



Curious George: The Golden Meatball

Tuesday, October 27, 2026
9:30am & 12pm



***Where Stories Leap Off the
Page and Onto the Stage!***



MacombCenter
for the Performing Arts

Macomb
Community
College



INTRODUCTION

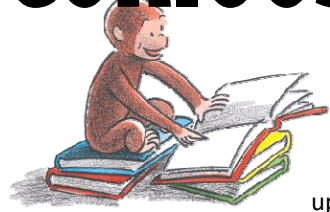
Dear Teachers, Parents, and Community Leaders,

Please use this study guide as a resource to help your students explore the context of the story, make connections to the performance, and complete activities that will deepen their learning.

We are thrilled to bring Curious George, the Man in the Yellow Hat, and all their friends to life, and we hope you find this study guide to be a helpful resource.



CURIOUS CREATORS



Margaret & H.A. Rey

Hans Reyersbach and Margarete Waldstein were both born in Hamburg, Germany in September of 1898 and May of 1906, respectively. They grew up near the Hagenbeck Zoo, which Hans would visit frequently to practice the art of illustration. He would recall that as a child he was “more familiar with the elephants and kangaroos than with cows or sheep”.

Hans served in the German Army during World War I, and when the war was over, he spent a few years painting circus posters for a living. After studying at two different universities, he traveled to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in South America where he found a job selling bathtubs.



After spending some time in London as a photographer, Margarete ended up heading to Rio in 1935. Some sources believe she was following Hans, though according to letters and postmarks, she did not arrive to Brazil until about 10 years after he did. Regardless of her intentions, the two reconnected and were married later that year. Margarete changed her name to “Margret” and Hans changed their last name to “Rey,” finding that that Reyersbach was difficult for Brazilians to pronounce.

The next year, the newlyweds returned to Europe for their honeymoon and soon settled in Paris. There, they worked as advertisers and published their first children’s books. Although many of the couple’s early books were published solely under the name “H.A. Rey”, Hans has said himself that “even those that do not show Margret’s name on the title own much to her help; she usually does the text and criticizes my drawings while they are in progress”. Among these early books was *Cecily G. and the Nine Monkeys*, published in 1939. One of these nine monkeys soon became the title character in a book of his own, *The Adventures of Fifi*, also published in 1939.



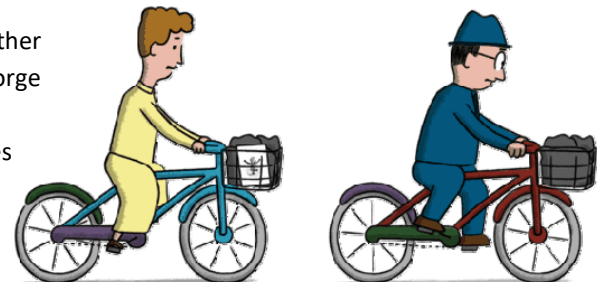
By May of 1940, Hans and Margret decided to return to Brazil, escaping the start of the Second World War. All they had access to for transportation was an old tandem bicycle. Hans took the bike and some other spare parts and found a way to cobble together two separate bicycles for he and his wife. They rode through Southern France, relying on the kindness of strangers for food and shelter.

As they were about to enter Spain, some officials heard their German accents and suspected them of being spies. They were detained for questioning and the police searched through their luggage, finding the manuscripts of their stories, including a draft of what would become the first *Curious George* book. The police agreed that creators of such charming children’s books could not possibly be spies, and the Reys were released.

They couple continued on to Portugal and sailed to Rio. In October of 1940, they found their way to New York , which would become their home for the next 23 years. The Reys quickly made a successful new life for themselves in the city. Within just one month, Houghton Mifflin accepted four of their manuscripts. The publishers loved the character of Fifi, but thought it was an odd name for a male monkey in America. So the Reys agreed to change his name to George. *Curious George* was published in 1942, and between 1947 and 1966, more books had appeared: *Curious George Takes a Job*, *Curious George Rides a Bike*, *Curious George Gets a Medal*, *Curious George Makes Pancakes*, *Curious George Flies a Kite*, *Curious George Learns the Alphabet*, and *Curious George Goes to the Hospital*.

In 1963 Hans and Margaret moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts where they lived together until Hans’ death in August of 1977. Houghton Mifflin continued publishing *Curious George* books with the help of Margret and other talented authors and illustrators who imitate Hans’ style. Today, the books have sold nearly 30 million copies in 16 different languages and have spawned a PBS television show and of course, a stage musical.

Before her death in December of 1996, Margret established The Curious George Foundation (1989) which continues to fund children’s programs that encourage all of the traits of her and her husband’s favorite monkey: curiosity, exploration, ingenuity, opportunity, and determination.



CURIOUS CREATORS

Discussion Questions

1. What about Hans Rey's childhood might have inspired him to use animals as the main characters of his stories?
2. Some historians say that Margaret was following Hans to Brazil. What do you think?
3. Many of the Rey's early books were published under the name "H.A. Rey", even though Hans said himself that Margaret "usually does the text". Why do you think that decision was made? What does it mean that Margaret "usually does the text"?
4. Is there anything you find inspirational about the Rey's story? Talk about it!
5. Do you think the Rey's would want Curious George books and television shows to continue being created? Why or why not?

Activities

1. Using the biography, create a timeline of the Rey's lives. Make it as detailed as possible. Look in the text for years and dates, but also use clues such as phrases like "The next year..." to collect more information. You can also include approximate dates, and if there are not exact years for certain important events, you can still include the event. Simply write it in between the gap in years where it must have happened. You can even use research tools to find out more dates, such as when World War 1 took place. How many life events can you find?
2. Label the world's oceans and continents on the map on the next page. The yellow stars show the cities where the Reys spent their lives. See if you can figure out which city each star represents! Use your background knowledge and help from your peers or teacher. Show the order of the countries the Reys traveled to by numbering each city.
3. Using a dictionary or a computer, define the five traits that The Curious George Foundation works to inspire. What are some examples of these traits that you have experienced in your own life? After seeing the play, come back to this question and discuss examples of these five traits that you saw in Curious George's character on stage.



