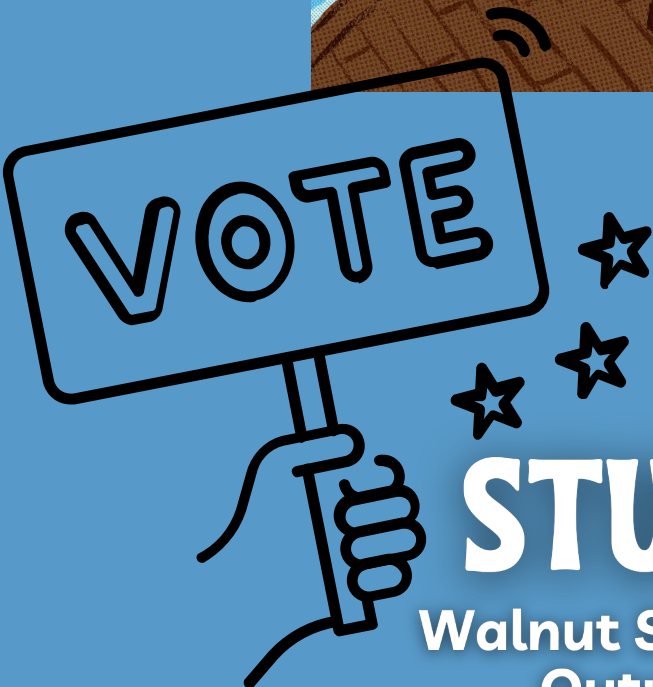


WALNUT STREET THEATRE
EDUCATION



STUDY GUIDE

Walnut Street Theatre Touring
Outreach 2025 - 2026

Show Synopsis

In an inspiring journey, Grace learns that by believing in herself, working hard, and standing up for what's right, she can show everyone that anyone—boy or girl—can be a great leader and make a difference in their school and community.

Pre-show

- What does a good leader look like to you?
- Have you ever stood up for something you believe in? What happened?
- What challenges might someone face when running for class president? How was it similar to what you think might happen in the play?

Discussion Questions

Post-show

- What do you think about Grace's changes throughout the story? What does it mean to never give up when facing setbacks?
- If you were president of your class or school, what would you want to change or improve?
- What else would you like to explore about elections and leadership?

Theatre 101

PLAYWRIGHT: The person who writes the script.

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

COSTUMES: What the actors wear during the show.

SCENERY: Everything on stage (except props) used to represent the setting, or the place in which the story 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 sets the mood and environment of a scene.

SOUND: Everything you hear during a performance that doesn't come from the actors.

ACTORS: The actors are the people that perform the show on- stage.

AUDIENCE: The lucky people that get to watch the show!

Audience Rules

- **Be a Good Audience:** Keep quiet—no talking, sleeping, or poking your neighbor. The actors can see and hear you, so let's not distract them!
- **Leave Gadgets at Home:** No phones, cameras, or tablets during the show. They might distract everyone.
- **React at the Right Time:** Laugh, clap, and cry when it feels right. And don't forget to give a big clap at the end!
- **Stay in Your Seat:** Stay seated throughout the show. It helps everyone see and enjoy.
- **Bathroom Before the Show:** Visit the bathroom before the performance starts.

Activity: Candidate Challenge

- **Form Groups:** Divide the class into an even number of groups. Each group will be tasked to create a fictional candidate (human, animal, alien, etc.)
- **Create the Candidate:** Students will have to create a campaign slogan, three promises, and a short speech.
- **Share and Observe:** Groups take turns presenting their candidate to the class. Once all groups present, the class will vote for the most convincing campaign.
- **Rotate and Repeat:** Groups switch members and create a new candidate. Continue until time is up.

