Peter Rabbit and Me
adapted by Aurand Harris
from The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter

November 17 – December 20, 2015 • performed in the IRT Cabaret

TEACHER GUIDE

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In the delightfully joyous Peter Rabbit and Me, 13-year-old Beatrix Potter begins to create an exciting world of storytelling through imagining her rabbit, Peter, and her own family members into storybook characters. Young students in particular will love this highly interactive piece and will learn about boundaries and exploring the realm of their own imaginations. The bunnies teach us, through stories, songs, and rhyme, about compassion, teamwork, community, and ambition. As it turns out, both rabbits and children have a stunning ability to learn through experiences and mistakes.

Recommended for students in grades Pre-K through 3

Themes & Topics
Storytelling and Imagination, Compassion and Teamwork, Community and Family, Creative Ambition, Real and Make-Believe, Loneliness and Confidence, Rhythm and Rhyme

The performance will last approximately one hour with no intermission.

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The Story of the Play

*This synopsis focuses on Aurand Harris's stage adaptation of Beatrix Potter's books.*

Young Beatrix Potter and her brother, Bertrum, live in London in 1879. Their governess, Miss Hammond, allows them to care for several live animals in their nursery–school room. Beatrix often draws the animals. After a frog disrupts their mother’s tea party, their father, Mr. Potter, insists the animals be removed from the house. When Bertrum leaves for boarding school, Beatrix promises to write him letters with pictures and stories, and she begins to imagine *The Tale of Peter Rabbit.* She creates characters based upon people she knows, such as her brother, her father, and her governess, or on people she has seen outside her window, such as two girls skipping rope and a boy selling muffins. In the play, those imaginary animal characters are played by the same actors who play the real characters.

The tale begins with Peter, Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-tail living under a tree with their mother, Mrs. Rabbit. When Mother goes to the baker’s, Peter disobeys her orders and sneaks into Mr. McGregor’s garden. There he eats some delicious vegetables. When he is chased by Mr. McGregor, Peter loses his jacket and his shoes, and Mr. McGregor uses them to make a scarecrow. After many adventures, Peter is helped by two friendly birds and a singing mouse, and he escapes through the garden gate. He returns home wet and sneezing.

When Beatrix’s brother, Bertrum, returns home from school for Christmas, he asks Beatrix for another adventure story. In her new story, Peter returns to Mr. McGregor’s garden to try to retrieve his jacket and shoes. Will he succeed? Will he escape Mr. McGregor’s clutches? Find out when you see the play *Peter Rabbit and Me* at the Indiana Repertory Theatre.
I grew up thinking of Beatrix Potter as a kind of goddess. My mother is a librarian and a confirmed Anglophile, and Potter’s little books, in their original child-sized versions, were beloved, much-read volumes in our household. The magical nature of the illustrations, the quaint expressions of the animals, and the mythic stories of secret, human-like animal behavior—which we all suspect to be true as children—were absolutely captivating to me. When my own children were very young, we read them the stories, and watched the gorgeous BBC animated series.

The time-honored nature of Potter’s books is only one aspect of their enduring charm. The stories themselves contain important life lessons that are as true today as they were 100 years ago when she wrote them: lessons in safety, respect for parents and the rule of order, the importance of home and hearth, the deep bonds of siblings, to name only a few. But through these lessons, Potter also threads some wonderful anarchy. We love Peter’s curiosity and defiance, even though it often lands him in danger. Potter’s love of nature also fuels the stories and signals the rural, agrarian lifestyle she eventually took up as an adult.

The adaptation of the stories that we are producing, made by a pioneer in the young audiences playwriting market, Aurand Harris, adds another layer of learning and exploration. He creates a framing device that introduces us to the adolescent Beatrix herself, chaffing under the restraints of Victorian English mores that kept girls neat and indoors and undereducated. Harris creates a bit of a rule-defier in Beatrix, a child who needs the out of doors and nature, who yearns to learn and longs for parental support of her extraordinary artistic gifts. Harris creates a Beatrix who creates stories and animal characters as companions to counteract the loneliness of her privileged life.

Our excitement and gratitude in doing a second year of Exploring Stages, this program for children 3 to 8, is shared by our extraordinary partners: the United Way of Central Indiana, Child Care Answers, and the Indianapolis Public Library. Also, a huge thanks to the Eccles Fund, a family fund administered by the Central Indiana Community Foundation, for believing in the importance of quality arts experiences for the very young.

If this experience sparks something in you, make it a point to read a book to a young child—help them to awaken to the thrill of language both spoken and read, to the delight of stories told and heard, and to the animating capacity of stories to spring to life in the imagination and change us forever.
Helen Beatrix Potter was born in 1866 to well-to-do parents who lived at 2 Bolton Gardens in a fashionable London neighborhood. Beatrix was not allowed to have friends because her mother believed they had germs, and her interactions with the outside world were carefully regulated and supervised. She did, however, have a few sympathetic caretakers who brought the outside world in to her. Her nurse Miss Mackenzie told her Scottish folk and fairy tales, full of witches and magical forests. Her governess Miss Hammond snuck in lessons on drawing and painting when she could, and the butler Cox would sneak animals from the garden up to the nursery. Despite these small glimmers of the world outdoors, and her younger brother Bertram, Beatrix was a lonely and isolated child.

Like many children who grow up in such restricted environments, whether those places are at home or at school, Beatrix used her imagination to expand her world beyond her nursery. She was a remarkable noticer of the unnoticed. As her artistic talents blossomed, she developed the uncanny ability not only to capture, but to *elevate* the most delicate details in a way that draws you in and makes you wonder that such loveliness exists in the world. Beyond the rabbits and mice for which she is so well known, her keen scientific sensibilities, combined with her artistic skill, produced a veritable encyclopedia of the flora and fauna of the United Kingdom.

