teacher resource guide  
schooltime performance series  
the adventures of harold and the purple crayon  
arts education  
njpac  
discover. create. grow.
The Adventures of Harold and the Purple Crayon

Harold and the Purple Crayon is a classic children's book, first published in 1955. The story features a little boy who, using his imagination and a special purple crayon, creates new worlds and adventures. One night, Harold decides to go for a walk in the moonlight...but there's no moon! Using his trusty crayon, he draws a crescent moon and a path to walk on so he won't get lost. Harold's imagination soon begins to run wild — drawing an apple tree and dragon to guard it. The story details the whimsical scenarios and adventures that Harold experiences trying to find his way back to his bedroom. Harold finally draws a window around the moon above him, draws a bed and drifts off to sleep. Even 67 years after its publication date, Harold and the Purple Crayon is a story loved by generations and is a celebration of imagination and independent play.

In the spotlight

with Zachary Chiero, Teaching Artist & Manager, Community Relations, Enchantment Theatre

Crockett Johnson, whose real name was David John Leisk, was born on October 20, 1906 in New York City. He grew up in Elmhurst, Queens and studied at both The Cooper Union in 1924 and New York University in 1925. Affectionately nicknamed Crockett as a child (perhaps after the 19th-century frontiersman Davy Crockett), he arrived at his well-known pseudonym, Crockett Johnson.

In the early stages of his career, Johnson was the art editor for several magazines and contributed to others. He wrote political cartoons for The New Masses (1934-1940) and drew a weekly comic strip, “The Little Man with the Eyes,” for Collier’s (1940-1943). In 1942, his beloved comic “Barnaby” first appeared in PM and was later syndicated in 52 newspapers across the country. America fell in love with the comic’s child protagonist, Barnaby Baxter and his bumbling fairy godmother, Mr. O’Malley. Johnson wrote “Barnaby” daily until 1946 when cartoonists Jack Morely and Ted Ferro took over. On February 2, 1952, Johnson returned to pen the final episode. Having garnered acclaim as a comic strip writer, Johnson transitioned easily into an author and illustrator of children’s books. He wrote and illustrated more than 20 books for children in his lifetime. He illustrated seven others, including The Carrot Seed (1945), written by his wife and well-known author Ruth Krauss. His style of illustration was minimal, using simple lines and few colors to tell a story without distraction. Johnson’s best-known works relate to the adventures of Harold, small boy whose

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<th>Teacher Focus</th>
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<td><strong>Prepare for the performance</strong></td>
<td>In the show you are going to see, there are parts of five Harold stories woven together into one big adventure. Do you have a favorite Harold story? How do you think the theater company will bring the stories to life on stage?</td>
<td>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1, SLL.5.L.1 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 7</td>
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<td><strong>Experience the performance</strong></td>
<td>In what ways do you think the performance will be like the books? Look and listen for how the story is brought to life using movement, sound, props, costumes, or scenery.</td>
<td>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1, SLL.5.L.1 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 7 Anchor Standard 8</td>
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<td><strong>Reflect, respond and read</strong></td>
<td>What parts of the performance did you enjoy the most? What did you notice in the show that really brought the story to life? Use Activity Sheet 1 to create your own ABC drawings like Harold.</td>
<td>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1, SLL.5.L.1 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 7 Anchor Standard 8</td>
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<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
<td>It's time to see if your imagination can be as big as Harold's! Use Activity Sheet 2 to create objects out of paper shapes. Play games with your classmates that will have you moving your body in creative ways, and creating new uses for objects in the classroom. Try your favorite activity at home to challenge the creativity of your family!</td>
<td>Mathematics Geometry Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standards 1 Anchor Standard 2 Anchor Standard 3 Anchor Standard 4 Anchor Standard 5 NJSLSA.1.SP.3.4.NJ Career Readiness, Life Literacies, &amp; Key Skills 9.4.L.6.2.1 9.4.L.6.1.1 9.4.L.6.3.1 9.4.L.6.4.1 9.4.L.6.5.1 9.4.L.6.6.1 9.4.L.6.7.1 9.4.L.6.8.1 9.4.L.6.9.1</td>
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<td><strong>Originiate</strong></td>
<td>It's time to share your three-step story! As an audience member, take time viewing your classmates' work in the class art gallery. When it's time for performances, sit quietly and watch your classmates perform. Applaud them for their work when they are finished. It is your turn to perform, take a deep breath, face your audience and use your body and imagination to act out your story.</td>
<td>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1, SLL.5.L.1 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 4 Anchor Standard 5 Anchor Standard 6 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 5 NJSLSA.SL.5.L.1 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 5 Anchor Standard 6 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 6 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 7 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 7</td>
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<td><strong>Rehearse</strong></td>
<td>Practicing acting (without speaking) the beginning, middle and end of your three-step story. Have a classmate or teacher read the text while you bring the story to life with your movements, facial expressions and imagination. Your performance should only last as long as it takes your narrator to speak the words.</td>
<td>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1, SLL.5.L.1 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 5 Anchor Standard 6 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 7 Anchor Standard 8 Anchor Standard 9 Anchor Standard 10</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Make magic</strong></td>
<td>Decide how you would like to share the students' three-step stories. You could hang up the drawing and text pages around the room to create an art gallery-type environment. Students can walk around the room and view each other's work and/or invite other classes to see the students' work. Afterward, have your audience take a seat while individuals or groups act out their three-step stories with spoken narration. You could also send home the real or digital versions of the story pages to be viewed by friends and family at home.</td>
<td>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1, SLL.5.L.1 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 4 Anchor Standard 5 Anchor Standard 6 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 4 Anchor Standard 5 Anchor Standard 6 Visual &amp; Performing Arts Anchor Standard 7 Anchor Standard 8 Anchor Standard 9 Anchor Standard 10</td>
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The Adventures of Harold and the Purple Crayon