Discussion Activity:

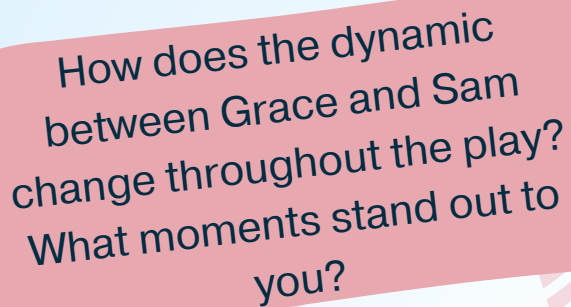
- Would you vote for Grace to be president? Why?
- What do you think makes Grace a good person to be in charge?
- Why is it important to listen to other people's ideas when you are a leader?
- What does the story teach us about believing in ourselves?
- Can you think of a time when you believed in yourself, even when it was hard?
- Why is it important to be nice to nature and to each other?



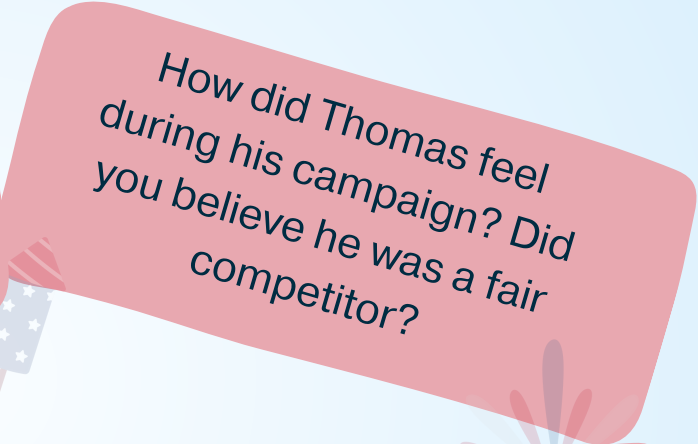
BRING THE SHOW TO LIFE

Before diving into the scene below, talk with your class about the different elements in a play. What is the setting of the scene? What is the conflict? What props could they use to help tell the story?

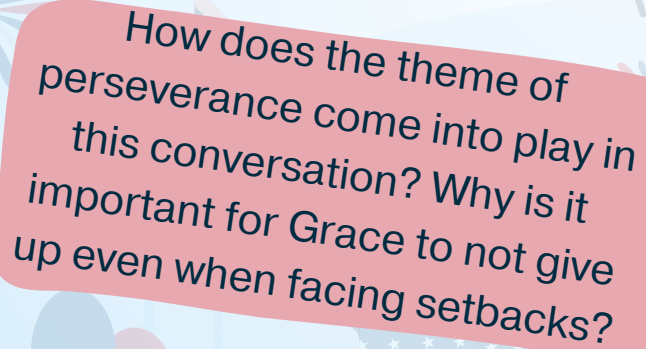
Sample Scene Questions



How does the dynamic between Grace and Sam change throughout the play? What moments stand out to you?



How did Thomas feel during his campaign? Did you believe he was a fair competitor?



How does the theme of perseverance come into play in this conversation? Why is it important for Grace to not give up even when facing setbacks?



If you were Grace, how would you have run your election campaign?

Building a Character

Actors build a character by pretending to be someone or something else. The following things help actors portray the character to the best of their ability.



Physical Movement

Objective: What they want!

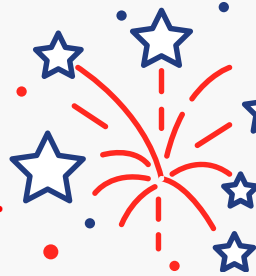
Character voice

Obstacle: What is in their way?

Words in parenthesis
are not read out loud!
They describe the
action of the scene!



Sample Scene



GRACE: Mrs. Barrington, now I'm not so sure about running for President.

MRS. BARRINGTON: Why not?

GRACE: Because I don't have a lot of accomplishments, like Thomas.

MRS. BARRINGTON: Oh Grace, you have many accomplishments.

GRACE: I do?

MRS. BARRINGTON: You're a good student.

GRACE: Not as good as Thomas.

MRS. BARRINGTON: You excel at creative writing. You contribute to the school paper. And you get things done.

GRACE: I do?