Vocabulary

Respectively *adverb* In the order already mentioned (meaning Hans was born in September of 1898 and Margaret was born in May of 1906)

Hagenbeck Zoo *noun*

A zoo in Hamburg, Germany

Postmark *noun*

A stamp that the post office puts on a letter to show the date and time that it was delivered to them

Honeymoon *noun*

A vacation that a newly married couple takes

Criticize *verb*

To give judgement (usually in order to make something better than it was before)

Publish *verb*

To prepare a work (in this case, a book) to sell to the public

Tandem Bicycle *noun*

A bicycle built for two people to ride

Detained *verb*

To keep someone from moving on (usually to be questioned about a crime)

Manuscripts *noun*

A text that has not yet been published

Houghton Mifflin *noun*

An educational publishing company; currently known as Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Imitate *verb* To copy or to follow

Establish *verb*

To set up an organization, system, or set of rules

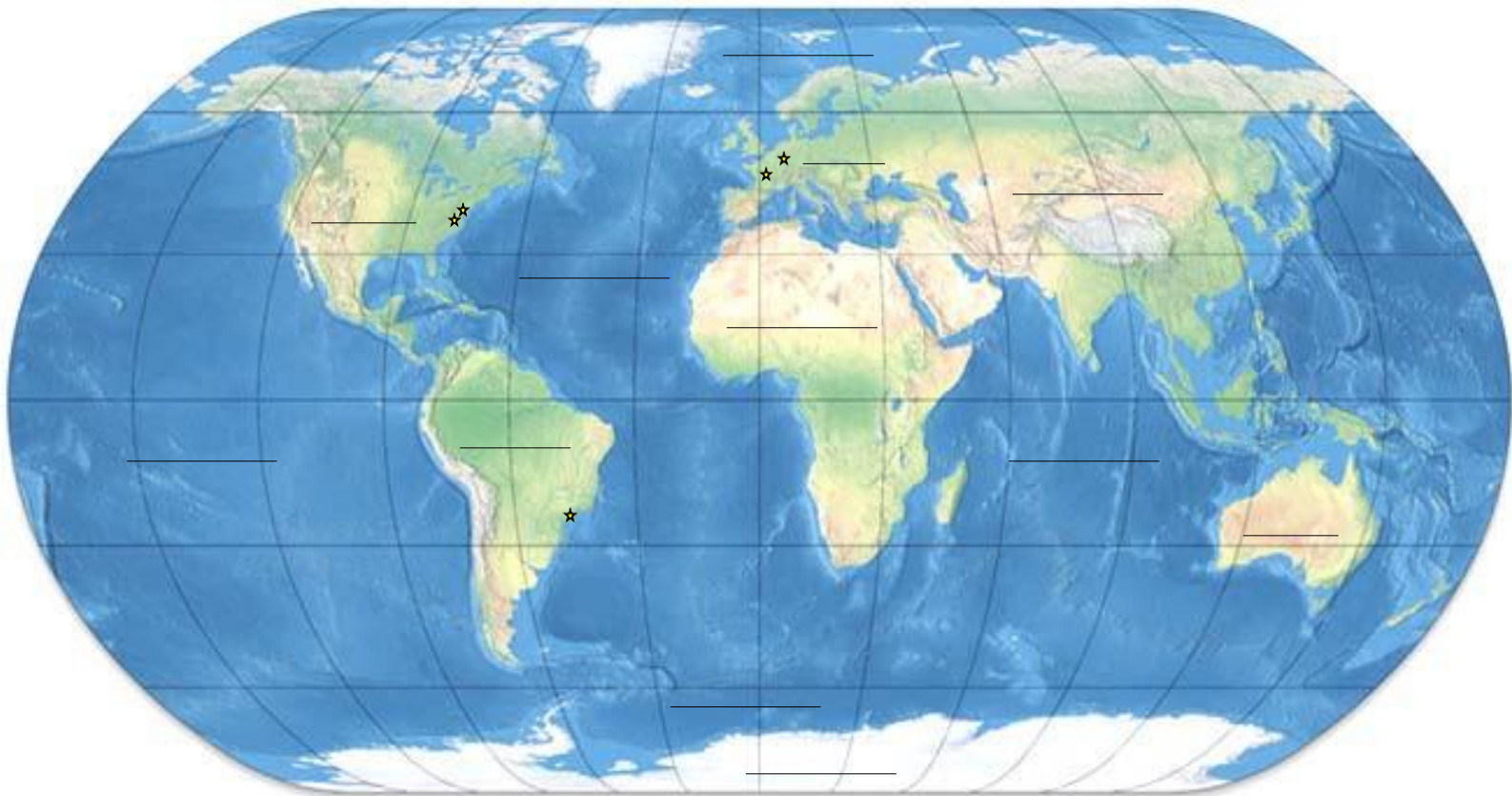
Trait *noun* A characteristic of someone or something

CURIOUS CREATORS

Name _____

Map Out the Rey's Travels!

Label the world's oceans and continents on the map below. The yellow stars show the cities where the Reys spent their lives. See if you can figure out which city each star represents! Use your background knowledge and help from your peers or teacher. Show the order of the countries the Reys traveled to by numbering each city (Hint: There was one city they returned to, so one of the stars should have two numbers beside it).



CHARACTER EXPLORATION



Before seeing the play, read a few Curious George stories to your class to introduce them to the characters and spark their imaginations. Below is a list of some of the titles from the series:



Curious George Rides A Bike

Curious George First Day of School

Curious George Goes to the Hospital

Curious George Takes a Train

Curious George Goes Camping

Curious George and the Puppies

Curious George Makes Pancakes

Curious George and the Birthday Surprise

After reading, encourage your students to explore the different characters. George does not speak English, so how does he communicate with his voice? How does he communicate with his body? What is the Man With the Yellow Hat like? What do you think he sounds like? Why?

Invite your students to either stand at their desk or stand in a circle. Have them discover how each character might stand. What sort of posture do they have? How might each character sit? How might each character walk?

Split the class into two groups. One group as Curious George and the other as The Man in the Yellow Hat. Ask your students to pair up and interact with one another as these characters. If you'd like, you can even guide them through the plot of one of the stories you've read as these characters.

