



MR. POPPER'S PENGUINS

Book by Robert Kauzlaric

Music & Lyrics by George Howe

Based on the novel by Richard & Florence Atwater

Classroom Guide Grades K - 1

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How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Mr. Popper’s Penguins* is designed for Texas students in Grades K and 1. It offers activities to help you integrate a performance of *Mr. Popper’s Penguins* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, social studies, music, art, and theatre curricula.

All activities in this guide are linked to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) content standards.

For students outside Texas, this guide’s ELA and math activities also are linked to Common Core standards. At the back of this guide, you will find a list of the guide activities and their related Texas and Common Core standards.

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1: Discussion Questions

Before the Performance

Mr. Popper's Penguins is a stage play. What is a stage play?

- How is a play similar to a TV show or movie?
- How is it different?

Who performs the parts (roles) in a play?

- What kinds of skills do you think performers need to have to perform in plays?
- Who else works on plays? (Remember: you may not see them on stage!)

The play is based on a book called *Mr. Popper's Penguins*.

- Have you read *Mr. Popper's Penguins* as a class or by yourself?
 - Based on what you read, what do you think may happen in the play?

During the Performance

When you watch a play, you are a member of the audience. What kinds of things should you do as an audience member? Examples:

- Pay attention
- Laugh when something funny happens
- Clap if you enjoy something

What kinds of things should you *not* do as an audience member? Examples:

- Talk to your neighbor
- Use a cell phone during the performance
- Yell at the actors (unless they ask you to!)

After the Performance

What did you think of the play?

- If you read *Mr. Popper's Penguins* beforehand, how was the play similar to the book?
- How was it different?

Describe the performers in the play.

- What did they do to make their characters special (different from the other characters)?
- How did they use their bodies to play their characters (using voice, movement, etc.)?
- Did you see anyone else who worked on the play besides the performers on stage?

Describe the characters' costumes.

- What did each character's costume tell you about that character?
- Did any of the performers change costumes?
 - If so, why do you think they needed to change costumes?

Describe the set of the play.

- Did it have a lot of locations?
- Did it look like a place you've been to before?
- How did different lighting change how the set looked for different scenes?

Did the play have music in it?

- If so, was it only in the background, or did it help tell the story?
- What instruments did you hear in the music?

If you were going to direct *Mr. Popper's Penguins* how would your production be different than the play you saw by Magik?

2: Magik Must-Reads

For each of our main stage productions at The Magik Theatre, we choose a theme related to the show. Then we create a list of Magik Must-Reads on that theme.

The reading theme for *Mr. Popper's Penguins* is Determination.

The Magik Must-Reads (Grade K - Grade 1) are:

The Most Magnificent Thing written and illustrated by Ashley Spires

Flight School written and illustrated by Lita Judge

How to Catch a Star written and illustrated by Oliver Jeffers

Colorful Dreamer: The Story of Artist Henri Matisse written by Marjorie Blain Parker,
illustrated by Holly Berry

Read them as a class or let students choose two or more to read. Then use these questions for discussion or book reports:

Theme

How did the theme of Determination show in each book? Explain.

Setting

Describe the settings of each book.

- What details can you remember?
- Were the settings similar to a place you know or a place you've visited?

How were the settings similar to each other? How were they different?

Characters

Who were the main characters of each book?

Did any characters show up in more than one book?

Were the characters of one book similar another book's characters in any other ways?

How were the characters related to the theme of Determination? Explain.

Plot

What did the main characters of the books want most?

Did anyone or anything stand between the main characters and their goals?

Did the main characters get what they wanted? How?

How were the plots of the books similar? How were they different?

3: Write and Illustrate Your Own Story

In *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, Admiral Drake gives Mr. Popper a gift that changes his life. As a class, write a story about a character who either gives or receives a life changing gift. Have everyone draw one picture from the story you create. When you are done, put the pictures together to make your very own book.

