

# STUDY GUIDE

**ELEMENTARY • 2nd & 3rd GRADE**



## Princess Thimbelina



**Bits 'N Pieces Puppet Theatre**

Study Guides are produced in partnership with Broward County Public Schools.

## Plot Summary

Once upon a time in Denmark, a magic flower sprouted in a garden near Copenhagen. A friendly Flower Witch had planted it. It was no ordinary wildflower but one that was filled with magic. In the flower's center, bursting from between its petals, grew a tiny fairy child. No larger than your thumb, or a thimble on your finger, her name was Thimbelina. She was a princess of the flowers from the Land of Faerie.

A big green bullfrog stomped out of the swamp and hopped into her garden. He promised he was her handsome prince, but when she gave him a kiss, he turned out to be a wart! An awful frog was he, with nothing to do but tell lies to the child. She bade him leave, and he hopped away.

Cupid, bouncing up high in the sky upon a cloud, saw the beautiful fairy child and flew in for a closer look. He wanted to help, so he gave Thimbelina a magic heart. If she used it wisely, she would find happiness.

A bright, shiny bird from the Scottish Highlands flew across the sky. Hungry for a bite, he landed. Instead of food he found Thimbelina! He taught her how to dance the Highland fling. But then he had to fly south. Winter was approaching, and he'd freeze his tail feathers!

Too late! Too late! The Snow Queen arrived with her mantle of snow and ice. She covered the bird with frost and froze icicles on Thimbelina's nose. The bird limped away. The Snow Queen flew off triumphant, and tiny Thimbelina was left to freeze in the snow.

Brr! Thimbelina would surely have frozen and died if good fortune had not been with her. A mole, too cold underground, had tunneled up out of the earth to warm himself in the sun. He squinted at a mound of snow that shivered, sneezed and jumped! It was a tiny girl. The mole took her home and let her live with him.

The mole was waiting for his sweetheart to arrive. He planned to marry a spider to live by his side, so Thimbelina performed the wedding ceremony. The couple was happy, but Thimbelina was still alone.

Outside the mole's home spring had sprung. Thimbelina remembered her magic heart and wondered when her turn for happiness would come. Cupid flew in. There had been a mistake! She had the heart of the Prince of the Flowers; he had hers. They fell in love with the help of Cupid's arrow. Happiness had come to Thimbelina's magic land.



## About the Author: Hans Christian Andersen

### At A Glance

**Born:** April 2, 1805, Odense, Denmark

**Died:** August 4, 1875, Rolighed, Denmark

Hans Christian Andersen, like many of the heroes in his own fairy tales, was born into a humble family. His mother was a sickly woman, his father a poor cobbler of shoes. As a child, Hans had a mind filled with dreams.

With puppets and dolls, stories and songs, he entertained his friends and family. He dreamed of the day he would be king. At thirty years old, Hans published his first book of fairy tales. Followed by more stories, plays and poems he found a spot in his audiences' hearts and carved out his kingdom.

Andersen died a famous old man at 75 years of age. Within his own life he had published a half a million words of fantasy for all time, and forever after. He was the last great teller of fairy tales, stories of people, fairies and inanimate objects that talked. Though today we have writers of science fiction and fantasy on other planets, Hans wrote of a time when witches and goblins, talking clothes and princesses lived in your neighborhood, just around the corner, once upon a time.

### Fun Facts

- Hans Christian Andersen wrote 168 fairy tales and stories. The story of Thumbelina was among the first published in 1835. His first book of fairy tales was published in 1835. The book was very successful. He continued writing children's books, nearly one each year, until 1872. His stories have been translated into more than 100 languages.
- Most known as a fairy tale author throughout the world, Hans Christian Andersen's artistic talent extended beyond the written word. He also used paper for ink drawings and scissor art. More than 1,000 of his colorful paper cuttings, ranging from simple to quite intricate, still exist today. Many of these can be viewed online at The Royal Danish Library website.
- In the original story (1836), the main character was named "Tommelise" and her name has changed in different versions of the story. In 1864 the name "Thumbelina" first appeared. In this play, she sits upon a thimble – so they choose to name the character THIMBELINA!

## **How To Make a Giant Puppet Show**

**By Bits 'N Pieces Theatre**

So you say you would like to make a giant puppet show? You're going to need at least 18 months to do it. It takes a year and a half to create the puppets, script, lyrics, music, choreography and sets for one giant puppet musical. There are 11 giant puppet shows in the Bits 'N Pieces repertoire. Since we don't reuse old puppets for new, each puppet production is built as an original work of art. It's taken sixteen and half years to build all of our shows.

