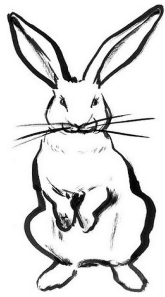




WALNUT STREET THEATRE



STUDY GUIDE



SHOW SYNOPSIS

HARVEY, the classic Pulitzer Prize-winning Broadway and Hollywood comedy, pulls laughter out of the hat at every turn. Elwood P. Dowd is charming and kind with one character flaw: an unwavering friendship with a 6-foot-tall, invisible white rabbit named Harvey. When Elwood starts to introduce his friend to guests at a society party, his sister Veta can't take it anymore. In order to save the family's social reputation, Elwood's sister takes him to the local sanatorium. But when the doctor mistakenly commits his anxiety-ridden sister, Elwood and Harvey slip out of the hospital unbothered, setting off a hilarious whirlwind of confusion and chaos as everyone in town tries to catch a man and his invisible rabbit.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

BEFORE THE SHOW

- Has anyone ever been to a live play before? How was it different from television or a movie?
- What is the difference between a play and a musical?
- Have you ever seen the movie *Harvey*?
- Did you have an imaginary friend as a young kid? What do you remember about them?
- Could you imagine still having an imaginary friend as an adult? How do you think others would respond to you in this situation?

AFTER THE SHOW

- Did you enjoy this performance? What was your favorite part?
- Who was your favorite character? Why?
- Why do you think some of the characters, particularly Elwood, can see Harvey and others can't?
- Do you think Veta made the right decision in not allowing her brother to receive the medicine? Why or why not?
- Do you think Harvey is imaginary? Why or why not?



THEATRE 101



Ever wondered how to put on a play?

There are many different elements that go into putting a show up on its feet. Please review the following with your students:

PLAYWRIGHT The playwright writes the script.

DIRECTOR The director is in charge of orchestrating the entirety of the production. They lead the actors, designers, and production crew to put the show on its feet.

COSTUME What the actors wear during the show.

SCENERY Everything on stage (*except props*) used to represent the place at which action is occurring.

PROPS All physical items on stage with the exception of the scenery. This includes lamps, chairs, pens, paper, books, and more!

LIGHTS Stage lights illuminate the actors so that they look their best. The colors used, focus of the light, and amount of lighting can really set the mood and environment of a scene.

SOUND Everything that you hear during a performance that does not come from the actors.

ACTORS The actors are the people that perform the show onstage.

AUDIENCE The lucky people that get to watch the show. New to being an audience member? Follow these rules and you will be a natural!

AUDIENCE RULES

- ◆ Unlike a movie, the actors are performing in front of you. They can see everything that you do. Talking, sleeping, poking your neighbor, or making noise during the performance distracts the actors and others around you.
- ◆ Don't bring electronics to the performance. The use of cell phones, cameras, computers, tablets, and video game devices are **not allowed**.
- ◆ Use your better judgment on when to laugh, clap, and/or cry during the performance. But don't forget to clap at the end of the show!
- ◆ Stay in your seat during the performance.
- ◆ Make sure you go to the bathroom *before* the show starts.

TRY IT YOURSELF!

DIRECTIONS

Give students a chance to act out a scene from *Harvey*. Before jumping into the performance, think about all of the elements that go into a play. Are there any props that we can use to help improve the scene? Where are the characters when this scene is taking place? What might the scenery look like?



SAMPLE SCENE

SANDERSON: To sum it all up, your sister's condition is serious, but I can help her. She will however have to remain here temporarily.

ELWOOD: Doctor, I've always wanted Veta to have everything she needs.

KELLY: That's very kind.

ELWOOD: But I wouldn't want her to stay out here unless she liked it out here and wanted to stay.

SANDERSON: Mr. Dowd, if this were an ordinary delusion—something reflected on the memory picture—in other words, if it was something she had seen only once—that would be one thing. But this is more serious. It stands to reason nobody has ever seen a white rabbit six feet high.

ELWOOD: Not very often, Doctor.

SANDERSON: So your sister must be committed here, at least temporarily. Under these circumstances I would commit my own grandmother.

ELWOOD: Does your grandmother drink, too?

SANDERSON: No. It's just an expression. Now will you

sign these temporary commitment papers as next-of-kin? It's just a formality.