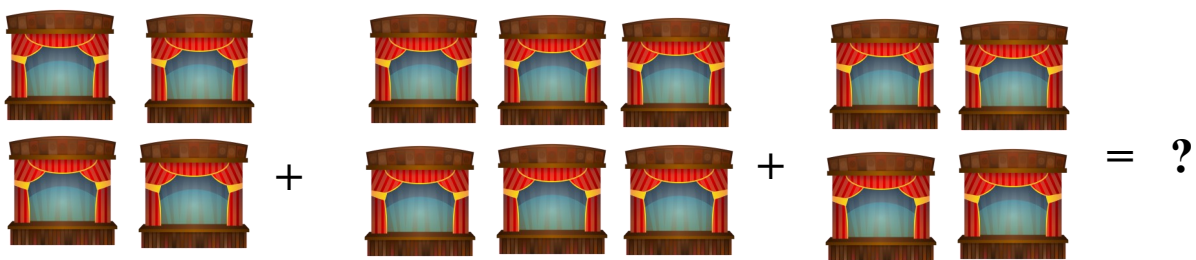
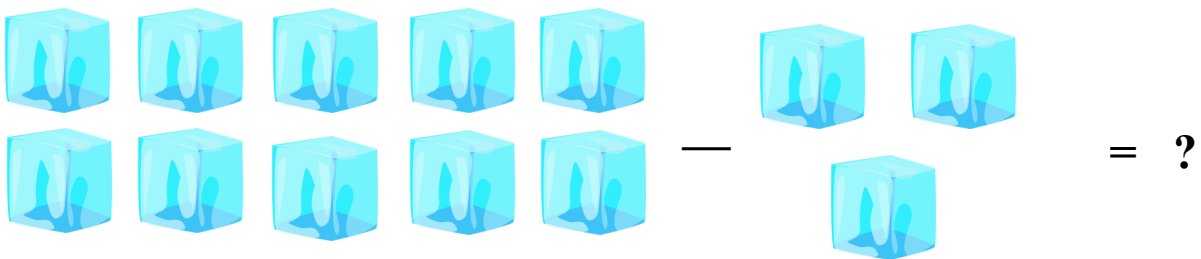
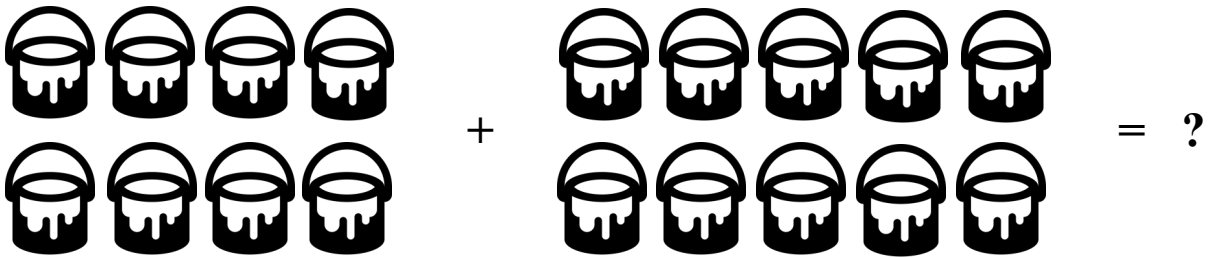
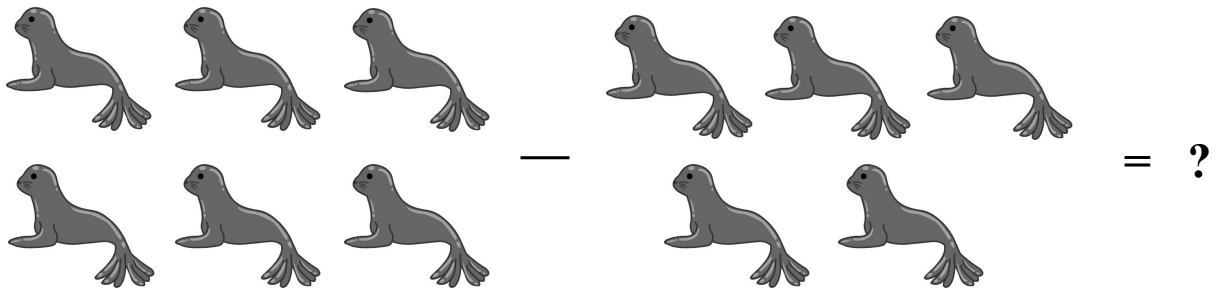
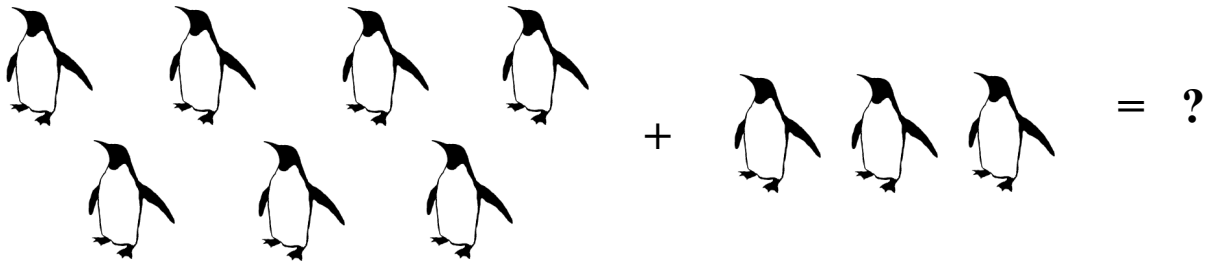
Answer these questions as you write your story:

