



# WALNUT STREET THEATRE

Touring Outreach Company

## The Boy Who Cried Bully

by Tom Quinn

Study Guide



### Play Synopsis

Meet Nate, a typical third-grader who loves playing outside with friends, adding comic relief to Miss Thurgood's class and telling tall tales. Nate's biggest problem is Sam, a fifth-grade bully who has it in for him and his friends. With Sam and her sidekick stealing all of Nate's lunch money, his troubles seem to be getting worse.

Fortunately, Bob the Bully-Buster is invited to Nate's classroom to talk about identifying and preventing bullying in their school. But will Nate's reputation for exaggerating stories keep him from getting the help he needs? This honest examination of bullying - how it starts, why it happens and what to do to stop it - is a fun, theatrical way to deal with this sensitive topic while also showing students the dangers of bending the truth.

### Pre-Show Activity

Hang three sheets of poster paper or newsprint on the board. On the first, write "BULLY." On the second, write "VICTIM." On the third, write "BYSTANDER." Explain to your students that bullying always involves a bully and a victim. Sometimes people are around to witness the bullying and those people are called bystanders. Bystanders must choose to either help the victim, help the bully, or do nothing. Have students suggest words or phrases that describe each of the roles and add them to the poster sheets. Save these sheets and revisit them after the show to decide which characters fell into which categories.

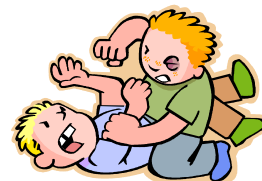
### Questions for Before the Show

- \* *What do you expect from a show called "The Boy Who Cried Bully?"*
- \* *What does the verb "to bully" mean? Have you ever heard about or seen bullying in your school?*
- \* *What should someone do if they are being bullied?*
- \* *Have you or someone you know ever stretched the truth to get out of trouble?*
- \* *What is an adaptation?*
- \* *What do you know about Aesop and his fables?*
- \* *Review the plot of "The Boy Who Cried Wolf."*



### Questions for After the Show

- \* *If you are bullied, what should you do? Why?*
- \* *Why is it so important to get help from adults when you're being bullied?*
- \* *List some reasons why Sam might be so mean to Nate?*
- \* *In what ways was "The Boy Who Cried Bully" similar to "The Boy Who Cried Wolf?" Which character was the wolf and which character was the boy?*





## “Bully-Box”

In *The Boy Who Cried Bully*, Bob the Bully-Buster shows Nate’s class a “Bully-Box,” a box for students to tell teachers and other school administrators about a bullying situation. Using a “Bully Box,” students can alert their teachers while remaining anonymous.

In front of your class, take a shoe box and wrap it in a brown paper bag or neutral-colored wrapping paper. With scissors, make a slot in the top of the box and label it “Our Classroom Bully-Box.” Have each of your students use a small piece of paper to write or draw their response to the question, *How can we, as a class, prevent bullying?* Take each of these responses and tape them around the outside of the box. Display the box in a place where all of your students can access it for the rest of the school year.

## Trashing Bullies

In this activity, your students will investigate why bullying takes place. Discuss Sam and the reasons why she bullies Nate. Talk about how sometimes there are things that people don’t like about each other. Also discuss how someone’s life at home can make them behave a certain way at school. Individually, have your students write or draw why someone might bully. Tell your students that their responses are private and for their eyes only, but that they should be honest in their examination of why and how bullying can happen. When your students have finished, ask them to fold up their paper and throw them away in the trashcan one by one. Explain that this “throwing away ceremony” symbolizes the trashing of bullying behavior. Discuss the activity and what new insights your students may have gained.