Beatrix Potter did not set out to be a writer of books for children. Her stories first emerged in a series of letters to the eight children of her dear friend Annie Carter. The letters were usually illustrated with pencil sketches, and it is here that the characters of Flopsy and Mopsy, Mr. McGregor, Peter and Cottontail, and Jeremy Fisher first emerged. Years later when Beatrix finally allowed herself to be cajoled into submitting her stories for publication and they were rejected, she took the proceeds she’d earned from a greeting card illustration to self-publish. The book sold out almost instantly. Her work has been in constant printing ever since.

Beatrix Potter’s work reminds us to slow down, to *notice* and pay attention. She reminds us that it’s good to be still and quiet for more than just a moment, to allow our minds to veer off task, and to imagine wonderful adventures for the humblest of everyday things … and for ourselves.
Meet the Characters

Piper Murphy as Beatrix Potter and Peter Rabbit

Costume drawings by Guy Clark.
**Mara Lefler**
as
< Miss Hammond
and
Mother Rabbit >

**John Michael Goodson**
as
< Mr. Rupert Potter
and
Mr. McGregor >

*Costume drawings*  
*by*  
*Guy Clark.*
Dalyn Stewart

as
< Bertrum Potter
and
Cotton-tail >

Eric Best

as
< Baker’s Boy
and
Mr. Mouse >

Costume drawings
by
Guy Clark.
Kelsey Foster
as
< Girl and Flopsy >
and Bird

Claire Kauffman
as
< Girl and Mopsy >
and Bird

Costume drawings
by Guy Clark.
Beatrix Potter was born in London in 1866. Her brother, Bertram, was born in 1872. Their father, Rupert, was a barrister—a British lawyer. The children’s governess Florrie Hammond encouraged their love of nature and animals, and they had many pets, including a series of rabbits.

Beatrix was home-schooled by her governesses. She was very interested in science, particularly botany; she collected fossils and studied insects. She began taking art lessons at 12, and she was awarded an Art Student’s Certificate at 14. Her formal education ended at the age of 18, but she continued to educate herself. The famous naturalist Charles McIntosh helped her in her studies.

By her mid-twenties, Potter had become quite an accomplished artist, and she began selling Christmas cards of her own design. Publishers bought her drawings and watercolors to illustrate books by other authors. She was commissioned to create a set of lithographs of insects for use with college science lectures; her drawings of fungi and their microscopic spores are still used by scientists today.

Over the years, Potter sent letters illustrated with her own drawings to the children of Annie Moore, one of her former governesses. In her letters she made up a story about four young rabbits: Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail, and Peter. Annie suggested this tale might make a good children’s book. In 1902, Frederick Warne & Co. published The Tale of Peter Rabbit. It was a great success, the first of 23. Potter worked closely on each small, child-sized volume with her editor, Norman Warne. In 1903 she designed and patented a Peter Rabbit stuffed animal—an early example of “spin-off” merchandise. Over the years, in addition to her picture books, she designed and marketed painting books, board games, figurines, and other items, ensuring herself a healthy independent income.

In 1905 her editor, Norman Warne, proposed marriage; Potter accepted, despite her parents’ disapproval of his social status as a tradesman. Sadly, one month later, Warne died of leukemia.

That same year Potter bought Hill Top Farm in the Lake District. She made improvements to the property and learned about raising crops and livestock. In order to protect her land from being encroached upon by developments, she began to buy the surrounding farms. Her books began to reflect her new rural life.

Beatrix Potter (above) as a child; (opposite) as an adult.
In 1913 Potter married William Heelis, a local solicitor who had been assisting her with her increased land holdings. She settled into rural life, serving on various committees and councils, establishing a Nursing Trust for the local villagers, and becoming a prize-winning breeder of Hardwick Sheep. She used her increasing wealth to buy larger and larger tracts of land, preserving the local small farms and their rural way of life.

In 1943 Beatrix Potter died of pneumonia and heart disease at the age of 77. She left nearly all her property to the National Trust—some 4,000 acres, including 16 farms, which formed the nucleus of Great Britain’s Lake District National Park. In 1946 Hill Top was opened to the public.

Besides writing and illustrating some two dozen beloved children’s books, Beatrix Potter was a respected amateur scientist and an accomplished agriculturist. She was a quiet pioneer, fighting against the restraints put on Victorian women to become a successful businesswoman and entrepreneur. And she was a dedicated preservationist, protecting not only the beauty of one of England’s loveliest districts, but also a traditional way of life that celebrates nature, animals, and a healthy environment.

*Hill Top Farm.*
The Power of Imagination

**Gordon Strain**  Scenic Designer

Like many people I grew up hearing the stories of Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail, Farmer McGregor, and of course Peter. What I was less familiar with was all of Beatrix Potter’s other stories. And, more importantly, I was completely unaware of all her other beautiful illustrations, both arts-y and science-y. In bringing this show to life, we wanted to find a way to capture the delicacy of her watercolor and ink, and also the simplicity/clarity/magic of her style. Beatrix had wonderful powers of imagination and observation that brought animals and the world around them to life. We hope that through this production we can inspire some of that same imagination and observation in our audiences.

*Preliminary sketch by scenic designer Gordon Strain.*

**Beth Nuzum**  Lighting Designer

There are two worlds to portray with light in this story. There is the real world where Beatrix feels caged and rigid. It is a very structured environment with very little room for individuality. Then there is the world of Peter Rabbit that is open and vibrant. It has the freedom of the natural world. The caged world is tightly focused and bland. The natural world is bright and earthy. Color and shadow play a role in creating these settings. Peter’s world is full of pastels that bring to mind blue sky, grassy lands, trees, and gardens. The real world uses amber and shadow to represent the nursery that Beatrix and her animals occupy. There is only a hint of the world outside Beatrix’s window that has the lightness of Peter’s world.
Guy Clark  Costume Designer
All children are artists, Pablo Picasso suggested. The problem, he warned, is how to remain an artist once we grow up. In *Peter Rabbit and Me*, Beatrix Potter takes the first steps towards her life as an artist. In her stories and pictures, the characters are free of the tight, heavy clothing imposed upon young Victorian girls like her; Peter even sheds his fancy new jacket and shoes in order to free himself from McGregor's clutches. The art she created as a child would help Beatrix free herself as well.