- Who is your main character?
- Who are your other characters (if any)?
- What does your main character want?
- What is keeping your main character from what he or she wants?
- How does your main character tackle the problem?
- How does your story end?
- Did your main character learn anything?

In the space below, draw a picture to illustrate your story.



4: Picture Problems



5: Penguin Needs

In *Mr. Popper's Penguins* the basic needs of the penguins are discussed multiple times - fish, a cold environment, etc. But what does that say about other living things? And what are some other things the penguins might have needed to survive?

Procedure

- 1) As a class, come up with a list of things you think are living and a list of things you think are non-living. What is the difference between the two?
- 2) Keeping in mind what the penguins seemed to need in the play, create a list of things that the living and non-living things may need. What are some of the common needs of the living things? Do the non-living things need anything?
- 3) After you have pulled some common needs of the living organisms from your conversation, discuss the needs of the penguins again. Is there anything else that you think they might have needed?
- 4) To summarize your conversation, use the following chart to detail what makes something living or non-living. Be sure to include basic needs and special abilities (for example, the penguins in the play had babies) of both.

What makes something a living thing?	What makes something a non-living thing?

6: House Painter, Vaudeville Performer, Documentary Star?

In *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, Mr. Popper has various jobs. From house painter to vaudeville performer to (in the end) documentary star. But why did Mr. Popper need a job? And which job was really right for him?

As a class, discuss the following questions:

- What are some jobs in your community? Create a list of at least three.
- What is the value of those jobs? (What do they add to the community?)
- What are some skills required to do those jobs?
- Why do people need jobs?
- Why does the community need people to do those jobs?

Mr. Popper begins the play as a house painter, but his job is only seasonal (meaning it only happens at a certain time of the year). This made it difficult for he and his wife to continue to support themselves and the penguins as time went on.

As a class, discuss the benefits of his jobs as a house painter, vaudeville performer, and documentary star.

The following are some questions to consider:

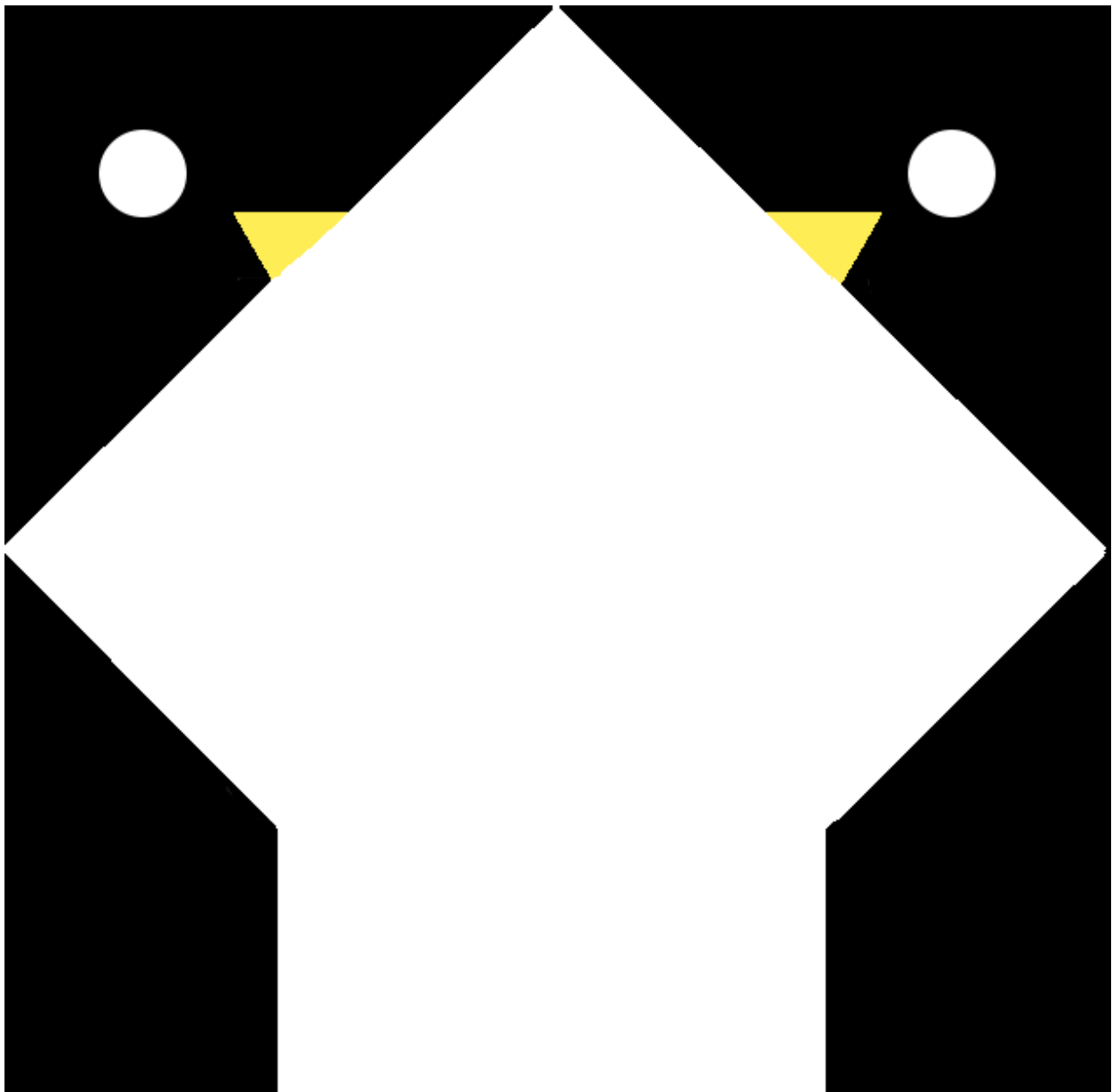
- Were he and his family making enough money to live doing each job?
- What would he have to give up if he had each job?
- Would any of the jobs require him to give up certain kinds of goods and services? (for example, could he afford to travel if he was a house painter?)
- Was he happy doing all three jobs?
- Which job do you think was best for Mr. Popper?