ELWOOD: You'd better have Veta do that, Doctor. She always does all the signing and managing for the family. She's good at it.

SANDERSON: We can't disturb her now.

ELWOOD: Then perhaps I'd better talk it over with Judge Gaffney, our attorney.

SANDERSON: Tell him I advised it. And it isn't as if you couldn't drop in here any time and make inquiries.

KELLY: We'd be glad to have you.

SANDERSON: In fact look around now, if you'd like. Take your time.

ELWOOD: That's very neighbourly.

SANDERSON: Well ... It's been a great pleasure, Mr. Dowd.

ELWOOD: Thank you. I've enjoyed it too, Doctor—meeting you, and especially Miss Kelly here.

ACTIVITY: SEEING THE WORLD IN DIFFERENT WAYS in the HOT SEAT!

IT'S HOT SEAT TIME!

A story can change depending on who tells it. You've gotten to a chance to meet the characters in *Harvey* and learn about their personality traits throughout the story. Now it's your turn to become the characters by expressing their viewpoints in words and styles that you help to create!

STEP 1: Set up a "hot seat", which is a single chair in front of your classroom.

STEP 2: One by one, each member of your class should take a turn in the "hot seat". When it's your turn, choose one of the characters from *Harvey* and introduce yourself in the voice and manner of the character you have chosen.

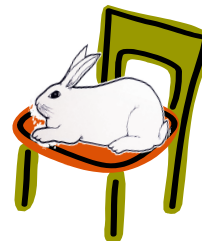
STEP 3: Find an important event from *Harvey* and ask the "characters" in the "hot seat" questions about how these events affect them.

FOLLOW-UP

- After students have interviewed several "characters", discuss how the characters' viewpoints differed. How were they alike?

VARIATIONS:

- Instead of acting out the characters' viewpoints, write about them in diary entries.
- How would the characters respond to events in your life? How would they respond to current events happening today?

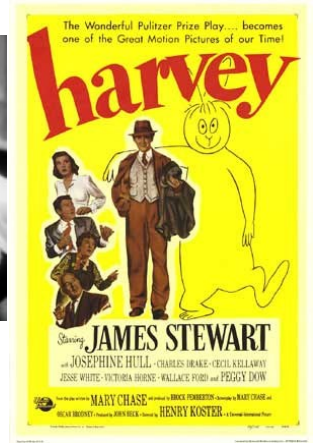


HARVEY: From Stage to Screen!

Harvey is a 1944 play by the American playwright Mary Chase, who received the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for the work in 1945. It has also been adapted for film and television several times. The play was adapted for film most notably by Chase, Oscar Brodney, and Myles Connolly in 1950, and was directed by Henry Koster, starring Josephine Hull and James Stewart.

Three US television adaptations have also been made. The first, in 1958, starred Art Carney, Marion Lorne, Elizabeth Montgomery, Larry Blyden, Fred Gwynne, Charlotte Rae, and Jack Weston. In the second, James Stewart reprised his famous screen role in 1972 along with Fred Gwynne, Richard Mulligan and Madeline Kahn. The last, in 1998, starred Harry Anderson, Swoosie Kurtz, Jessica Hecht (who appears in the 2012 revival), Leslie Nielsen, and William Schallert.

Photos: TOP- James Stewart as Elwood,
BOTTOM LEFT- Josephine Hull as Veta
BOTTOM RIGHT- Original 1950 film poster



STUDENT ACTIVITY: BUCKET OF WATER

Harvey requires us to use our imagination many times throughout the play in order to truly see Harvey the rabbit. Because we cannot see him visually, we must rely on our mind's eye to get a clear image of him, how he is moving, and the space he is taking up on the stage. Try the "Bucket of Water" activity to strengthen your imagination and reaction to things that aren't really there, but could be!

Procedure:

1. With the class seated, ask two students to take the stage.
2. Ask these two students to hold a large, imaginary bucket, one person on either side.
3. The instructor will fill the bucket with water from an imaginary hose.
4. The goal of these students is to carry the bucket from one side of the stage to the other. Then they are to dump out the water and bring the bucket back.
5. The kids should demonstrate the differences of weight of the bucket in their bodies and expressions.
6. Consider adding other elements to the activity: it's freezing cold, the bucket really smells, the floor is slippery, etc.