Costume drawings by designer Guy Clark.

Tom Horan  Sound Designer
Recently it was discovered that my nephew had taken to hiding extra cookies in a jar under his bed. I'm reminded of that time early in our lives where we begin to squirrel away the things that are precious to us, and to create our own imaginative world. With *Peter Rabbit*, Beatrix Potter found a way to preserve her childhood treasures. She has given us a world that is undeniably soft and gentle; but it also possesses a spirited playfulness. For *Peter Rabbit and Me*, I want to focus on these very personal objects, whether it's the animals we keep as pets or a music box that we might hide under our bed.
What is Theatre?

The most basic needs for a theatrical experience are a story to tell, actors to tell it, and an audience to hear it. As soon as prehistoric people could communicate with each other, they began to tell stories around the campfire. As civilization developed, communities gathered for ritual festivals where stories were told through song, dance, and spoken word. Playwrights from Sophocles to Shakespeare to James Still have written plays that tell stories through dialogue and action. Taking the playwright’s words from the printed page, actors use their voices, bodies, and creativity to develop characters that live on stage. Designers create scenery, costumes, lighting, and music that form a unique physical environment for each individual play. The director is the person who leads this ensemble of artists, making sure that all the various elements and viewpoints come together for a unified statement that creates a satisfying experience for the audience. When theatre artists bring their best work to the stage, and when audiences receive that work with open minds and active imaginations, the results can be enlightening, enriching, and entertaining.

Theatre Etiquette

When your students come to the play, IRT staff will take a moment before the show to remind students of what is expected of them:

First, we will remind them to remain seated on their bottoms in the carpeted area. This is so both students and actors are kept safe, and nobody will trip over anybody!

Then we will remind students to listen with their eyes, ears, heart, and body. We want students to enjoy themselves. Remind them that they are welcome to smile and laugh when things are funny! But we must also remember that we are together to watch and learn! Just like in school or during learning time, we should stay focused on the action in front of us.
Activities
for before, after, and beyond seeing the play

Show and Tell

Have the children bring in something to share about themselves with their fellow classmates and teachers. Actors do this in acting classes. They share about their characters in acting exercises and about their personal selves in journals, rehearsals, and acting exercises.

Have each child stand up and talk about why a certain food or clothing item he or she brought is a favorite. They can create “My Favorite Things” boards using photographs and pictures from magazines, then talk about a few things on the board and why they are favorite things to wear, eat, do, make, etc. Peter Rabbit has his blue jacket that his mother gave him!

  o Try to have the other children look at the child who is sharing while they are listening to that child. This teaches the children a skill they will need when they come to the theatre. In the theatre we call this giving focus.
  Remind students about eye contact, movement, and noise, and what that means when you’re engaging in active listening.

  o Ask each child questions about his or her item:
    ▪ Why do you like that sweater?
    ▪ How long have you had it?
    ▪ Do you remember who gave it to you?
    ▪ Was it a birthday, holiday, or other gift?
    ▪ Is it new or old?
    ▪ Who goes with you to the movies?
    ▪ Does your grandmother let you help her when she bakes your favorite cookies?
Discussion

Talk with the children about stories, books, and movies where animals are anthropomorphized, given human characteristics and actions. What is the difference between real animals (in nature, in the zoo, or your pets) and fictional animals (in story books such as *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, *Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus*, or *Curious George*, or in movies such as *Over the Hedge*, *Ice Age: The Meltdown*, *The Muppet Movie*, *Kung Fu Panda*, and *Flushed Away*)? Here is an article to help you prep your discussion with your students:

http://www.ncte.org/library/nctefiles/store/samplefiles/journals/la/la0813animals.pdf

Talk with the children about books and movies where both animal and human characters are adventurous, mischievous, or cause havoc on others. Beyond the Beatrix Potter books, you might use *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type* by Doreen Cronin, *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale* by Mo Willems, *The Day the Crayons Quit* by Drew Daywalt or *Curious George* by H. A. Rey.

What does Peter do that upsets his mother?

Why doesn’t Mr. McGregor want rabbits in his vegetable garden?

At the end of the day, when mother rabbit returns home, what do Flopsy and Mopsy get to do, and what happens to Peter Rabbit?

In running away from Mr. McGregor, who helps Peter Rabbit get home? Do you think he could have made it with their help? Why is it good to help others from time to time?

When Peter goes into the garden he loses his jacket. What happens to us when we do things we are told not to do?

What could people do with all the pancakes Curious George made?

Curiosity is both good and worrisome. Give the children a couple of examples of both.

The cows had some concerns so they told the farmer about them. Is this a good thing? Were some of the things the cows wanted silly? When you have concerns, you can tell ____________ and they will help.

Let’s talk about a fun adventure you went on. Did you make any friends on your adventure?
Beatrix Potter liked to draw, write letters, create stories, read books, and travel. She loved nature, and she and her brother kept animals as pets all their lives. You can read more about her in *The World of Beatrix Potter* on page 10, online, and in the biographies listed in the resource section of this teacher guide. In guiding the students to learn things about the life of Beatrix Potter, you can ask questions to show connections, as well as do crafts and other activities.

What types of things do you like to do here at school and at home?