### **Where to start?**

The words come first. The story is the beginning of each new show. It can be a classic or contemporary piece of literature, a saying or an interesting event. From this first glimmer of an idea, Director Jerry Bickel writes the script and lyrics. He collaborates with a composer to create the musical score.

### **A little clay, a little papier-mache, and a lot of hot glue:**

Once the story is firm, Designer and Master Puppeteer Holli Rubin begins to build the puppets. From a giant block of clay, she sculpts the heads and casts them in plastic papier-mache. The moving facial parts are installed before Holli costumes each character. Each puppet represents weeks of creation, thousands of stitches and many hot-glue burns.

### **How the puppets come to life:**

The musical's dances are created by a choreographer. Actors first rehearse the show without the giant puppets. Once they learn their choreography, they wear the puppets and adapt their puppet's movements for the stage. Special rehearsals with video cameras help the puppeteers learn where improvements can be made in their performance. While one production is on tour across the country, a new show can be created between engagements in the Tampa, Florida studios. Three months are devoted to writing the show. Twelve months to design and build the puppets. Finally, three more months are used to rehearse, record, add special effects and edit. A year and a half total, and the new show can open for its first public performance. Refinement continues throughout the tour until the production reaches its final form: a new giant puppet musical in the Bits 'N Pieces Puppet Theatre repertory.

## Language Arts Connections

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

In each box, draw and label a character from the performance.

- **Grade 2:** Write a sentence detailing how the character responds to challenges. *(LAFS.2.RL.1.3)*
- **Grade 3:** Write a sentence detailing how the character's actions influenced the story. *(LAFS.3.RL.1.3)*

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<b>Character</b>	<b>Detail</b> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Character</b>	<b>Detail</b> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Imagine that you have been asked to write a review of the performance of Princess Thimbelina!

- **Grade 2:** Be sure to include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings you observed. *(TH.2.C.1.2, LAFS.2.W.3.8)*
- **Grade 3:** Be sure to include details to describe the lights, costumes, props, and sound and how they made you feel. *(TH.3.C.1.2)*

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the space below to write a letter to a character based on what you learned from the show! You can write the letter from yourself or from another character. Use the writing ideas and character list below to help you get started. *(ELA.2.W.1.3, ELA.3.W.1.3)*

**WRITING IDEAS:**

- Write a letter from Angus the Bird to Thimbelina telling her winter is coming.
- Write to Thimbelina telling her how to find happiness.
- Write to the Garden Witch about her garden.

**CHARACTERS:**

- Thimbelina
- Frog
- Miss Spider
- Angus the Bird
- Prince of the Sunflowers
- Garden Witch
- Mumford Mole
- Snow Queen
- Cupid

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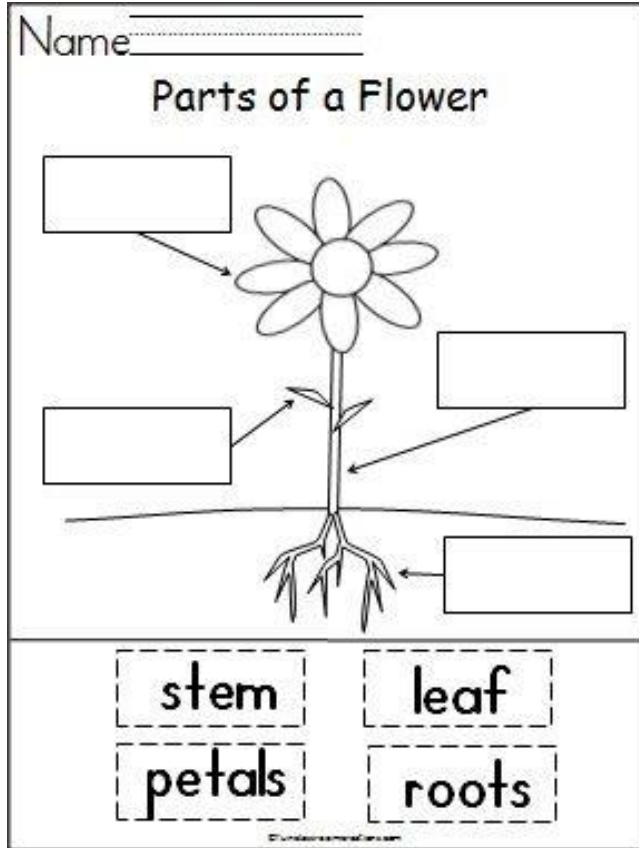
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## Parts of a Flower

(SC.2.L.14.1, SC.3.L.14.1)

Do your best to identify the various parts of the flower and list the purpose of each:



### Parts of a Flower Purposes:

What role does each part play? Think about food production, support, water and nutrient transport, and reproduction.

