



Squirrel Stole My Underpants

A poignantly silly adventure tale for families

ABOUT THE SHOW

A lonely, awkward girl is sent out to the backyard to hang up the laundry and keep herself busy. The moment Sylvie's back is turned, a mischievous squirrel appears, steals her favorite piece of clothing and runs off. When the girl gives chase, she finds herself lost in strange lands. As the story unfolds, an entire world emerges from her laundry basket and Sylvie learns that she is a strong girl with magic within herself.



This show features puppetry, physical theater, live music, and a giant pile of laundry.



About The Gottabees

Puppets! Original music! A Tiny Bit of Acrobatics! Adventure and Invention! The Gottabees started making super fun theater for families in 2013 with the creation of *Squirrel Stole My Underpants* and its follow-up, *Lollipops for Breakfast*, in 2015. They have since been selling out venues and inspiring homemade puppet shows throughout the US and Canada. **They find it deeply satisfying to create original physical theater for families to giggle, gasp, sigh, and cheer in 45 minutes or less.**

Their shows are stories told without words—they embrace the physical and the visual in theater. The result is a poetic, non-linear story that surprises audiences of all ages. One thing that makes members of The Gottabees happiest is when they meet children who have seen a show and parents tell them how their child acted out the entire show for weeks after seeing it. This is the core reason why they make theater for young audiences: **The Gottabees want children to know in their hearts that they, too, can make theater wherever they are and whomever they are.**



This show was awarded a 2013 Jim Henson Foundation family project grant and was developed with the generous support of the Puppet Showplace Theater's Incubator program. It is a 2017 UNIMA-USA Citation of Excellence WINNER and earned an "Artistic Achievement" award from the Puppeteers of America's Northeast Region.

thegottabees.com

Preparation Activities

These are student activities to do before seeing *Squirrel Stole My Underpants*. Do one activity or all of the activities! They will introduce students to the show by providing context clues, giving them a working knowledge of how the story works, and exciting them about seeing the live performance.

Discuss, Write, Draw

Use these questions to frame student discussions, individual drawings, or prompts for writing:

- 📌 Describe your favorite object in the whole world. *It might be the object you sleep with, take everywhere with you, the object that makes you feel better when things are difficult.*
- 📌 Have you ever lost something or had something taken from you? How did it make you feel? What did you do about it?
- 📌 What animal do you think is the most mischievous? What makes them seem naughty?
- 📌 If you went on an adventure, where would you go? What does this place look like? How do you get there?



Draw a comic book thought bubble on paper so that everyone can see it.

What is this? How is it used?

Definition: thought bubbles used in comic books, comic strips and cartoons to allow words to be understood as representing the speech or thoughts of a given character in the comic.

What do you like to think about? If you had a thought bubble following you right now, what would it have in? Can you draw a picture of it?

Define and discuss these words and how they might be related to the performance:

Brave	Mime
Chase	Mischievous
Dance	Music Box
Excited	Party
Frustrating	Puppet
Hand puppet	Relief
Hero	Rod Puppet
Hide	Sad
Imaginary	Scared
Lonely	Sneak
Lost	Theater
Lullaby	Trick

Read and discuss these stories about naughty animals:

- 📖 *Curious George* series, H.A. Rey
- 📖 *Five Little Monkeys* series, Eileen Christelow
- 📖 *Giggle Giggle Quack*, Doreen Cronin
- 📖 *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*, Jon Scieszka

Read and discuss these adventure stories:

- 📖 *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, Crockett Johnson
- 📖 *Not a Box*, Antoinette Portis
- 📖 *Olivia Saves the Circus*, Ian Falconer
- 📖 *Where the Wild Things Are*, Maurice Sendak

Audio Activity

Go to this webpage:

<http://www.bonnie-duncan.com/for-presenters1.html>

Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on Music Sample, “Out to Sea” by Brendan Burns and Tony Leva. Play the audio link for students.

- What instruments do you think are being played? (acoustic guitar and upright bass)
- What do you think might happen while this music plays?
- How does the music make you feel?
- Write a story or draw a picture of what you think might happen while this music plays.



A Little Note About Audience Etiquette:

When you watch a performance, it is different from watching TV. You are in the same room as the performers—they can see and hear you! Performers do their best when the audience looks and listens quietly.

1. Pay attention to what the performers are doing so that you do not miss any action.
2. Stay quiet and seated during the performance so that others may also see and hear what is happening.
3. Applaud when the performance ends to tell the performer that you appreciate all of their hard work.
4. At funny moments, it is OKAY to LAUGH!



Follow-Up Activities

*These are activities for students to do after seeing **Squirrel Stole My Underpants**. Do one activity or all! They will give students opportunities to understand what they saw more deeply, be inspired by what they saw, and to imagine their own adventure stories.*

Discuss, Write, Draw

Use these questions to frame student discussions, individual drawings, or prompts for writing:

- 🗨️ How did Sylvie's feelings change as she chased after the squirrel? When and how did Sylvie show that she was sad? Afraid? Brave? Proud?
- 🗨️ Why do you think Squirrel stole the underpants?

Review the vocabulary and discuss how each term related to the show.

Ask students to write Bonnie a letter with any questions or comments about the show.

I love writing letters/emails and promise to respond! Email me for my paper mail address: bonniedone@gmail.com

Make a Puppet!

Photocopy page 5 of this packet and distribute to students. Ask students to design and color their own squirrel and underpants. Then, cut out the squirrel and tape a popsicle stick to the back of the paper to create a rod puppet.

Use these prompts for drama activities and/or writing:

- 🗨️ Interview the squirrel and ask why he/she stole the underpants.
- 🗨️ Ask the squirrel to describe his/her home.
- 🗨️ Ask the squirrel to retell the story of the show.

Ask students to write or act out their own version of **Squirrel Stole My Underpants**.

Here are some guiding questions to structure the story:

- What is the story's setting?
- Are the characters people or animals?
- What is lost / stolen?
- Who is trying to find them?
- Who took them?
- What 3-4 tactics do they try to use to find the missing object? (These tactics fail!)
- What tactic works to find the missing object?
- How does the story end?

Here are some guiding scene prompts, if students act out the story:

- Scene 1: Set the Scene--where & who
- Scene 2: Discover an object is missing
- Scene 3: Try to get back = fail
- Scene 4: Try to get back = fail
- Scene 5: Try to get back = SUCCESS
- Scene 6: Celebration



