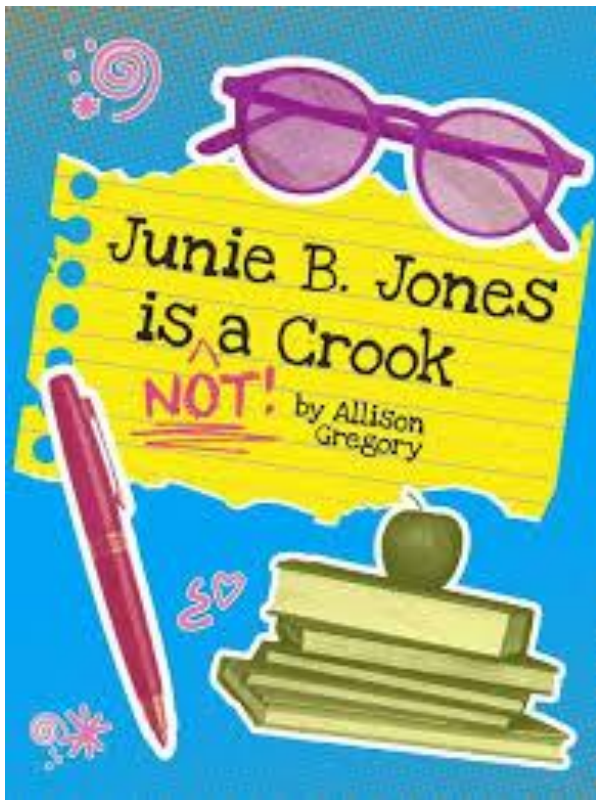




Study guide and lesson plan activities

This study guide includes information about our production along with creative activities to help students make connections in your classroom before and after the performance. Recommended Grades K-5. Conflict Resolution; Values-Based; Fine Arts; Literature-Based; Communication/Language.



A Play by Allison Gregory

Based on the books *Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook*
and *Junie B. Jones Loves Handsome Warren* by
Barbara Park

Produced by FrogTown Players
Directed by Amy Spaulding-Heuring

About FrogTown Players

FrogTown Players is a not-for-profit arts organization founded in 2024 with a mission to provide quality educational theatre featuring local talent to the children, families and teachers in Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan. Educational outreach is central to the credo of our organization.

Synopsis

The play, *Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook* by Allison Gregory, is based on the beloved book series by Barbara Park. Junie B. Jones is a clever, mischievous kindergartner known for leaving a trail of chaos and laughter wherever she goes. Junie B. receives a pair of fluffy black mittens from her grandfather. When they come up missing, Junie B. is tempted to keep “wonderful” pen that she finds. Will Junie B. recover her mittens? Will Junie B. return the pen? What follows is a story filled with humor and heart about honesty, friendship, and doing the right thing.

Characters in the Play:

Junie B. Jones—an energetic kindergartner with a huge imagination

Grace—one of Junie’s best friends; her talent is running super-fast

Lucille—a friend of Junie and Grace; she likes to show off her fancy clothes and dancing skills

Handsome Warren—a new boy in kindergarten who is cute and shy; Lucille has claimed him as her “boyfriend”

Ricardo—a sweet, smart student in Room Nine; he is Junie B’s “boyfriend”

Meanie Jim—another student in Room Nine; he teases and annoys Junie B

Mrs.—Junie B’s kindergarten teacher; she is patient and firm but kind

Principal—he knows Junie B. because she is sent to his office—a lot; he tries to help her learn the reason behind returning lost items

The Grouchy Typing Lady—she is the principal’s office assistant; she rarely smiles

The Choir—a musical group from Junie B.’s imagination

Mother—Junie B.’s mom; she is loving and understanding but overwhelmed by Junie’s energy and caring for Ollie, Junie’s baby brother

Grandpa Frank Miller—Junie B.’s loving and generous grandfather; he gives her the beloved fluffy, black mittens and teaches Junie the importance of returning lost items

The Mitten Thief—the imaginary character who “steals” Junie’s mittens; he resembles Meanie Jim

Pink Fluffy Girl—she finds Junie B.’s mittens but does not return them to the “lost and found”



Theatre Terms:

Aside - a quick remark made by a character in a play which is said to the audience

Book - the script of a play

Cast - the people who perform in a show

Choreographer - the person who creates dances and arranges movements for a musical

Company - the cast and crew of a show and any other staff who work on the show

Dramatist - a person who writes the music for a play or a musical

Costumer - the person in charge of the costumes for a show

Crew - all the people who work together on a show except the cast

Director - the person who provides the vision of how a show should be presented, who works with the

actors on their roles, develops the blocking, and is in charge of the rehearsals

Dressers - people who help the actors get into and out of their costumes

Ensemble - a group of actors, singers or dancers who perform together on stage

Front of House - a term used to describe all of the people in a theater who deal with the audience including the people who sell tickets and the ushers, and any other people who deal with the public (also see listing under PLACES in Kids Theater Dictionary)