PRE SHOW DISCUSSION

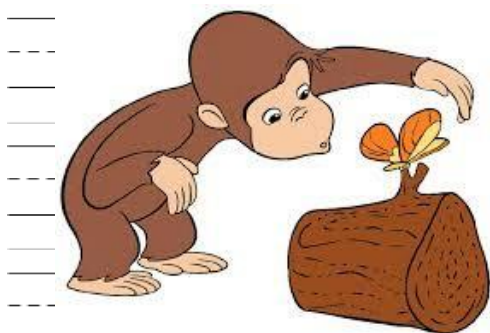
1. How do you think the actor playing Curious George will bring the character to life onstage? How will she use her voice, body, and imagination to show what she is saying, thinking, and feeling? How will she interact with other characters?
2. *Curious George: The Golden Meatball* takes place in two very different cities, New York City and Rome. How do you think the scenic designer will create these two different locations on one stage?
3. In the play, the Golden Meatball Competition takes place at the Coliseum in Rome. What do you know about the city of Rome? What country is it in? Where is it located on a map? What are some important facts about the history of Rome? Why would the author choose Rome as the setting for the meatball competition? What do you know about cooking competitions?
4. How do you think the costume designer will dress Curious George and The Man In the Yellow Hat? How will she make a human actor look like a monkey? How would you design the costumes? Sketch it out and share your designs with the class!

WHAT MAKES YOU CURIOUS?

Use the space below to draw a picture of something that makes you curious like George! Use the lines to describe your drawing. Don't forget to sign your name!



Handwriting practice lines consisting of three horizontal lines (top, middle dashed, and bottom) repeated five times.



Handwriting practice lines consisting of three horizontal lines (top, middle dashed, and bottom) repeated five times.

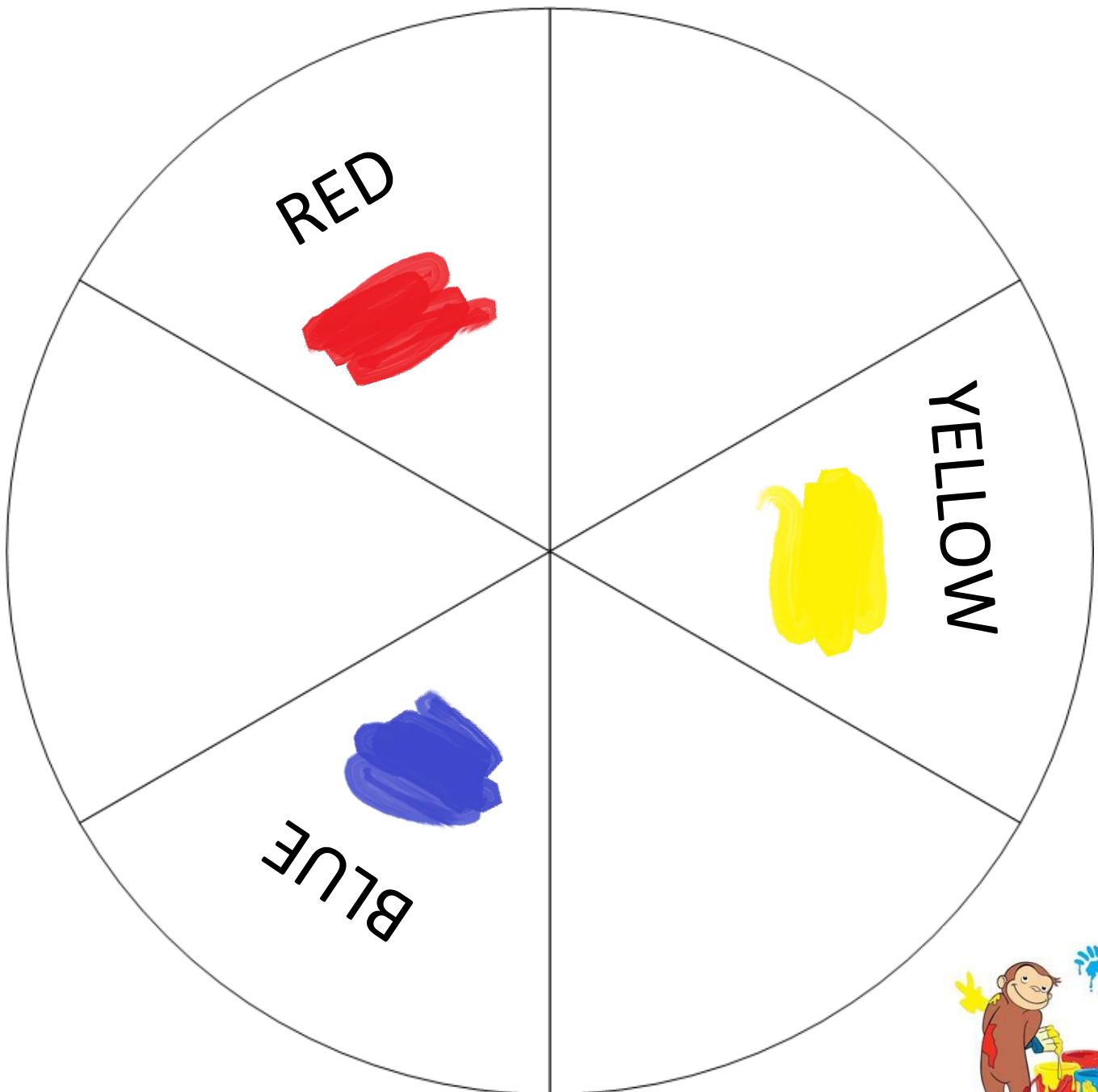
By: _____

COLOR MIXING

Name _____

At the very beginning of the play, two painters are arguing over whether yellow or blue is the best color. They soon discover they were both right! They bump into each other accidentally mixing their paints, creating a brand new color! What could it be?