STUDENT WORKSHEET: CREATE A BACKSTORY

DISCUSSION

Everybody has a backstory— the story of their life that tells about what has happened to them in the past and how it has shaped who they are. What is Harvey's backstory? Where did he come from? Does he have a family?

DIRECTIONS

- In the space below, write a backstory for Harvey.
- Consider the questions listed above or think of new topics to include. Remember, we only know as much about Harvey as the play tells us— its up to you to fill in the gaps.

LIKE THE SHOW? LET US KNOW!

Send letters or drawings to:

Walnut Street Theatre

ATTN: Education Department

825 Walnut St.

Philadelphia, PA 19107





WALNUT STREET THEATRE

BIOGRAPHY

Walnut Street Theatre has the unique distinction of being the oldest, continuously operating theatre in the English-speaking world, having served Philadelphia audiences for over 200 years!

Today, under the direction of Producing Artistic Director Bernard Havard, Walnut Street Theatre is in its 33rd season as a self-producing, non-profit theatre company. Walnut Street Theatre continues to entertain and enlighten diverse audiences with high quality theatrical programming. With more than 50,000 subscribers, the Walnut is also the most subscribed theatre company in the world!

Last season, 180,000 children and adults were impacted by the Walnut's Education Programs- including our theatre school with classes for kids and adults, Camp Walnut, Our Touring Outreach Program to local schools and our artist in residency programs.



WALNUT STREET THEATRE EDUCATION STAFF

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
EDUCATION PROGRAMS ASSOCIATE
EDUCATION PRODUCTION ASSOCIATE
EDUCATION APPRENTICE
ACTING APPRENTICES

Thomas Quinn
Ashley Kerns
Patrick Shane
Amanda Gallup
Angie Confredo
Jared Calhoun
Devon Fields
Donovan Lockett
Kathryn Miller

WEB

- **Educational Drama Activities**
<http://dramagames.info/>
- **Walnut Street Theatre Touring Outreach Company**
<https://walnutstreettheatre.org/education/outreach.php>

ORIGINAL CREATIVE TEAM

A Play by:
Mary Chase

Additional dialogue by:
Ken Ludwig

Media Partners



Mary Chase

In 1924, Chase began her career as a journalist on the Denver Times and Rocky Mountain News, leaving the News in 1931 to write plays, do freelance reporting work, and raise a family. In 1936, her first play, *Me Third*, was produced at the Baker Federal Theater in Denver as a part of the Roosevelt-era Works Progress Administration (WPA). In the spring of 1937, the play opened on Broadway, renamed as *Now You've Done It*, but it failed to attract positive reviews and closed down after three weeks. In 1938, Mary wrote *Chi House*, which was made into a Hollywood film by RKO Radio Pictures called *Sorority House* (1939), starring Anne Shirley of *Anne of Green Gables* fame. In the early 1940s, she had a series of government, volunteer, and union jobs, serving as the Information Director for the National Youth Administration in Denver, doing volunteer work for the Colorado Foundation for the Advancement of Spanish Speaking Peoples, and working as the publicity director for the Denver branch of the Teamsters Union.

Walnut Street Theatre Educational Opportunities!

2015-2016
SEASON

WALNUT STREET THEATRE TOURING OUTREACH

BRING A SHOW TO YOUR SCHOOL!

Oskar and the Big Bully Battle (Bullying) Grades K-6
Only 13 (Choices) Grades 6-9
Freedom Riders (Diversity) Grades 6-9
The Berenstain Bears Hospital Friends (Family & Good Health) Grades pre K-3
The Adventures of Nick Nutrition and his Dog Fiber (Nutrition) Grades K-6

Open a dialogue with students about issues
that affect them!

Call 215-574-3550, ext. 584

WALNUT STREET THEATRE FOR KIDS

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Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* (December)
Zombie in Love (February)
Freckle Face Strawberry the Musical (March/April)
Miss Nelson Has a Field Day (June)

Tickets just \$10-\$16

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Call 215-574-3550, ext. 504



The Theatre School at WALNUT STREET THEATRE

CLASSES FOR KIDS, STUDENTS
AND ADULTS

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WHEN WE PLAY, LEARNING HAPPENS!