House Manager - the person in charge of the theater auditorium and anything to do with the audience

Lighting Designer - the person who designs the lighting for a show and works with the director to get desired effects

Monologue - a speech given by one actor

Musical Director - the person who works with the director, actors and orchestra to get the desired musical effects for a show

Prop Mistress/Master - the person in charge of all the props and who usually works with them during a show

Set Designer - the person who designs the sets for a show...in smaller theaters this person also builds the sets

Sound Designer - the person who designs the sound direction for the show

Stage Manager - the person who runs the show from opening curtain to closing curtain and is in charge of everything on the stage and in the back of the stage

Troupe - a group of actors that form a company

From The Kids Theatre Dictionary

Discussion Questions

What is a play? A play is a piece of writing that may be funny or serious that is performed in a theatre, on the radio, or on television.

Post-performance Question—What kind of play is Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook? Give examples from the play to explain your answer.

Post-performance Discussion Questions: What theatre terms did you see in action when you arrived at the theatre? While watching the play? After the play ended? Leaving the theatre?

About the Playwright, the Author, and the Composer



Allison Gregory (Playwright) Allison’s plays have been produced nationally and internationally by a fusion of professional theatres, academic stages, and non-traditional spaces. She has received support and commissions/grants/development from Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Kennedy Center, South Coast Repertory, The New Harmony Project, and Indiana Repertory Theatre, to name a few. Her plays for young audiences include *Go Dog, Go!*, adapted from the P.D. Eastman book and co-written with Steven Dietz; *Peter and the Wolf*, which toured nationally; a revved-up *Red*

Riding Hood; *Ronia, the Robber’s Daughter*, adapted from the Astrid Lindgren novel and which premiered in Poland; *Junie B. in Jingle Bells, Batman Smells!*; *Junie B. is Not A Crook*; and *Junie B., Toothless Wonder* -- all adapted from the beloved book series by Barbara Park, and which have been seen at hundreds of theaters across the country. Allison has been recognized by TYA USA as “One of the 10 Most Produced TYA Playwrights”.



Barbara Park (Author) Barbara Park is from Mt. Holly, New Jersey. As an elementary school student, she was a daydreamer and spent quite a bit of time in the principal’s office. After she graduated from high school, Ms. Parks went to college to become a science teacher. She loved it until she started student teaching 7th grade and realized that teaching was not for her (“I ran screaming from the building every day”). Her first middle-grade novel was *Operation Dump the Chump* for Alfred Knopf, Inc. Park’s most popular books are the *Junie B. Jones* series; currently there are 28. She has drawers of letters sent by grateful parents of children who were reluctant readers before being introduced to Junie B. Jones and her friends. Her latest book is a graphic novel, *Junie B. Jones and a Little Monkey Business*.



Dr. David Jex (Composer) Dr. David Jex (Composer) retired as a music professor from the University of Toledo in 2024. He has been composing for six decades. His music has been performed by national, regional, and local organizations. His critically acclaimed chamber opera, "The Purple Gang", written with playwright Christine Childs, had its world premiere at the University of Toledo in 1992 and received an Ohio Arts Council Individual Artist award. He composed a choral jazz piece to honor Toledoan and jazz legend Art Tatum that has been performed by the Clarence Smith Community Chorus and other area choruses. He composed scores from 2010 to 2020 for the Toledo

Rep's annual production of "A Christmas Carol", and several ballets for Ballet Theatre of Toledo, including "The Great Pancake Escape" and "A Night Before Christmas At the Museum". Dr. Jex wrote the score for the one-act 2018 musical "Captain of the Crossing Guards" by Gretchen Zyndorf and incidental music for the 2025 Frogtown Players first production "Tortoise vs. Hare 2.0: This Time It's Personal", both performed at the Valentine Theatre. Dr. Jex lives in Sylvania, Ohio, with his wife Jori, founder of the Frogtown Players.

Pre-Performance Classroom Activities

Arts & Art History-- In Scene 4, Lucille refers to Junie B. as "a real Pistachio" after she admires one of Junie B.'s drawings. Junie responds, "It's my blue period." The humor references the great abstract artist Pablo Picasso and one of his artistic eras.

Here is some background on artist Pablo Picasso:

Pablo Ruiz Picasso (born October 25, 1881 – died April 8, 1973) was a famous Spanish artist. He was a painter, sculptor, printmaker, ceramicist, and theatre designer. Picasso was one of the most important artists of the 20th century. He is best known for helping to create the [Cubist](#) art movement.

Picasso's Blue Period lasted from 1901-1904. During this time, Pablo Picasso painted mostly in **shades of blue and blue-green**, with only tiny touches of other colors. The paintings expressed his feelings:

- Blue made his paintings look calm, quiet, or sad.
- He used cool colors to show emotions.
- Many people in his paintings look thoughtful or serious.