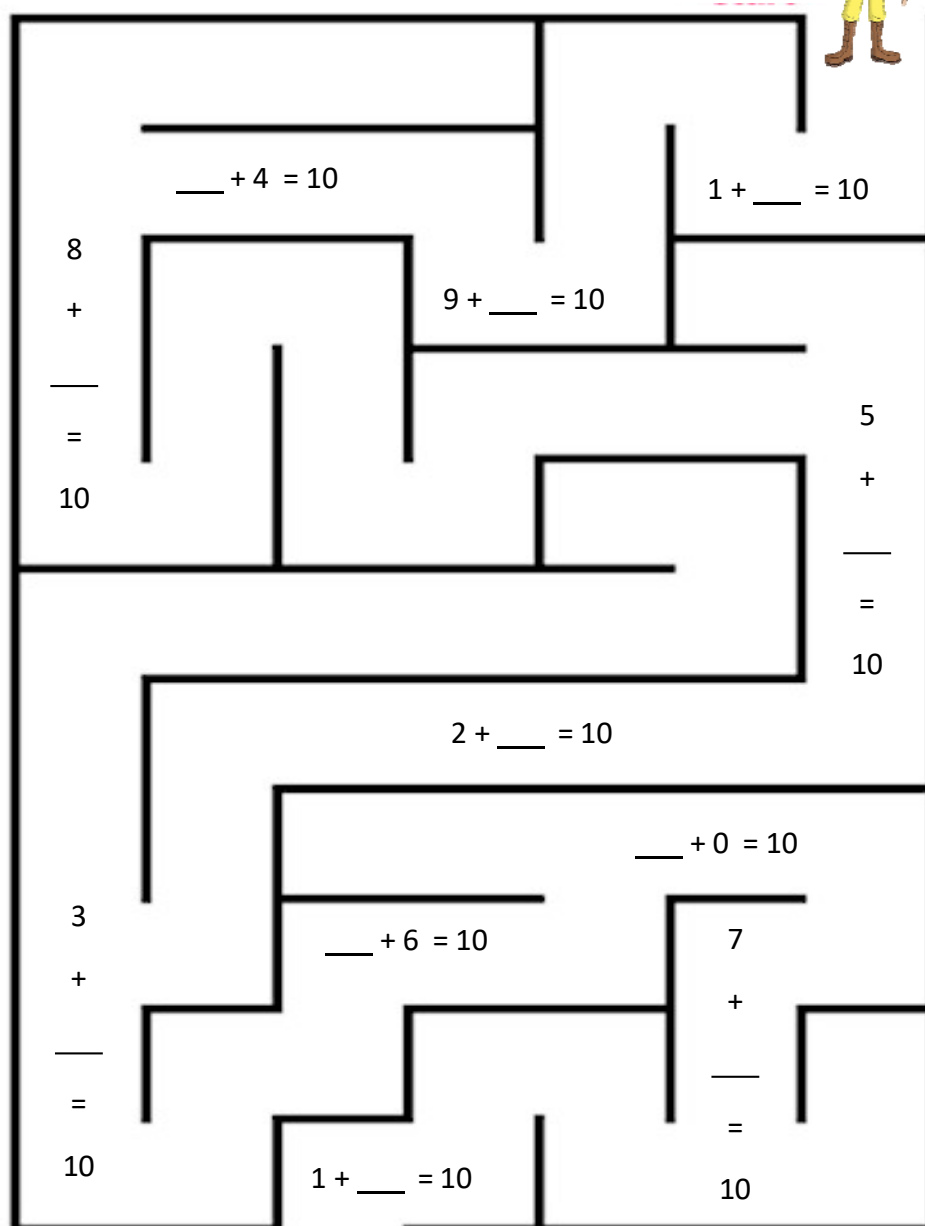
Use red, yellow, and blue paints to color the color wheel below to discover how primary colors can come together to make a secondary color!



MATH MAZE

Name _____

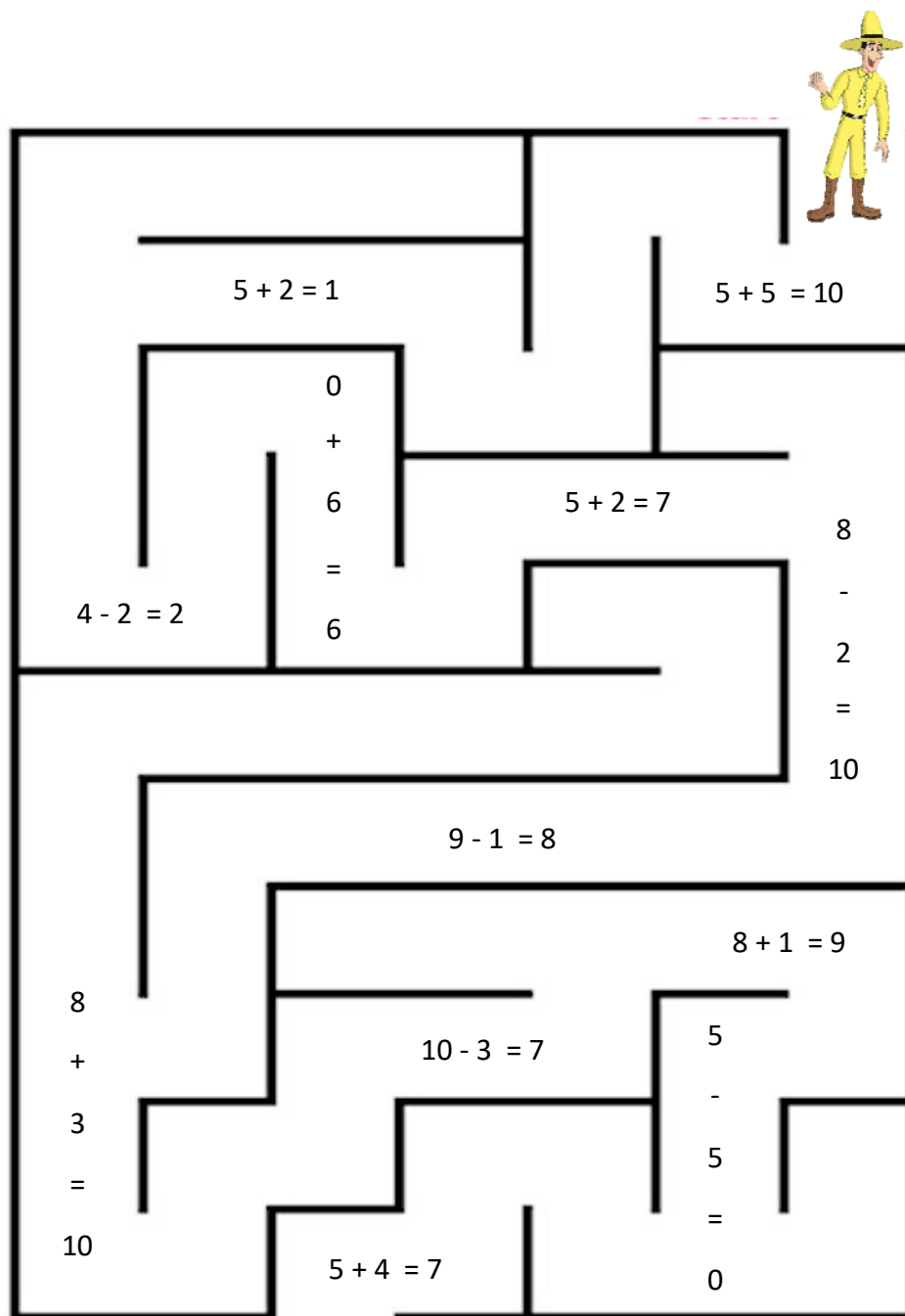
Help the Man in the Yellow Hat find the clues that will lead him to George's whereabouts! Solve the problems along the way!