MRS. BARRINGTON: What about the grounds project? Who organized the fifth grade and their parents to plant flowers at all the entrances so we would have a more beautiful environment?

GRACE: I did.

MRS. BARRINGTON: And what about the rules on the playground? Who got us to change them? So if someone is standing all by themselves, the other students are urged to invite that student to join them. What made you do that, Grace?

(Music Cue #13 - "My Accomplishments Playoff Music II - last 8 bars.)

GRACE: I don't know. I felt like it was wrong to let somebody stand all by themselves while the rest of us are having fun and playing.

MRS. BARRINGTON: You made something happen, Grace. You didn't like what you saw and you changed it. Most people let things go. They don't have the energy or the courage to make change happen.

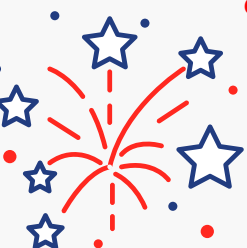
GRACE: They don't?

MRS. BARRINGTON

You fix things. And those things help people and make the rest of us better.

GRACE: I hadn't thought of it that way.

MRS. BARRINGTON: I don't think you have to worry about not having accomplishments. Listen to your heart, Grace.



REFERENCE SHEET



REFORM

make changes in (something, typically a social, political, or economic institution or practice) in order to improve it.

QUALIFICATION

a quality or accomplishment that makes someone suitable for a particular job or activity.

DEMOCRACY

a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.

ELECTION FUN FACTS

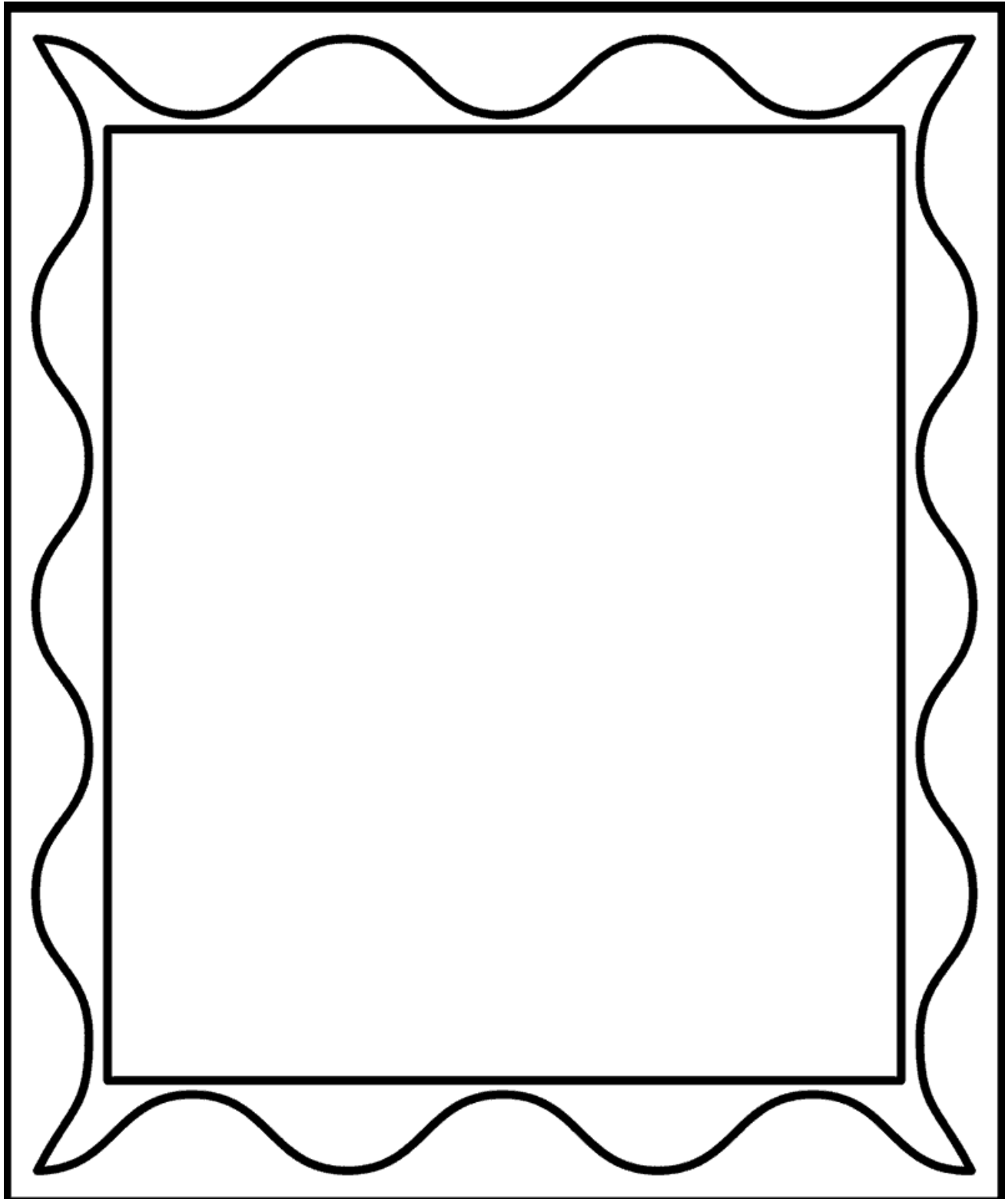
Makeup: The USA is country on the North American continent that consists of 50 states, a federal district (District of Columbia) and 14 territories.