This period happened when Picasso was going through a tough time, and he used art to express how he felt.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&app=desktop&v=A4wwKGgJRv0>

Fun Art Project for Kids

To help children understand and appreciate Picasso's Blue Period, you can engage them in a fun art project inspired by his style:

1. Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Blue washable markers or paint
- Water and a paintbrush
- Sharpie for outlining

2. Steps:

- **Create a Drawing:** Start by drawing a simple portrait or scene. Encourage kids to use sharpies and lines to create figures that reflect emotions, like sadness or contemplation.
- **Use Blue Tones:** Once the drawing is complete, use blue markers or paint to fill in the artwork.
- Use a sharpie to outline the pictures.
- Feel free to encourage students to use other colors that may express their personal moods/ emotions

Science -- Traits of a Parrot—In Scene 1, Junie B. tells the story (that may or may not be true) of how her friend Lucille got a bald spot on her head because her grandpa's parrot attacked her, got stuck in her hair, and had to be cut out by a fireman. Here is some information about the behavior of parrots.

Parrot Behaviors Kids Should Know

They Love to Copy Sounds

- Parrots can mimic words, whistles, and even noises like doorbells.
- They do this because they are very social and like to “talk” with their flock.

They Preen Their Feathers

- Preening means cleaning and arranging their feathers.
- It keeps them healthy and helps them stay warm and able to fly.

They Are Very Social

- Parrots like being around others—people or other birds.
- They show affection by sitting close, chirping softly, or gently nibbling.

They Are Super Smart

- **Parrots can solve puzzles, learn tricks, and remember things.**
- **They need toys and activities to keep their brains busy.**

Post-performance Discussion Questions: Based on what you now know about parrots, do you believe Junie's story is real or imaginary? Explain.

Verbal Communication & Pre-learning of Plot, Characters, and Theme

As a class, discuss these pre-performance questions to help the students relate to the plot, characters, and theme of the play.

1. Has a special item of yours ever gone missing?
2. How did you feel?
3. Did you ever find it?
4. What did you think happened to it?
5. What actually happened to it?

Activity: Write a Short Story. Make the item that went missing a main character. Create an adventure that the item goes on. Choose your ending—does the item return home or find a new one?

Verbal Communication, Language Arts (Parts of Speech), Pre-learning of Character and Theme

Friendship is very important to all our lives. With friends, we can share our dreams, jokes, and emotions. Friends often play together, have common activities, and support one another. Let's discuss what makes a good friend.

Grades K-3:

- Have students brainstorm the qualities of a good friend using only single words
- Define the term adjective
- Explain these single words are called adjectives.
- Activity: Students should choose their favorite word that describes a good friend. They should then draw a picture that shows that word in action.

Grades 4-6:

- Review the definition of the part of speech-- adjective.
- Have students brainstorm the qualities of a good friend using only single words
- Activity—Acrostic Poem: Students should think of the first name of their best friend or a friend. Each student should write their friend's name in the margin of the paper with one letter per line. Using the letter in that friend's name write a positive adjective that describes that friend. There is a worksheet on the next page. Here are two examples:

My friend is Paul

Punctual

Artistic

Unforgettable

Loyal

My friend is Angela

Adventurous

Nice

Girly

Energetic

Loving

Amazing

My Acrostic Poem

Written By: _____

Post-Performance Classroom Activities

Discussion Questions – Values Education

One of the themes of *Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook* is that of honesty. Junie B. is “heartsick” when no one turns in her beloved missing mittens to the “lost and found.” On the other hand, Junie B. finds an amazing pen but does not turn it in—right away. Discuss these questions with your students about the themes of honesty and “finders keepers, losers weepers.”

1. Why does Junie B. think that someone stole her mittens?
2. Why doesn't the “Pink Fluffy Girl” turn in the mittens?
3. Is the “Pink Fluffy Girl” a thief? Why or why not?
4. Do you think Junie B. is a crook? Why or why not?
5. Who helps Junie B. learn her lesson? How?
6. Is it ever okay to keep something that you find? Explain your answer.
7. Is it ever not okay to keep something that you find? Explain your answer.

Discussion Questions – Values Education

Discuss some of the important school rules and classroom rules. Why are there rules? What makes these particular rules important.

Class or Small Group Activity: In the play, Principal shares with Junie B. a poem written by the third graders about the importance of returning lost items to the office's “Lost and Found” box. Write a poem of your own to help your classmates remember an important rule for your classroom or school.

Discussion Questions -- Language Arts

The play *Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook* is based on two books by Barbara Park, *Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook* and *Junie B. Jones Loves Handsome Warren*. There are plot points from both books in the play. Works like this are often called “mash-ups.” Another example would be the cartoon *Shrek*

Activity:

- Brainstorm with the class some favorite short stories, fairy tales, and characters.
- As a class or small group activity, create a “mash-up” of two stories. For example, Bob the Builder and *The Three Little Pigs*, Dora the Explorer and her Adventure with *Little Red Riding Hood*, Bluey and *The Three Bears*. Students can share their story through a storyboard or by acting them out.



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