MATH MAZE

Name _____

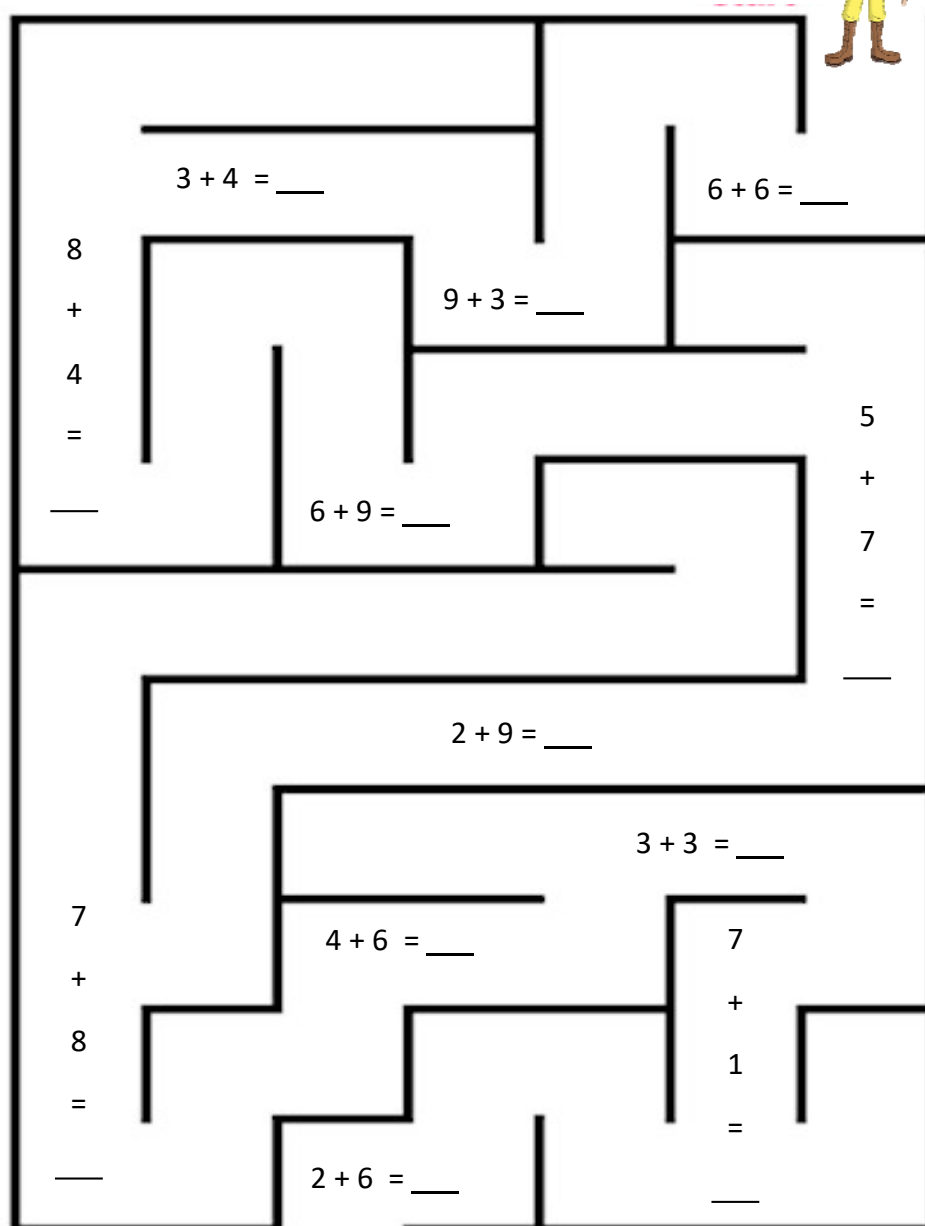
Help the Man in the Yellow Hat find the clues that will lead him to George's whereabouts! Find out if the equations along the way are true or false. If they are true, circle them. If they are false, cross them out.



MATH MAZE

Name _____

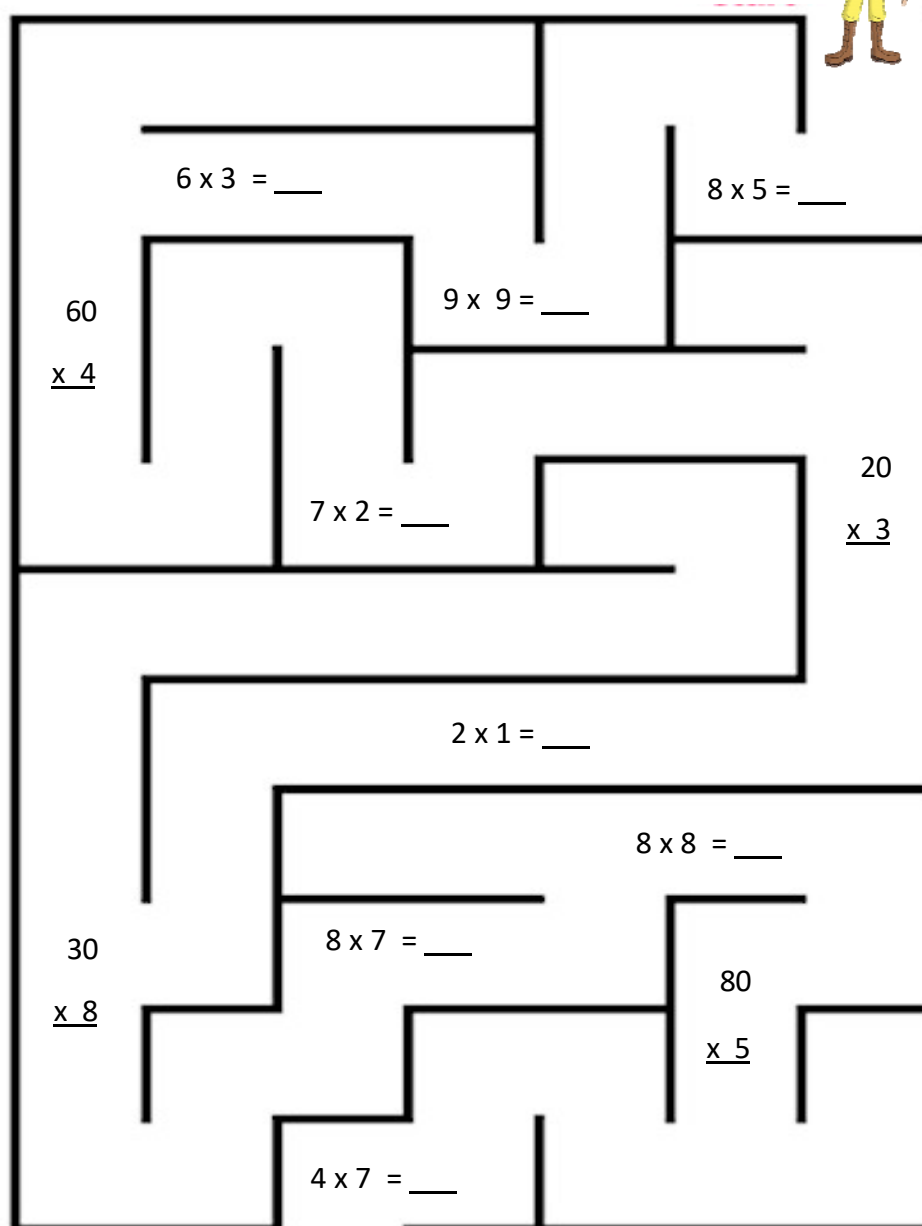
Help the Man in the Yellow Hat find the clues that will lead him to George's whereabouts! Solve the problems along the way! In bocca al lupo! (Italian saying for "Good luck!" - literally translated, it actually means "Go into the wolf's mouth!")



