

THE BOCKETY WORLD
OF HENRY
AND BUCKET





State Theatre New Jersey is delighted to welcome you to *The Bockety World of Henry and Bucket*, by Ireland’s Barnstorm Theatre.

These *Keynotes* provide information to help you and your students prepare for the performance. Included are discussion questions and suggested activities to help you make the most of your experience.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Founded in Kilkenny, Ireland, in 1991, Barnstorm Theatre Company creates and presents high-quality professional theater for and with young people and adults. They have a special focus on bringing live theater to communities that do not traditionally have access to these experiences.



CREDITS

John Currivan.....Henry
Paul Curley.....Bucket
Sarah ArgentWriter-Director
Carol BeteraSet and Costume Designer
Mark GalioneLighting Designer
Jack CawleyComposer
Vincent DempseyProduction Manager

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State Theatre New Jersey—creating extraordinary experiences through the power of live performance.

WHAT IS THE PLAY ABOUT?

The Bockety World of Henry and Bucket is the story of two friends who live in a playful world where ordinary pieces of junk become a car, satellite dish, toothbrush, and more—all through the power of their imaginations! As Henry and Bucket go through their day, they must navigate the inevitable ups and downs of friendship—learning to share and forgive, respect personal space, and help one another.

WHAT DOES 'BOCKETY' MEAN?

The word *bockety* is used in Ireland to describe something that is a bit broken or unsteady but that still works reasonably well. (For example, your bicycle wheel could have a small dent in it, but it will still go round. It is a bockety wheel.) Henry and Bucket's friendship reflects the bockety world that they inhabit; there are wobbles and shakes, and it is not quite level all the time, but it works!

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

LANGUAGE ARTS - Language is used economically in the play. However, the two characters play with language throughout, using techniques that range from repetition to rhyming, onomatopoeia, and storytelling.

FINE ARTS - The play uses everyday objects and props to draw the audience into Henry and Bucket's world. Imaginary play, combined with theatrical techniques (e.g. lighting and sound), lets the audience see how worlds and situations can be created without ever having to leave the one setting.

EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT - Through Henry and Bucket's friendship, we can examine what friendship is, what happens when it goes wrong and, how we fix it. In observing them as they negotiate their relationship, we can develop an understanding of the skills used in building, maintaining, repairing, and valuing our relationships throughout our lives.



WHAT IS A FRIEND?

Henry and Bucket are friends. They live together and spend their days together. They play together. They create stories together. They go on imaginary journeys together. And sometimes they argue.

Here are some questions to prompt a discussion about friendship.

- Are Henry and Bucket friends? How do we know?
- Are Henry and Bucket the same? If so, how or in what way?
- Are they different? If so, how or in what way?
- Who do you like to spend time with? What do you like to do together?
- How should you treat your friends? How do you want them to treat you?



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Henry and Bucket argue and make up several times during the play. After the performance, use the play as a prompt for discussing how to resolve differences when friends aren't getting along.

- Can you think of times during the play when Henry and Bucket got into an argument? What caused the arguments?
- Was anybody 'right'?
- Was there any time that Henry or Bucket was being unfair?
- What kind of things happened that allowed Henry and Bucket to make up?
- What ways can we show we're sorry?
- What makes it hard to say you're sorry, even when you know you have done something wrong?
- What does it feel like to say sorry when you feel you are right, but the other person is also convinced that they are right? What might happen in a situation like that?
- Is having an argument avoidable?



ALONE TIME

One of the times when Henry and Bucket don't get along is when Bucket wishes to be on his own and to read his book quietly but Henry would like to sing to Mouse.

Ask your students: is it important to be allowed to have 'alone time'? Why? What is your favorite way to spend your 'alone time'?

Have students draw a picture of 'alone time,' showing what they like to do and where they like to do it.



Though there are not a lot of words used in the show, Henry and Bucket play with language throughout, using techniques such as repetition, rhyming, onomatopoeia, and storytelling. Here are some partner games to get students to work cooperatively as they explore language.

WORD-BY-WORD

During the play, Henry and Bucket sometimes 'share' their sentences. For example:

BUCKET: You

HENRY: are

BUCKET: getting

HENRY: on

BUCKET: my

HENRY: nerves

BUCKET: today

The activities on this page use this technique to help students build towards creating a story. Begin by having students break into pairs. Each pair should decide who will be "A" and who will be "B." (or who will be "Henry" and who will be "Bucket.")