trustful purple crayon leads him on a series of fantastic adventures. Harold was introduced as the protagonist of Harold and the Purple Crayon (1955), a book so popular it inspired a series of six other titles. In 1965, Johnson began exploring the aesthetic values of right triangles and Euclidian geometry, yielding about 100 large-scale paintings of geometric shapes. His work was abstract, representing Johnson’s own mathematical ideas. He was recognized by The British Mathematical Journal in 1974 and contributed original mathematical theorems to Mathematical Gazette (1970), the IBM Gallery in Yorktown Heights, New York (1975) and the Smithsonian Museum of History and Technology (1980).


Adaptation
The process of making a change or alteration to a process or body of work to be presented in an alternate way.

Adventure
An exciting or unusual experience that is sometimes risky.

Animation
The art and science of making drawings or images appear to move. Animated movies and television are popular forms of entertainment.

Artist
A person that is skilled in the arts (writing, drawing, acting and more).

Character
A person in a book, play or movie.

Circle
A shape with no sides (ex. a wheel or a ball).

Color
Qualities of light as our eyes see it, like a rainbow. Primary colors like red, blue and yellow cannot be made by mixing colors, but make up all of the secondary colors like purple, green and orange.

Cool Colors
One of the color groups in the color wheel. Often associated with ice, the cold and feelings such as sadness or calm.

Imagination
The act of forming a thought, picture or idea of something or someone that is not present to the senses.

Line
A dot that goes for a walk; connection of two dots.

Magic
The power of apparently influencing the course of events by using mysterious or supernatural forces.

Pantomime
A type of entertainment where performers express meaning through gestures and facial expressions accompanied by music. Talking is not allowed in pantomime.

Portrait
A drawing of a person.

Rectangle
A shape with four sides and longer lines (ex. a bus or a car).

Self-Portrait
A picture of the artist drawing it.

Square
A shape with four equal sides (ex. a house).

Tone
The style in which the author of a book conveys their attitudes; how words in a book are expressed.

Warm Colors
One of the color groups in the color wheel. Often associated with the sun, warmth, fire and feelings such as happiness or anger.
resources

Websites
ETV Commission, KnowItAll.org, 7 July 2009.
knowitall.org/
The Adventures of Harold and the Purple Crayon - HBO Family Series
hbofamily.com/programs/harold-and-the-purple-crayon.html
Harold and the Purple Crayon - The Internet Movie Database
imdb.com/title/tt0283735/
Kaboose: Harold and the Purple Crayon - The Complete Series
entertainment.kaboose.com/movies/
harold-and-the-purple-crayon-the-complete-series.html
The Crockett Johnson Homepage
ksu.edu/english/help/purple
Harold and the Purple Crayon Discussion Guide
s.scholastic.com/browse/collateral.jsp?id=32380
The Adventures of Harold and the Purple Crayon
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_and_the_Purple_Crayon
Color Theory in Kid Terms
sciencing.com/color-theory-kids-terms-g9d7yq4.html
Crockett Johnson’s Biography
noclo.com/crockett-johnson-biography/

Books
Johnson, Crockett. Harold and the Purple Crayon. Harper Collins; 1955
Sivin, Carole. Maskmaking. Davis; 1986
Priestly, J.B. The Wonderful World of the Theatre. Rathbone Books Ltd; 1959
Brook, Peter. The Open Door. Anchor; 1993
Campbell, Joseph. The Power of Myth. Anchor; 1988
the arts in your school

In-School Residencies: NJPAC teaching artists come right to your school — online — to teach the performing arts to your students. Our super-flexible virtual residencies are designed to meet your needs, and you’ll have a dedicated program manager to help you every step of the way. It’s the perfect program to keep your students creating, connecting and expressing themselves through the magic of the arts.

Professional Development: Calling all educators! Expand your teaching skills, deepen your curriculum and give yourself a creative boost in NJPAC’s forward-thinking professional development workshops. Our virtual PD programs are for teachers all the way from pre-K to high school, and include hip hop, dance, storytelling, theater, music and more. Not only will you learn something…you’ll also have fun and be inspired.

study the arts at njpac

Saturday Programs: NJPAC’s Saturday programs are geared towards students at every level — from those who dream of starring on Broadway to those who are still learning their scales. Students work with professional artists to build technique and develop their own creative style in hip hop, jazz, devised theater and symphonic band.

Summer Programs: Want to begin to explore the arts? Or immerse yourself in the study of one genre? Then join us at NJPAC next summer in one of seven programs that spark the creativity in every child through the study of music, dance and theater.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please email our education sales team at schooltime@njpac.org.
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