MATH MAZE

Name _____

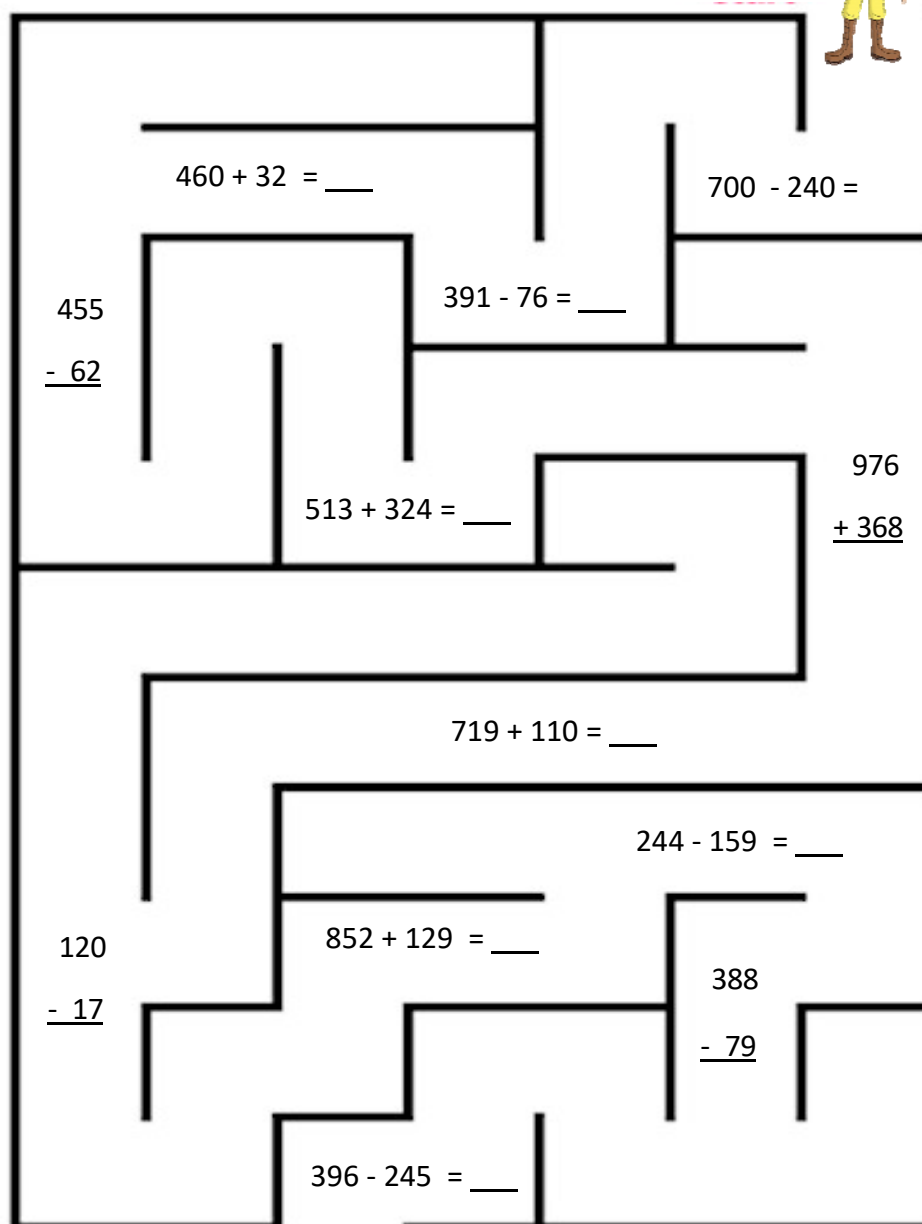
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MATH MAZE

Name _____

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CLASS COOKBOOK!



Many families have their own favorite recipes that come from all over the world. Curious George and the Man in the Yellow Hat clearly love Italian home cooking the most. Come together as a class to create a recipe book. Encourage students to share their family's culture through food!

1. Write a letter to parents and families about the project, expressing appreciation for their support and detailing the instructions. Alycia Zimmerman has published a great [sample letter](#) on Scholastic.com.
2. Present the project to your students in class. Have them pair up and brainstorm their favorite meals and how their family prepares them. Ask students to complete the **"Recipe Brainstorm!"** handout on the following page.
3. Send the letter and handout home; have students talk with their families and decide which recipe they will submit.
4. (A) At home and with the help of their families, students complete the **"Recipe Information" Guide** and bring it back to class the next day. Students will then use school technology resources to create a finished page to submit to the cookbook. Encourage pictures and creativity. Use the **"Cookbook Page Checklist"** to help guide students as they create their page.

