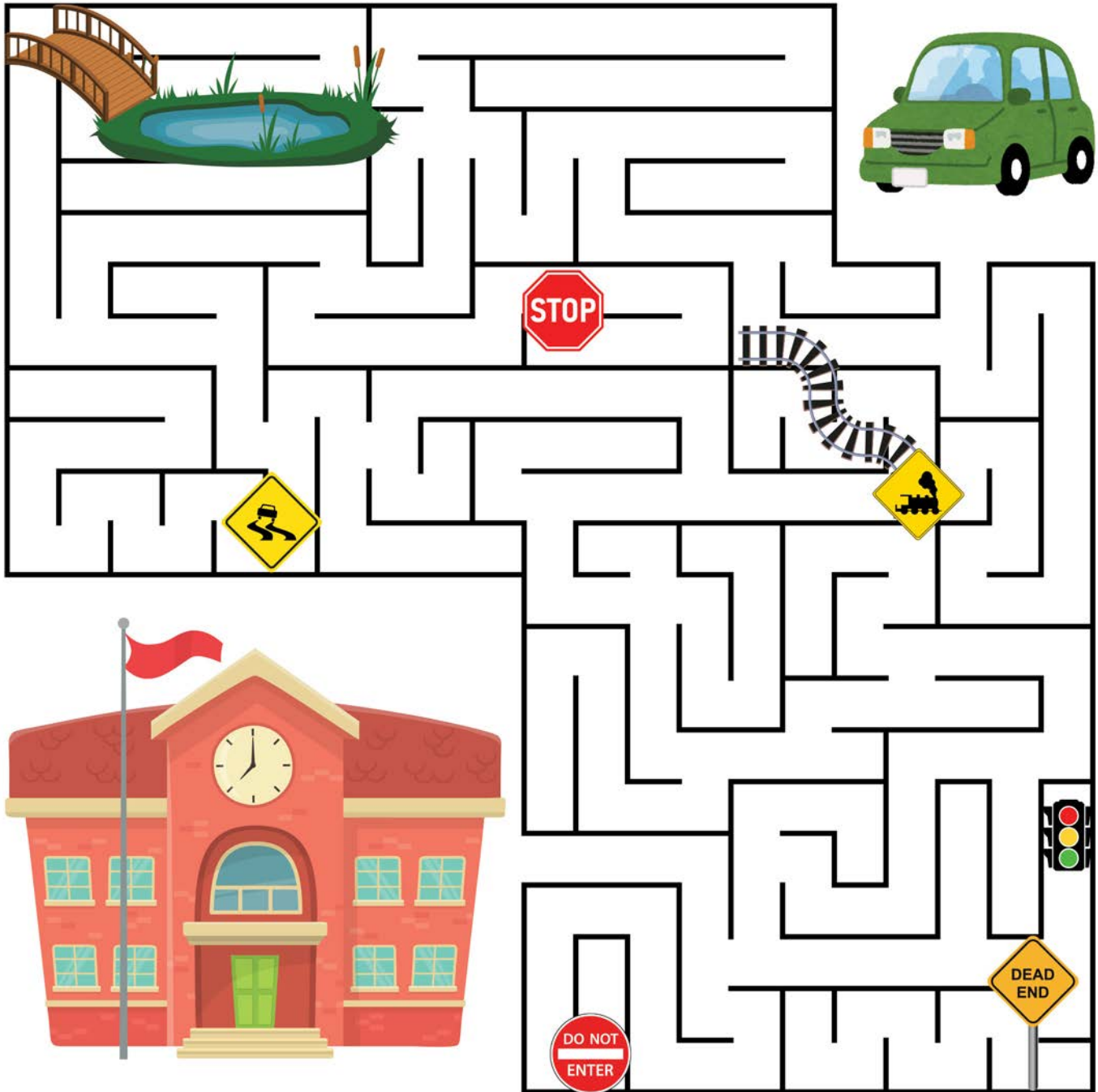
3

4

Illustration by E.H. Shepard

TOAD'S SAFE DRIVE TO SCHOOL

Join Mr. Toad on an exciting adventure to get his friends safely to school! In this maze, you'll help Mr. Toad make sure everyone is buckled up and ready to go. Then, using your pencil, draw a path from Mr. Toad's car to the school, avoiding any obstacles along the way. Can you guide them safely to their destination?





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