Founding: The USA was started right here in Philadelphia 250 years ago on July 4th, 1776 by the First Continental Congress.

Elections: At the federal government level, people vote for The President of the United States every four years, members in the House of Representatives, which makes up one side of Congress, every two years, and Senators every six years (the Senate forms the other side of Congress)

Worksheet: use the blank portrait below to draw yourself as president and write one promise you'd make

Future President _____



I promise to _____



Production Team:

Director:

Hannah Catanoso

Assistant Director:

Briana Myers

Stage Manager:

Maya Chester-Ziv

Assistant Stage Manager:

Connor Shields

Props:

River Hennick

Costumes:

Ahna Romanski

Written by:

Joan Cushing

Adapted from:

the Novel by

Kelly DiPucchio and LeUyen Pham

Cast:

Grace: Raven Burckhalter

Sam: Raymond Ingram

Mrs. Barrington/Rose: Grace McKenna

Anthony/Thomas: Cody Lewandowski

*13 people helped
create this show
for you!*





WALNUT STREET THEATRE

EDUCATION

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 210 years! Due to the direction of Producing Artistic Director Bernard Havard, Walnut Street Theatre has been a self-producing, non-profit theatre company for over 40 seasons. Walnut Street Theatre continues to entertain and enlighten diverse audiences with high quality theatrical programming. With more than 20,000 subscribers, the Walnut is also the most-subscribed theatre company in the world! Last season, 100,000 children and adults were impacted by the Walnut's Education Programs, including our Theatre School, Camp Walnut, Our Touring Outreach Program to local schools, and our artist-in-residency programs.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION:

T.J Sokso

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION:

Amanda Pasquini

EDUCATION PROGRAMS MANAGER:

Maya Chester-Ziv

EDUCATION APPRENTICE:

Connor Shields



Opportunities

The Theatre School at Walnut Street Theatre

Classes for kids, students, and adults!

For students of all ages! Great for networking, providing a creative outlet, and professional training. Find your inner star at the Walnut! Call 215-574-3550, ext. 510

Walnut Street Theatre Residency Program

Let us design a dramatic and educational program for your school! We support teacher's objectives with personalized programs that meet your needs and budget. Call 215-574-3550, ext. 566



Walnut Street Theatre Touring Outreach

Bring a show to your school! Open a dialogue with students about important issues that affect them! Call 215-574-3550, ext. 584

Walnut Street Theatre for Kids

Bring your kids to Walnut Street Theatre! Bring a show to your school! Open a dialogue with students about important issues that affect them! Call 215-574-3550, ext. 552