7: Penguin Puppet

In *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, Mr. Popper is gifted a penguin by Admiral Drake. Today, you get the chance to make your very own penguin! Print out the following image, follow the below instructions, and feel free to name your penguin after a famous explorer!

Making the Penguin

- 1) Fold the paper in half and then unfold it. Repeat this, folding it the other way and unfolding.
- 2) Fold the edges in so that the side with the picture on it is facing up!
- 3) Once all edges are folded in, flip the paper to the new blank side and fold in the edges again.
- 4) Fold the paper into a rectangle, put your fingers in the openings, and push until the beak of the penguin comes together. Then you have your penguin puppet!



8: The Rhythm of Determination

In *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, characters sing the song "Determination" as they put together their vaudeville show. Now is your turn to sing the song! As a class, sing the first portion of the song, tapping or clapping to show the rhythm of the song. Then, create a new verse that keeps up with that rhythm and the meaning of the song. Write it below!

"Determination"

If you're a person eagerly rehearsin'
All the steps to your favorite dance
You'll look suave and debonaire soon,
Tappin' like a Fred Astaire soon.

But what if on a shuffle-ball-change
You should stub your little toe?
Would you just quit? Throw a big fit?
Wrap it up quick and go.

You've got determination, keep your eye on the ball.
No, you never look back when you stumble,
You never give in when you fall.

Yes, you always look up toward tomorrow,
Believe in what you do,
And with determination you'll come through.

Your verse:

TEXAS

Kindergarten

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
1	Fine Arts 117.104.b.5
2	ELA 110.2.b.5
3	ELA 110.2.b.1, 6 E
4	Math 111.2.b.1-3
5	Science 112.11.b.9
6	Soc Studies 113.11.b.7
7	Fine Arts 117.102.b.2
8	Fine Arts 117.103.b.1 D, 2

Grade 1

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
1	Fine Arts 117.107.b.5
2	ELA 110.3.b.6
3	ELA 110.3.b.1, 7 E
4	Math 111.3.b.1-3
5	Science 112.12.b.9 A
6	Soc Studies 113.12.b.9-10
7	Fine Arts 117.105.b.2
8	Fine Arts 117.106.b.3, 4

COMMON CORE

Kindergarten

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
2	ELA L.K.1
3	ELA W.K.3
4	Math K.OA.1-2

Grade 1

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
2	ELA L.1.1
3	ELA W.1.3
4	Math 1.OA.1-2, 5, 7-8