## Two Truths & A Lie

In the play, Nate tends to tell lies far too often. Luckily his teacher is able to tell the truth from a lie in the end and save him from Sam. Have your students pair up with a randomly selected partner. Tell the students to interview each other. Make sure the students remember two facts that they each learned about their partners. Once the students have completed their interviews, tell them that they will report what they learned to the rest of the class, but they will also make up one false piece of information to share as well. For example, if Student A tells Student B that she likes horses and was born in Maine, Student B would report these facts to the class and then make up a third fact. For example, that Student A has seven brothers and sisters. Have each pair come to the front of the room one at a time to share. After each student shares, let the class vote to see which fact they think is not true.

When you are finished, talk about what made the activity challenging. Ask your students to identify how they could tell when someone was lying. Discuss the importance of being able to tell the truth from a lie.

## Hurtful Words

Sam uses a lot of mean words to lower Nate’s self esteem. Talk to your students about verbal bullying. Using painted newsprint or large blue construction paper, trace and cut out a large genderless human figure. Hang the figure, named “Bluey,” in front of the class. One by one, have the students come forward and call out some mean words they have said or heard and rip off a piece of the figure as they say it. Have the students keep their pieces until everyone has gone. Then have the students bring their pieces back to the front of the room, and—using tape—have the students try to put “Bluey” back together. This shows how difficult it is to put people back together after they’ve lost confidence.

**BULLY  
FACTS**

### ACCORDING BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS & STANFORD UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS:

6 out of 10 students in grades three through six report being bullied by their peers.

Each day 160,000 students miss school for fear of being bullied.

43% fear harassment in the bathroom at school.

Every 7 minutes a child is bullied.

Over half of elementary school students report having participated in some type of bullying.



## Once Upon a Bully...

In *The Boy Who Cried Bully*, Bob the Bully Buster explains what their school's procedure is when a student feels as if he or she is being bullied. Make sure your students know what your school's specific bullying policy is before beginning this activity, which will help to reinforce those policies and procedures.

Have your students stand or sit in a large circle. Explain to them that you are going to play a game called "story." It will start with you reciting the following opening lines of a story: "Jake was the only boy in third grade who hated recess. Everyday he would stand by himself next to the building, hoping that Kenny wouldn't come over to bother him..." Then you will "pass" the story to the next student in the circle. He or she will add one sentence to the story. Continue passing the story along around the circle until the situation is resolved and the story has reached a logical conclusion. If—in the first version of the story—Jake and Kenny don't resolve their issues peacefully, remind students of the school's anti-bullying procedures and play the game again.

## Me, Too!

Have your students stand in a circle. One by one, have them step into the center and announce to the group something they like or dislike. Other members of the group who like or dislike the same thing should then raise their hands and shout "me, too!" For example, a student might say "I like pizza!" Then all students who like pizza as well would raise their hands and shout, "me, too!"

## Bullystiltskin

*The Boy Who Cried Bully* is an adaptation of one of Aesop's fables. The playwright used the plot of the original fable set in a more familiar setting to teach students a lesson about bullying. In the fairy tale "Rumpelstiltskin" the miller's daughter is bullied by the king to spin gold for him. When she can't, Rumpelstiltskin says he'll do it for her in exchange for gold and her first born child. With your class, role play a scene where someone is being forced by a bully to give up something valuable to them. Pick four students to play the roles of bully, victim, bystander, and adult. Ask the class to suggest where the story takes place and what the bully is trying to take from the victim. When the setting and the plot are established, have the actors improvise a scene. Repeat this with four different actors in the roles. Change the plot and the setting slightly each time you start over, resulting in multiple different scenes.



## Ya-Yas

One of the keys to putting an end to bullying in your school is to make school a safe, warm and supportive place for children. Have your students stand in a circle. One by one, have each student step into the circle and say some goal they'd like to achieve at school. At this point, all of the students in the circle should raise their hands in the air and shout "ya-ya!" This simple activity helps to create a supportive classroom where bullying is less likely.