Ask the children to tell about their pets and the animals they have encountered in their neighborhood and the zoo. What is your favorite animal and why?

Let’s draw pictures of animals we can find in our neighborhood.

Lay out garden books on the tables or the floor for the children to look at, and then close them up and have them draw pictures of what they saw. You might make suggestions while they are drawing by asking what they saw in the books: flowers, rocks, bridges, benches, statues, etc.

What other stories do you know about rabbits? What is your favorite story book right now, and why is it your favorite?

Take a walk and collect things from nature. Bring them in and create shadow boxes using the found nature items with other art supplies such as felt, tissue paper, popsicle sticks, etc.

**Activities**

**Writing and/or Drawing**

After seeing the play, have your students write or draw a message to the cast. It could be a thank you, or a note to tell the actors about their favorite part of the play.

Younger students might make a drawing and dictate to the teacher what they’d like to say.

Older students might write a sentence or two about what they remember most from the play, or how they felt during or after the play, and why.

Draw pictures of the scenes from the play with a simple description to explain the action.

Examples: Mr. Mouse helping Peter Rabbit, Mrs. Rabbit giving Peter some chamomile tea, Peter Rabbit squeezing through the garden gate.
Activities:

Reading and Re-Reading the Story

Read *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter to your students several times. A free copy of this book was provided for Paths to Quality child care centers by the Indianapolis Public Library. We also encourage reading the original stories by Beatrix Potter and perhaps other adaptations. These and other options are available at the public library.

- The first time you might read the story through without interaction from the children, but using your best expressive reading skills. The more dramatic you are, the more you are preparing the children for the theatrical experience. They are learning what theatre people call **active listening**: listening with our eyes, ears, hearts, and minds. Use your voice like actors do by changing your vocal tones. For example:
  - Use the upper range of your voice for the Birds.
  - Use low-pitched sounds for Mr. McGregor.

Another tool to making stories come alive vocally is to use **onomatopoeia**—words that imitate the natural sounds of things. Onomatopoeia creates a sound effect that mimics the thing described, making the description more expressive and interesting.

For example: look at page 11 of your free copy of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*: “But Peter, who was very naughty, ran straight away to Mr. McGregor’s Garden and squeezed under the gate!.”

Using onomatopoeia:
  - “very naughty” might be said with a sharp, stern voice to emphasize Peter’s bad behavior.
  - “straight away” might be said very quickly, to illustrate how fast Peter is moving.
  - “squeezed” might be stretched out as “squeeeeeeeeeeeeed” and said in a pinched voice to illustrate the difficulty of this action.
• The second time you are reading through the story, encourage the children to be **physically, vocally, and mentally interactive** and engaged with the story.

  
  
  o Have the children repeat how you say words and phrases expressively:
    ▪ “very naughty” and “squeezed” as described above.
    ▪ Help them to notice the rhyme and the contrast between the sharp sounds of “Flopsy and Mopsy” and the soft sounds of “Cottontail.”
    ▪ Have them mimic your fearful tones on “out of breath and trembling with fright.”

  o Lead them to interact physically:
    ▪ Have them hop like rabbits: fast, slow, joyously, sadly.
    ▪ Have them squeeze under an imaginary garden gate.
    ▪ Have them pretend to pick and eat vegetables as though they were their favorite foods, as they would be for Peter Rabbit.

  o Get them to think how the story relates to their own lives:
    ▪ Ask them, “When have you done something you were warned against? What did you learn about why you shouldn’t have done that?”
    ▪ Have them name vegetables. What are their favorites? What don’t they like?

• The third time through the story is about making sure they are **following the plot**. Knowing the plot will greatly help the children enjoy the play at the IRT. Feel free to paraphrase the story while stopping to ask questions about what has happened and what is going to happen next.
  
  o “Why does Peter go into Mr. McGregor’s garden?”
  o “Why does Peter’s mother give him chamomile tea?”

Each time through the story you can **add elements** such as using rabbit puppets or repeating a certain physical action each time they hear the word **rabbit** throughout the story. Such activities, as you know, build reading comprehension, increase vocabulary, ignite creativity, and get the body in motion.

Reading the story multiple times will not only help the students with comprehension and other learning skills, it will also give the children an experience akin to that of the actors they will see in the play. During rehearsal, the actors will read and work on the script for six hours a day for more than two weeks.
Activities:

Have a Peter Rabbit Theme Day

- Read **other stories about rabbits, gardening, and adventures**. The IRT and Indianapolis Public Library librarians have compiled a list of books *(see page 44)*. Rosemary Wells has a large selection of books with a rabbit as the main character, one being *Read to Your Bunny*. Beatrix Potter wrote 23 books with animals having adventures in gardens, in the country, and in towns.

- Look at **DVDs and YouTube videos about real rabbits** and talk about the lives and food of real rabbits in the wild and as pets. Here are a few websites to assist you:
  - 8 common myths about rabbits
    - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXo7BkufNZA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXo7BkufNZA)
  - 20 Fun Facts about rabbits
    - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_Dn_NrdVP0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_Dn_NrdVP0)
  - Cute bunny jumping competition
    - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qM9YWm6T_hc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qM9YWm6T_hc)
  - What do rabbits eat?
    - [http://www.saveafluff.co.uk/rabbit-info/what-do-rabbits-eat](http://www.saveafluff.co.uk/rabbit-info/what-do-rabbits-eat)

- Have **snacks that rabbits would eat** (carrots, lettuce, etc.) or that are made to look like their food (i.e. cookies that are decorated like carrots).

- Learn a poem by Beatrix Potter or other poems about gardens, vegetables, drawing, animal friends, etc. Here is a poem of Potter’s that we have used:

  We have a little garden,
  A garden of our own,
  And every day we water there
  The seeds that we have sown.