OR

- (B) At home and with the help of their families, students prepare their meal and use their home computer or school laptop to create a finished page to submit to the cookbook. See the **"Cookbook Page Checklist"** on page 14. Encourage pictures and creativity.



Let students brainstorm and vote on your
Class Cookbook's official title!

MAKE IT A COOK-OFF!

Ask students to bring their finished meals in
for a cooking competition!

Study some examples
from other cook-
books as procedural
texts.

Or maybe even...

**Turn the project into a school-
wide fundraising event!**

RECIPE BRAINSTORM!

Name _____

Many families have their own favorite recipes that come from all over the world. Curious George and the Man in the Yellow Hat clearly love Italian home cooking the most! What are some of your family's best dishes? Brainstorm some ideas for the recipe you'd like to submit to the cookbook. Do your best to fill out the squares below.

Recipe Idea #1 _____

Country/Culture of Origin: Ingredients:

Instructions:

What I Like Most About This Dish:



Recipe Idea # 2 _____

Country/Culture of Origin: Ingredients:

Instructions:

What I Like Most About This Dish:



Recipe Idea # 3 _____

Country/Culture of Origin: Ingredients:

Instructions:

What I Like Most About This Dish:



Recipe Idea # 4 _____

Country/Culture of Origin: Ingredients:

Instructions:

What I Like Most About This Dish:



RECIPE INFORMATION

Name _____

Fill out the information below. The more details the better! You will use the information you gather here to help you create your cookbook page at school. If you'd like, practice preparing your meal and take a photo to include in your cookbook page. Don't forget to email the photo/put the photo on a flash drive so you can access it at school.

Recipe Title/Country or Culture of Origin:

Introduction:

Prep Time: _____ Cook Time: _____ How many people does your recipe serve?: _____

Ingredients and Materials:

Directions (detailed steps listed as a procedure):

Tips or Tricks:



COOKBOOK PAGE CHECKLIST

Name _____

Now it's time to create your cookbook page! The page you create will be submitted to your teacher to be included in your Class Cookbook! Use a computer and get creative. Microsoft Publisher and Microsoft Word are great programs to use—or use another favorite software. Websites like Canva.com can also help you make beautiful publications.

- ☐ **Your Name**
- ☐ **Title**
- ☐ **Country/Culture of Origin**
- ☐ **Headings**
- ☐ **Introduction to the Recipe**



Something to engage your readers and make them want to try your recipe. Try sharing what you like most about the dish, what it means to your family, or maybe the best time of year to make it.

- ☐ **Prep Time and Cook Time**

Prep: How long it takes to prepare the meal before it's cooked (includes gathering materials, chopping vegetables, etc.

Cook: How long it takes to actually cook the meal.

- ☐ **Ingredients List**

Example: 1 cup of water, 1 teaspoon of salt, half a cup of sugar

- ☐ **Materials List**

Example: large bowl, electric mixer, large spoon

- ☐ **Directions**

Detailed steps listed as a procedure

- ☐ **Photos or Illustrations**

- ☐ **Tips, Notes, or Safety Suggestions**

- ☐ **Make sure your page has a profile orientation and not a landscape orientation.**

This checklist is an example of profile orientation.



GIVE GEORGE SOME COLOR!

Name _____

Bring the life back to the Italian Painter's vision of George! But something is missing in George's right hand..... Can you remember what George was holding while he was being painted? Draw it in!



WHO'S GOT TIME?

Name _____



Draw hands on each clock to show Phinneas T. Lightspeed what time it is!

1.

12 : 00



6.

11 : 30



2.

1 : 30



7.

5 : 00



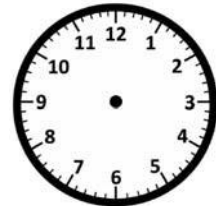
3.

8 : 00



8.

2 : 00



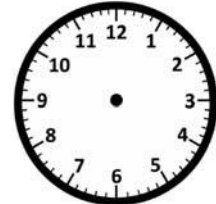
4.

4 : 00



9.

7 : 30



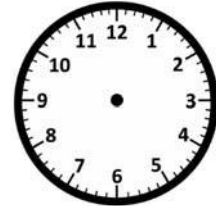
5.

2 : 30



10.

10 : 00



WHO'S GOT TIME?

Name _____



Draw hands on each clock to show Phinneas T. Lightspeed what time it is!

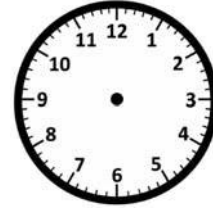
1.

12 : 05



6.

11 : 35



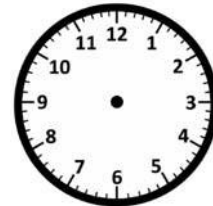
2.

1 : 15



7.

5 : 10



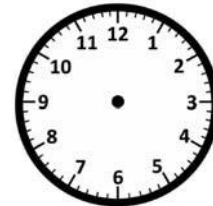
3.

8 : 25



8.

2 : 20



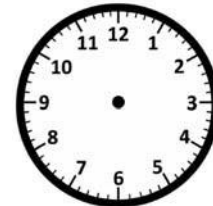
4.

4 : 55



9.

7 : 40



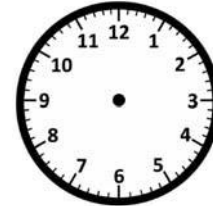
5.

2 : 30



10.

10 : 05



POST SHOW DISCUSSION

1. What was your favorite part of the play? Why?
2. Who was your favorite character? Who was your favorite actor? Discuss the difference between characters and actors. Did your favorite actor happen to play your favorite character?
3. Did the actors portray the characters in the way you imagined? How were the characters different onstage compared to in the books? How were they the same?
4. Could you understand what George was saying most of the time? If so, how were you able to figure it out? How did the actor use her voice and body to effectively communicate to the audience?
5. What was the most exciting part of the play? Why do you think so?
6. Recall the events in the story from beginning to end. How did each character contribute to what happened?
7. Describe the different settings.
8. How would the story have been different if George were a child instead of a monkey? How might it have been the same?
9. Do you think the performance was effective? Why or why not?
10. What was your favorite technical element in the play? The costumes, set, or sound? Explain your choice. Discuss the importance of each of these elements.
11. Remember the five traits that The Curious George Foundation works to encourage? Curiosity, exploration, ingenuity, opportunity, and determination. Describe examples of these traits in George's character onstage. Did any of the other characters exhibit any of these traits?