**STEM:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**LEAF:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**PETALS:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**ROOTS:**

\_\_\_\_\_

How are flowers similar and different to humans? Think about the parts (both inside and outside) that help both to stay alive and to grow and reproduce. Write at least one similarity and one difference:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Arts Integration

### Grade 2

#### **Research** (TH.2.F.2.1)

*Encourage students to research the various backstage jobs that contribute to a performance's success including designers and technicians in Costumes, Scenery, Lighting, Props, and Makeup. Explain what is required to do these jobs and what might appeal to you personally as a possible career choice.*

#### **Improvisation** (DA.2.F.1.1)

*Divide students into small groups, ask them to create a dance to tell the story of Princess Thimbelina. Encourage students to focus on the main characters and use a variety of movement (curved, angular, sharp, flowing), high/low levels in space, floor patterns and groupings to tell the story without using any words.*

### Grade 3

#### **Research** (TH.3.F.2.1)

*Encourage students to research the various backstage jobs that contribute to a performance's success including designers and technicians in Costumes, Scenery, Lighting, Props, and Makeup. Ask them to think of other jobs that require the same skills as those they researched.*

#### **Improvisation** (DA.3.F.1.1, TH.3.)

*Divide students into small groups, ask them to create a dance to tell the story of Princess Thimbelina. Encourage students to focus on the main characters and use a variety of movement (curved, angular, sharp, flowing), high/low levels in space, floor patterns and groupings to tell the story without using any words.*

## Academic Vocabulary

- **Character** – a person, animal, being, creature, or thing in a story
- **Petals** – the often bright and colorful leaves that make up a flower
- **Mole** – a burrowing mammal with tiny eyes, concealed ears, and soft fur that eats insects
- **Thimble** - a cap or cover used in sewing to protect the finger that pushes the needle
- **Cupid** – God of love
- **Garden** – an area of ground where herbs, fruits, flowers, or vegetables are grown
- **Underground** – below the surface of the ground
- **Nearsighted** – able to see near things more clearly than distant ones

## Arts Vocabulary

- **Adaptation** – alter a text to make it appropriate for the stage
- **Cast** – the group of actors who work together to perform the show
- **Characterization** – use body, voice, and movement to create a representation of a person or animal
- **Improvisation** – creating (a scene or role play) ‘on the spot’ without any planning ahead of time – making it up as you go
- **Musical Theatre** – form of theatre performance that includes singing, and dancing as well as acting
- **Choreography** - the art of arranging dances

**Standards Alignment:** The activities in this study guide are aligned with the standards listed below. When teachers incorporate the arts, they increase student engagement, offer multiple points for students to access the curriculum, and provide alternative means for students to demonstrate what they know.

Language Arts Florida Standards	
Grades 2 and 3	
Reading Literature	
LAFS.2.RL.1.3	Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.
LAFS.3.RL.1.3	Describe how characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
Writing	
LAFS.2.W.3.8	Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
LAFS.2.W.1.3	Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.
LAFS.3.W.1.3	Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

Florida Theater Standards	
Grades 2 and 3	
Critical Thinking and Reflection	
TH.2.C.1.2	Respond to a play by drawing and/or writing about a favorite aspect of it.
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.
Innovation, Technology, and the Future	
TH.2.F.2.1	Identify the jobs people can have in the theater.
TH.3.F.2.1	Identify non-theatre professions that require the same skills as are used in theatre.

Florida Science Standards	
Grades 2 and 3	
Life Science	
SC.2.L.14.1	Distinguish human body parts (brain, heart, lungs, stomach, muscles, and skeleton) and their basic functions.
SC.3.L.14.1	Describe structures in plants and their roles in food production, support, water and nutrient transport, and reproduction.

Florida Dance Standards	
Grades 2 and 3	
Innovation, Technology, and the Future	
DA.2.F.1.1	Create dances that interpret animals and storybook or other imagined characters.
DA.3.F.1.1	Create dance pieces that interpret characters from stories, poems, and other literature sources.

# Student Work Samples

Teachers:

Thank you for your continued support of the SEAS Program. Using the suggestions and/or activity pages included in this Study Guide, please collect student work samples, and upload them using the link below.

Please click on the link below to upload your student's work samples to their respective show folder:

[Click Here to Upload Student Work Samples](#)

Should you have any questions, please contact Lauri Foster at:  
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