  We love our little garden,
  And tend it with such care,
  You will not find a faded leaf
  Or blighted blossom there.

  Have the children make picture stories using crayons or any mixed media to create “a garden of their own.” Make flowers by gluing beads or felt shapes onto green construction paper. Color and cut out carrots, radishes, and green peppers, glue them onto popsicle sticks, and stick into a box garden. Or simply draw a picture of people tending a garden.
- **Make rabbit crafts**, finger puppets, masks, pictures, costume ears or whiskers, etc. When the United Way child care center directors were at the IRT, they made paper bag puppets that can be used in creative play or for story boards. To make these crafts, and to explore more ideas on your own, here are a few Pinterest pages for making bunnies, masks, games, snacks, gardens, vegetables, writing etc.:

  https://www.pinterest.com/vondabearden/peter-rabbit-theme-ideas/

  http://www.pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=preschool%20easter%20bunny&term_meta[]=preschool|typed&term_meta[]=easter|typed&term_meta[]=bunny|typed

  https://www.pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=indoor%20vegetable%20garden%20kids&term_meta%5B%5D=vegetable%7Cautocomplete%7C4&term_meta%5B%5D=garden%7Cguide%7Cword%7C2&term_meta%5B%5D=indoor%7Cguide%7Cword%7C24&term_meta%5B%5D=kids%7Cguide%7Cword%7C9&add_refine=kids%7Cguide%7Cword%7C9

- **Have a visit from a real rabbit.**
  Perhaps you know a family who owns a rabbit. You might contact Silly Safari, http://www.sillysafaris.com/index.php?q=node, or visit the zoo.
Activities:

Sing Songs

Sing songs about rabbits, vegetables, nursery rhymes, anything! Singing songs is a great way of learning about rhythm, pitch, working together, and memory development, as well as capturing the flavor of the British childhood Beatrix would have experienced in her nursery.

- **“Funny Bunny”**
  This is a link to “The Ooey Gooey Lady” singing the song, with finger play:
  
  **Lyrics:**
  
  Here’s a bunny with ears so funny
  And here’s a hole in the ground.
  When a noise he hears, he perks up his ears
  And he jumps in the whole in the ground!

- **“Mr. Rabbit”**
  There are numerous versions of this song on iTunes where you can hear the tune.
  The clearest versions for learning the lyrics and the tune are on these albums:
  - *Animal Folk Songs for Children* by Mike, Peggy, Barbara & Penny Seeger
  - *Sally Go Round the Sun: Songs and Rhymes from the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program* by Kathy Reid-Naiman
  
  Then you can sing it along with an instrumental recording like:
  - *Folk Songs for Kids: Relaxing Piano Music* by Maya Rosenfeld

Here are some variations to get you started:

- **Mr. Rabbit Mr. Rabbit your ears are mighty long**
  Yes my Lord (my Friend) they’re put on wrong
  **Chorus:**
  Every little soul must shine shine shine
  Every little soul must shine shine shine

- **Mr. Rabbit Mr. Rabbit your coat’s mighty gray**
  Yes my Lord (my Friend) it was made that way
  **Chorus:**
  Every little soul’s gonna (must) shine shine shine
  Every little soul’s gonna (must) shine shine shine

- **Mr. Rabbit Mr. Rabbit your tail’s mighty white**
  Yes my Lord (my Friend) I’m getting’ out of sight
  **Chorus:**
  Every little soul’s gonna shine shine shine
  Every little soul’s gonna shine shine shine
Here are songs we have been using in the Artist-in-the-Classroom visits:

- **“The Vegetable Song”**
  sung to the tune of “Señorita with the flower in her hair” or “Miss Lucy”
  I ate an orange carrot, the biggest I have seen.
  I ate a piece of broccoli, it was the color green.
  I ate a watermelon, as red as it could be.
  When I eat my colors, I know that I’m healthy.

- **“Hope Like a Bunny”**
  sung to the tune of “Ten Little Indians”
  Hop hop hop hop hop like a bunny
  Hop hop hop hop hop like a bunny
  Hop hop hop hop hop like a bunny
  All around the garden
  You can substitute other movements in the song: Wiggle like a bunny, nibble (eat) like a bunny, stretch like a bunny, etc.

- **“Peter Rabbit Song”**
  sung to the tune of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic”
  Little Peter Rabbit had a fly upon his nose,
  Little Peter Rabbit had a fly upon his nose,
  Little Peter Rabbit had a fly upon his nose,
  So he flicked it and it flew away!

  Powder puffs and curly whiskers!
  Powder puffs and curly whiskers!
  Powder puffs and curly whiskers!
  So he flicked it and it flew away!

On the next few pages are additional song suggestions.
**LONDON HILL**

*Brightly (♩= 152)*  
*English tradition*

As I went over London Hill,

London Hill, London Hill, as I went over

London Hill on a cold, frosty morning.

---

2. I shook my foot on London Hill,  
   London Hill, London Hill,  
   I shook my foot on London Hill  
   On a cold, frosty morning.

3. I shook my head on London Hill,  
   London Hill, London Hill,  
   I shook my head on London Hill  
   On a cold, frosty morning.

Let the actions suit the words and encourage the children to make up their own verses: “I jumped like a frog on London Hill”; “I drove my car on London Hill.”
THE MUFFIN MAN

Lively (\( \text{L} = 88 \))

Do you know the muffin man, the muffin man, the muffin man?

Do you know the muffin man who lives in Drury Lane?