## Outside Words, Inside Feelings

Almost 60% of students in grades three through six report being bullied by their peers. Explain that, for every ten students in this country, about six of them have been bullied in some way. Give each student a piece of cardstock with a gingerbread man-shaped figure drawn, traced, or copied onto it. On the outside of the figure, have students write mean, hurtful things that bullies might say to their victims. On the inside of the figure, have the students write some words and phrases that would describe the way a bullying victim might feel. Hang all of the figures up on the wall. At random, with a big red marker, draw a large "X" on six out of every ten figures. This exercise gives students the chance to see that 60% is actually a very large number.

# WEB RESOURCES



<http://www.AesopFables.com>  
(Full text versions of Aesop's Fables.)

[http://endthehate.org/?page\\_id=11](http://endthehate.org/?page_id=11)  
(Statistics about bullying in US schools.)

<http://www.safeyouth.org/>  
(Resources and information on preventing youth violence in schools.)

<http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov>  
(Bullying prevention resources and online games for young students.)

## **About the Playwright**

*Tom Quinn* is the author of *Freedom Riders*, *No Easy Road to Freedom* and *Martin and Malcolm*. Holding a bachelor's degree from Bucknell University, Quinn was a recipient of the Dorothy Haas Acting Fellowship from Walnut Street Theatre in 1991-92. Quinn also performed in regional theatre and Los Angeles before obtaining a teaching degree and Masters in Education from West Chester University, along with a Masters in Educational Administration from Gwynedd-Mercy College. Quinn also helped to create and write the anti-bullying initiative and policy for the Central Bucks School District and has conducted workshops on using drama in the classroom for elementary and secondary teachers. He is currently a professor of American History at Philadelphia University.

***This production was directed by Megan Heimbecker.***

## **Walnut Street Theatre Education Department Staff**

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.....*Jesimiel R. Jenkins*  
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## **WALNUT STREET THEATRE**



Walnut Street Theatre has the unique distinction of being the oldest, continuously operating theatre in the English-speaking world, having served Philadelphia audiences for 200 years! It is also the Official State Theatre of Pennsylvania, and a National Historic Landmark.

Today, under the direction of Producing Artistic Director Bernard Havard, Walnut Street Theatre is in its 25th season as a self-producing, non-profit theatre. Walnut Street Theatre continues to entertain and enlighten diverse audiences with high quality theatrical programming. With more than 56,000 season ticket holders, the Walnut is also the most subscribed theatre company in the world!

The Walnut Street Theatre is celebrating 23 years of bringing high-quality professional theatre to schools across the Delaware Valley. Our multi-cultural Touring Outreach Company introduces students to the world of theatre through age-appropriate, curriculum-based pieces, that are socially relevant, entertaining, and exciting. Last season, 109,867 children and adults were impacted by the Walnut's Education Programs.

### **Touring Actors**

Each season, Walnut Street Theatre holds a nation-wide search to recruit accomplished young professionals for Dorothy Haas Acting Apprenticeships. These actors form our Touring Outreach Company. Nearly 350 candidates are considered each year for these four positions.

### **The Walnut Street Theatre Educational Programs gratefully acknowledge support from the following:**

*Aramark Charitable Fund \* Arronson Foundation \* The Barra Foundation  
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Capital Region, North Penn, Southeastern PA, and Tri-State*

# Anti-Bullying Poster

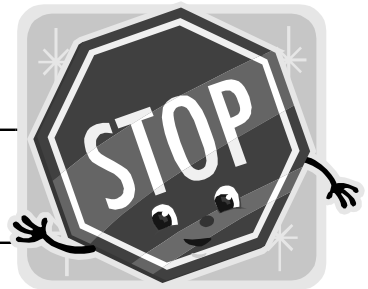
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Bullies should know that we think what they're doing is wrong! In the box below, design a poster to stop bullying in your school. Underneath the poster, write a slogan to go with it. A good example of a slogan would be, "SAY NO TO BULLIES!" or "LET'S BUST BULLIES NOW!"

Slogan: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Help Nate escape Sam and find his way to Miss Thurgood!**