MAKING CONNECTIONS



Curious Creators

[LAFS.K12.R.4.10](#)

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

[LAFS.K12.L.3.6](#)

Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

[SS.K.A.1.1](#)

Develop an understanding of how to use and create a timeline.

[LAFS.4.RL.1.1](#)

Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Curious Creators Mapping Activity

[SS.K.G.1.4](#)

Differentiate land and water features on simple maps and globes.

[SS.1.G.1.4](#)

Identify a variety of physical features using a map and globe.

[SS.2.G.1.3](#)

Label on a map or globe the continents, oceans, Equator, Prime Meridian, North and South Pole.

[SS.3.G.1.3](#)

Label the continents and oceans on a world map.

[SS.4.G.1.4](#)

Interpret political and physical maps using map elements (title, compass rose, cardinal directions, intermediate directions, symbols, legend, scale, longitude, latitude).

Character Exploration/Pre Show Discussion

[TH.K.F.1.1](#)

Pretend to be an animal by imitating its movements and sounds.

[TH.1.F.1.1](#)

Pretend to be an animal or person living in an imagined place.

[TH.2.C.2.2](#)

Describe how an actor in a play, musical, or film creates a character.

[LAFS.2.W.3.8](#)

Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

[TH.3.O.1.1](#)

Describe how an actor creates a character.

[LAFS.3.W.3.8](#)

Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

[TH.4.H.1.2](#)

Define how a character might react to a new set of circumstances in a given story.

[LAFS.4.W.3.8](#)

Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

MAKING CONNECTIONS



What Makes you Curious?

[LAFS.K.SL.2.5](#)

Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.

[LAFS.1.SL.2.5](#)

Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

Math Maze

[MAFS.K.OA.1.4](#)

For any number from 1 to 9, find the number that makes 10 when added to the given number, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record the answer with a drawing or equation.

[MAFS.1.OA.4.7](#)

Understand the meaning of the equal sign, and determine if equations involving addition and subtraction are true or false. *For example, which of the following equations are true and which are false? $6 = 6$, $7 = 8 - 1$, $5 + 2 = 2 + 5$, $4 + 1 = 5 + 2$.*

[MAFS.2.OA.2.2](#)

Fluently add and subtract within 20 using mental strategies. By end of Grade 2, know from memory all sums of two one-digit numbers.

[MAFS.3.NBT.1.3](#)

Multiply one-digit whole numbers by multiples of 10 in the range 10–90 (e.g., 9×80 , 5×60) using strategies based on place value and properties of operations.

[MAFS.3.OA.3.7](#)

Fluently multiply and divide within 100, using strategies such as the relationship between multiplication and division (e.g., knowing that $8 \times 5 = 40$, one knows $40 \div 5 = 8$) or properties of operations. By the end of Grade 3, know from memory all products of two one-digit numbers.

[MAFS.4.NBT.2.4](#)

Fluently add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm.

Class Cookbook

[SC.K2.CS-CP.2.2](#)

Perform a simple task (e.g., making a sandwich and brushing teeth) breaking it into small steps.

[SC.35.CS-CP.3.2](#)

Present digitally created products, either individually and collaboratively, where a topic, concept, or skill is carefully analyzed or thoughtfully explored.

[SC.35.CS-CP.3.1](#)

Write, communicate and publish activities using technology tools.

Who's Got Time?

[MAFS.1.MD.2.3](#)

Tell and write time in hours and half-hours using analog and digital clocks.

[MAFS.2.MD.3.7](#)

Tell and write time from analog and digital clocks to the nearest five minutes.

MAKING CONNECTIONS



Post Show Discussion

[TH.K.C.2.1](#)

Respond to a performance and share personal preferences about parts of the performance.

[TH.K.O.3.1](#)

Compare a story that is read to one that is acted out.

[TH.1.C.2.2](#)

Identify elements of an effective performance.

[TH.1.O.2.1](#)

Describe in words or by drawing a picture, the most exciting part in the story line of a play.

[TH.2.C.1.1](#)

Describe a character in a story and tell why the character is important to the story.

[TH.2.O.1.1](#)

Compare the differences between reading a story and seeing it as a play.

[TH.2.O.2.1](#)

Re-tell what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of a story after viewing a play.

[TH.3.C.1.2](#)

Watch a play and describe how the elements of light, costumes, props, and sound influence the mood of the production.

[TH.3.S.3.3](#)

Describe elements of dramatic performance that produce an emotional response in oneself or an audience.

[LAFS.3.RL.1.3](#)

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

[TH.4.C.3.1](#)

Identify the characteristics of an effective acting performance.

[TH.4.S.3.3](#)

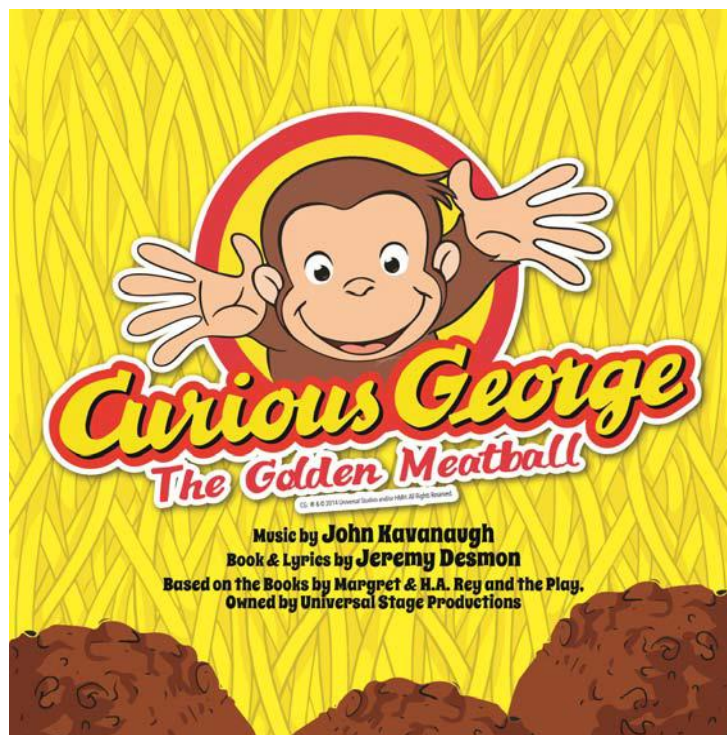
Describe elements of dramatic and technical performance that produce an emotional response in oneself or an audience.

[LAFS.4.RL.1.3](#)

Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

REFERENCES

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