Ostinato: tuned instrument

Ostinato: percussion

Chime bars

2. Yes, I know the muffin man, the muffin man, the muffin man,
   Yes, I know the muffin man who lives in Drury Lane.

A charming song for the youngest children, who like to substitute their own names:
“Do you know Belinda Jones who lives on Maple Street?”
Polly, put the kettle on

Gaily $\left( \text{L} = 108 \right)$

F

\[ \text{C7} \]

Poly, put the kettle on, Poly, put the kettle on,

F

\[ \text{C7} \]

Poly, put the kettle on, we'll all have tea.

\[ \text{C7} \]

\[ \text{F} \]

\[ \text{B}_b \]

Su-key, take it off again, Su-key, take it off again,

\[ \text{F} \]

\[ \text{C7} \]

\[ \text{F} \]

\[ \text{C7} \]

Su-key, take it off again, they've all gone away.
SEE HOW I'M JUMPING

Briskly \( \frac{4}{4} \) so

Flemish folk tune

Em . . . . D Em . . . .

See how I'm jump-ing, jump-ing, jump-ing! See how I'm bounc-ing

D Em G Em . . . .

like a ball! You didn't know I could jump so high;

\emph{a tempo}

\textit{rit.}

Em . . . .

you didn't know I could stand so still. See how I'm jump-ing,

D Em . . . .

\textit{rit.}

Em . . . .

jump-ing, jump-ing! When I am tired, down I flop.

After the children learn the words, they love to act this out, jumping lightly in time to the music and staying absolutely motionless on "stand so still" for a long pause. At the end they flop down on the floor.
Drama and Language Arts Activities
for before, after, and beyond seeing the play

Several of these activities will be led by IRT teaching artist(s) when working with your students. Feel free to ask your teaching artist any questions you have about content, execution, supplies, or logistics. We hope you will use these activities with your students beyond this collaboration.

Let’s, Yes!

This game has many variations, but for younger children we suggest that you start out as the leader and then guide them in giving actions and ideas. As “The Ooey Gooey Lady” has said in her presentations, this activity can go on for quite a while if you stretch your creativity.

Have the children stand around the room with enough physical space that they can move their arms and legs and not bump anybody. Teach them two phrases:

- Whoever starts the action says, “Let’s …” then says and does an action at the same time.
- The group responds, “Yes, let’s!” and then does the action.

For example:

- You might start by saying, “Let’s all stand up” and the group would then say, “Yes, let’s!” as they stand up.
- Then you might say, “Let’s look at the stars in the sky,” and then the group would say, “Yes, let’s” while they look up as if looking at the stars, pointing to them and making “oh” and “ah” sounds.
- You might elaborate the action by saying, “Look there is the north star shining bright” and pointing at it and having the children point at it as well.
- Then go on to the next prompt, which could be something like, “Let’s march up the mountain to get a better look.” And the group then says enthusiastically, “Yes, let’s.”
Some helpful tips:

- This is an activity where the actions can be random (Let’s swing our arms, act like a bunny rabbit, brush our teeth) or you can suggest actions in sequence to guide the children on a journey.

- Eventually you want to get the game going so well that the children are giving actions. Encouraging them to say, “Let’s catch fireflies” or any action they can think of.

- To take it further in learning language, have the children repeat the whole sentence. “Let’s jump up and down.” “Yes! Let’s jump up and down!”

- You might want to create a signal of some sort that will stop the action so you can move onto the next one.

- If the activity is getting stuck, side coach the children by asking what types of activities they do every day. What types of activities do they see adults doing? What activities do you do in the kitchen? These prompts will help the children and you to come up with more ideas to keep the game going.

- Offer imaginative prompts as well as reality-based actions. For example: Let’s fly to the moon, let’s be fairies and spread morning dewdrops, let’s be vegetable seeds and grow into tall corn stalks, let’s be monsters and eat everything in the house….

**For older children**, this game can be turned into a guessing game:

- Someone does an action silently; when another person has figured out what they are doing, they say, “Yes, let’s comb our hair.”

- The person who guessed what the other person was doing is the next person to start pantomiming another action for someone in the group to guess.

This activity is great for reinforcing positive attitudes, supporting the ideas of others, learning verbs, creativity, repetition, and getting physical.
Drama & Language Arts Activities:

Dramatic Play

The core of these activities is to help the children be physical while they tell stories and to use and extend their vocabulary, grammar, and creativity.

Making Up a Story in Sequence

Tell a simple story while acting it out, and having the children copy your movements with each sentence as you go along.

- Teaching artists usually start with getting up in the morning and getting ready to come to school because this has a number of commonalities. It can be a good way of teaching beginning, middle, and end.
  - You begin by waking up and stretching and yawning.
  - The middle is washing up, putting on your clothes, and eating breakfast.
  - The end is traveling to school and walking into the classroom to say hello to your teacher.

- You the teacher can lead these simple stories with the children’s help by asking them what might come next or what do you do next. With the simple stories you might even have a few children who can tell a whole story as you help the class act it out.

- This type of story can be as elaborate as you want it be or as basic as five sentences. What is essential is the inclusion of as many verbs as possible so your story stays physically active, making it more fun and moving it towards a conclusion. Example:
  - “I *walked* three blocks to the grocery store. Along the way I *waved* to Mr. Smith and *said* good morning to Mrs. Johnson.”
  - As the children are walking in place or around the room, you can *count out loud* the neighborhood blocks you are walking.
  - See a penny and you *stoop* to pick it up.
  - *Look* both ways across the street.
  - Forget your grocery bags and have to *run* back home.
Taking this exercise further, you can then move into fun fictional stories utilizing the beginning, middle, and end concept further by telling stories where you introduce a character (a beginning), have a conflict/problem (the middle), and resolve that problem (the end). An example might be:

- “Daisy Mae the cat got up from her long nap in the sun” And you do some good stretching of arms and legs and back and shake your bottom as your tail. Perhaps you might even do the yoga pose called Cat.
- “Daisy Mae realized she couldn’t find her favorite mouse toy. Oh no!” (You have introduced a problem that must be resolved.) Then you can throw your hands up, or put your hands on your cheeks and twist from side to side. Add sounds that we make when we’re anxious and worried. Or meow like a cat who is upset and worried.
- “Daisy Mae looked everywhere for her toy! Under the bed, in the sofa between the cushions. She ran from room to room.” (You have the middle or trying to resolve the problem. Lots of action from looking for the toy.)
- “Finally, Daisy Mae found her favorite mouse toy in the corner of the closet behind all the winter coats. She was very happy and played with the toy for the rest of the afternoon.” You can act the emotion of happiness with the children, and then act out games you would play with your mouse toy. You might even introduce a ball that the children roll to each other or bat between their hands as cats do with their paws.
Playing in Peter Rabbit’s World

Plan activities the children can do based on the life of Beatrix Potter and the Beatrix Potter books.