Round 1: Word Association

B starts with any word. A says the first word they can think of that has some sort of connection to B's word. B then says a word that relates to A's word. And so on. For example:

B: Frog **A:** Green

B: Yellow **A:** Sunshine

B: Rain **A:** Umbrella

Emphasize that there is no right or wrong answer because this exercise is about spontaneity. Continue the activity for a minute or more.

Round 2 - Building a Sentence

Just like Henry and Bucket in the play, the children are now going to build a sentence. For some children, offering them a subject matter really helps. You might suggest "winning the race" or "getting out of bed." This example uses "weather":

A: It **B:** is

A: very **B:** sunny

A: today **B:** and...

Each pair should try to create a few different sentences.

Round 3 - Building a Story

Give the pairs a time period—for example, "from waking up to arriving at school." A and B use one word each to tell a story about what happens during this time period. For example:

B: I **A:** woke

B: up **A:** and

B: went **A:** downstairs

B: to....

This round can also be done in groups of 4 to 6 children. When the children are comfortable with the Building a Story activity, it can be used as a whole-class exercise. The class might also try telling well-known fairy tales or creating their own stories using this technique.





DRAW WHAT YOU SAW

After the show, have children decide what part of the show was their favorite. Have them draw or paint picture of that scene. You can even have them put themselves into the scene, interacting with Henry and Bucket.



EVERYDAY OBJECTS

Tell students that there were many objects in the play that Henry and Bucket used in ways you wouldn't expect them to be used. Can they remember any of them? (Examples: a car antenna as a toothbrush, a computer mouse as a real mouse, clothes irons to heat the beans)

Gather together some everyday objects around the classroom: sheets of paper, cans, buckets, hats, boxes, hairbrushes, pencils, etc. Have students improvise different ways you could use an object. (Examples: roll a piece of paper into a tube and look through it like a telescope; hold a hairbrush by the handle and 'sing' into it like a microphone)



SOUND EFFECTS

In the play, Henry and Bucket use their voices to create many different sounds. These sounds help to build the world around them and to create different moods in the play.

Can you remember any of the sounds that Henry and Bucket make? (Examples from the play: alarm clock, catching rain in buckets, car ride with engine and radio)



JUNK ART

Henry and Bucket make use of everything in their world, no matter how ordinary. Have students make pictures or sculptures out of everyday objects. This activity is a great lesson in recycling, too!

IMAGINARY PLAY

Henry and Bucket create different locations and situations by believing in them together. (Examples: their car journey into space, the scary witch in the forest, tuning into the weather forecast on the radio.) Shared belief in imaginary play is very important in drama and theater.

This theater game, "Throwing the Ball," helps develop students' ability to pretend.

Hold an imaginary ball in your hand. It is important that you 'see' the (non-existent) ball. Tell your class, "I have a ball" and ask questions about it: "What color is the ball?" "Okay, so it's striped with purple polka dots." "What size is it?"

React to the children's answers; if they say it is a 'heavy' ball, then respond by holding a 'heavy' imaginary ball.

Then throw the 'ball' to one of the students, who will first catch it, and then throw it to another child. Continue for a few throws and catches. Then introduce the idea that the ball can change. The next person who catches the imaginary ball can show how it has changed size, or shape, or weight.

Have students enhance the Everyday Objects activity above by adding sound effects to go along with their object improv.



THINGS TO WATCH AND LISTEN FOR

During the performance, pay attention to the different theater techniques used in the show. These include:

MUSIC - Henry and Bucket make music using their voices, and also play instruments. (Look for Henry playing an instrument made from old metal spoons.) There is some recorded music in the show, too.

STAGE DESIGN - Notice how the performers use the scenery and props in different ways. (For example: the car hood is the headboard of their bed and then the front of their car.)

SOUND EFFECTS - How do the actors create sounds to go along with the action?

LIGHTING EFFECTS - Notice how the lighting changes during the different scenes. Pay attention as it gets brighter and darker, changes colors, and creates special effects, such as the twinkling stars.



HOW TO BE A GOOD AUDIENCE MEMBER

Going to see a show at the theater is not the same as going to a movie or watching TV. The performers

will be right there with you and the rest of the audience, which makes it very exciting! It also means you have a special responsibility to respect the performers and the rest of the audience so that everyone can enjoy the show. Make sure to follow these rules:

- If you have a phone, make sure you turn it off before the show starts. Keep it off until the show is over.
- During the show, give the performers all your attention. Stay in your seat and don't talk.
- Taking pictures or recording the show is not permitted.
- Don't eat or drink in the theater. And no chewing gum, please!



EDUCATION & OUTREACH SUPPORTERS

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