- Have a tea party! You can turn snack time into a tea party by dressing up and using our best manners and making tea cakes or little veggie sandwiches cut out in shapes. Or maybe the children come to the party as a character in one of Potter’s books, such as Benjamin Bunny, Jemima Puddle Duck, Squirrel Nutkin, or any animal the children love.

- For imaginative play, ask the children to talk about what they do during the day. At the tea party this would be party conversation. You can have some questions made up to help them learn the art of conversation. How are you feeling today? Did you help your family with housework by picking up your toys? What was your favorite thing at dinner last night? What book did your family read to you before bedtime?

- As animals, they can talk about what they did in their animal world. Did you find any cheese yesterday, Mr. Mouse? How will you make your nest warm for the winter, Miss Bird?

- Two children might come to the center of the circle or the front of the group and act out a scene as their animals. Give them a subject to talk about before the scene begins: for example, your animals are at the supermarket and they are deciding what foods to buy for the winter feast or items to buy for the soup. Or, as in *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, they are sneaking out to the garden or going on an adventure. The children should act out their story as they tell it. The teacher can help guide this process along by coaching from the side, giving them ideas and prompting questions. “If you are enjoying this adventure, maybe you want to skip down the road.” “Do you see a tree? Try climbing it to look out over the fields.”
Drama & Language Arts Activities: Dramatic Play:

Here to There

Have the children line up on one side of the room. Tell them they are going to cross the room in many different ways. Start with easy suggestions to get the activity started. “Go from here to there just walking.” When they get to the other side of the room they turn around to go back across. “Now go from here to there like you are marching in a parade.” As you go along you can vary the prompts that use more of the children’s imagination and pretend skills:

- riding a bicycle
- going up stairs
- moving through peanut butter or mud
- squeezing under the garden gate
- moving like dinosaurs
- scampering like mice sneaking around the house looking for cheese.

You can add emotions:

- on your way to a party
- after an argument with your best friend
- when you have a toothache

Use this activity to reinforce elements of a story you have been reading or a topic you’ve been studying, for example, the seasons:

- picking the spring flowers
- pulling up carrots and other vegetables in the garden
- raking the fall leaves
- shoveling the winter snow

This activity also can incorporate skipping, dance moves, and other types of locomotor movement.
IRT Artist in the Classroom (AIC) Visit

The visiting teaching artists will be telling the story of the play, which is Aurand Harris’s adaptation of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. They will be showing costume drawings so the children can learn the characters in the play and see what the actors will look like in costume, and to prepare the children for the actors each playing multiple roles. They will also have some fabric swatches so the children can feel the soft blue velvet of Peter Rabbit’s new jacket and also the red wool for the capes of Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-tail.

**Child Care Answers** is part of the Indiana Child Care Resource and Referral network that provides services to parents, child care providers, and the community. It is their mission to assure the highest level of early childhood education for children in central Indiana. This area includes Bartholomew, Brown, Hamilton, Hendricks, Johnson, and Marion Counties in Central Indiana. Early childhood educators and parents can contact them for referrals, education, and training. The contact information is 317-636-5727 or Toll Free: (800) 272-2937.
Drama & Language Arts Activities: Dramatic Play: Telling the story with props:

- **The “Emotion” Story**

You can use pictures and teach gestures of emotions that run through the story you are telling. Make large pictures of emotions. These pictures might be laminated, or mounted on foam core, or attached to paint sticks; whatever makes them durable and easier for the storyteller to access while talking.

Here’s a link to some free downloadable charts that illustrate various feelings; you might use them as is or cut them into individual flash cards:

http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/modules/2006/feelingchart.pdf

Begin by showing the children each picture needed for your story, and create with the children a simple action. **For example:**

- **HAPPY:** 😊
  The action could be big smiles with our arms and fingers spread wide and looking up full of joy. You might add a simple word or sound like Yay! or Whee!

- **SCARED:** 🙁
  The action could be arms crossed in front of our bodies like hugging ourselves, a little shiver, and faces with big eye and mouths like we going to say Oh No!

Review these actions several times with the pictures and tell the children each time you hold up the picture they are to do the action and say the emotion with you. Then start telling the story you have chosen. You might have a story that has the emotions in the text. Otherwise, just work it into your narrative: How does Beatrix feel when her brother goes away to boarding school? You hold up the picture of the emotion and the group says the word and does the physical gesture.

**For older students:**

You might introduce the four categories of **glad, sad, mad, and bad** (bad is the more difficult one to explain and can be left out; it is the category for emotions like disappointed, regretful, bored, afraid).

You might group basic emotions at different levels of intensity. So maybe you have three pictures for mad that show the emotion from the lowest to the highest level of feeling. For example: disgusted (low), angry (medium), outrage (high). Here is a web page that offers several methods for categorizing emotions:

http://changingminds.org/explanations/emotions/basic%20emotions.htm
Drama & Language Arts Activities: Dramatic Play: Telling the story with props:

- **Props in a Bag**

  In this activity, students work together to create a story about seemingly unrelated objects. This encourages lateral thinking and allows students to create and explore relationships between two things.

  To begin, collect an assortment of objects and place them in a designated bag (or box). Only use as many objects as you feel your students can confidently remember. Then, drawing one item out at a time, create a story piece by piece until all objects have been used. For example, if your box contained a toy rocket, a bottle, a book, and an apron, your story may go like this:

  - **You draw out the apron.** Once upon a time there was a little girl who loved to cook. She wore an apron in the kitchen, just like her grandmother.
  - **You draw out the rocket.** She decided to bake a cake in the shape of a rocket for her little brother’s birthday!
  - **You draw out the bottle.** She pulled out a bottle of her most delicious milk to use in her recipe.
  - **You draw out the book.** But, she didn’t know how much milk to use, so she opened her favorite recipe book to find out. The cake turned out to be delicious, and her brother had a very happy birthday!

  **For very young students,** you may need to model first by simply telling a story. Then, have the students repeat the same story along with you. Use the same objects a third time through, but ask for students to suggest what happens next. You will likely have to help them connect the objects. After repetition, students will begin to easily offer their own suggestions for the story. To challenge yourself, allow them to choose the objects for the bag and wow them with your versatile storytelling.

  **For older students,** you may choose to have them work in groups, with each group having a box containing different objects. Groups can work together to write, illustrate, or perform a story using their objects. Alternately, you may have them work independently to write a story as you reveal the objects one by one to the whole class. This will keep them on their toes! Encourage students to share their stories with each other when the activity is complete.
Drama & Language Arts Activities:

Sight Words – Opposites

When the children get older, they will learn about metaphor, simile, and oxymoron, comparing opposite images and ideas. Even at this age, however, we can still find ways to introduce this literary concept and the basic knowledge of opposites and imagery. The teaching artist may use opposite words that have been pulled from the book, the play, from lists we have found online, and from movement and emotion concepts we use to teach our students about acting and character development.

Choose about five pairs of opposites (ten words total) that vary the action and allow for speaking and solo and group actions. Example:

- shout / whisper
- push / pull
- together / apart
- happy / sad
- over / under

Make a flash card for each word, with a picture illustrating the word.
- The cards might feature other tools to help children who aren’t yet reading make connections with the words that match. The matching words might have the same color background and/or letter font, or the matching pictures and words might be mounted on the same color construction paper. You can also help this process by using similar vocal inflections when saying the word pairs.
- You might laminate your pictures and use Velcro to hold the opposite terms together.

Begin by holding up a card and acting out the word. Have the children act it out with you at first, then using call and response: you say the word while doing the action, and then they say the word and do the action. For example:

- Hold up “RUN” and run in place.
- Then flip over to the opposite word “WALK” and walk in place.

For older students, once you have gone through all the words, put the children in groups or pairs and hand each group or pair one of the words. You want to spread the “opposites” around the room so they really have to go looking for the matches. Tell the children to try to find their match.

For younger children, have all the children sit down. Have one group stand and act out and say their word and hold up their card. The group who believes they are the opposite can stand and act out their word and hold up their card. Then the teacher or the class can say, “It’s a match!” or “Try again!” And this goes on until all the opposite words are paired up.

Here are a couple website links to aid you:

http://www.kinderiq.com/sight-words.php
IRT Teaching artists for *Peter Rabbit and Me* have been leading journey experiences. This activity is best done in a large space so children have room for exploration.

With younger children this activity may take the form of follow-the-leader, but you can encourage them to spread out and you can move around the room from one place to the other to help avoid lines or moving in a circle. Tell the children, “we’re going on a journey, and off we go walking down the road” or skipping or any movement that has them moving through space with outflowing energy. After you get going you can add many types of prompts (see suggestions below). Allow the children to do the movement and perfect it for their individual skill levels before moving onto another type of movement. Example: marching. You can say, “Let’s try getting our knees as high as we can. Let’s march together like soldiers. Let’s march as quietly as we can.”

- To further the *Peter Rabbit and Me* experience, spell the movements as you do them and have the children repeat the letters after you. “Let’s all hop. H-O-P, hop.” “H-O-P, hop.”

- Opposite locomotive and stationary movements (you might use your Sight Word cards from the previous activity):
  
  over/under push/pull high/ low wide/ narrow
  fast/slow run/walk/ walk/crawl straight/curvy
  backward/forward loud/soft

- Animal movements
  hop nibble wiggle prowl
gallop waddle slither scurry
freeze and look around in caution dig for buried nuts

- Dance movement
  Walking Leaping Jumping bouncing
  swaying turning twisting shaking
  rolling balancing levels: high, medium, low
  tempo: quickly or slowly

- Imaginary prompts
  Flying to the moon
  Moving through marshmallow fluff
  Sneaky cats trying not to wake up the dog
  Walking on clouds
  Swimming to the bottom of the ocean to discover a sea creature
  Digging in the ground and discovering a treasure; ask the children what they found
  You can also have a specific story journey that is sequential
Drama & Language Arts Activities:  
Front-Loading Vocabulary

Reading the story before coming to the play can be a helpful way to front-load vocabulary and practice sight words. The questions below can be used in various ways to reinforce vocabulary.

- For younger students, you might use the activity orally in group or carpet time. Create a drawing or cut out a picture to represent each word. Keep the pictures visible as you ask the questions, and remove them from sight after they've been used. You may also choose different words than the ones in this sample.
- For older students, you might give them a worksheet with the questions. You could also challenge them to use these words in their own sentences, or as bonus words to practice their spelling.
- For all students, this activity could be modified to check for understanding after reading the book or seeing the play.

**Word Bank (Vocabulary from Peter Rabbit and Me):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>coat</th>
<th>naughty</th>
<th>garden</th>
<th>gate</th>
<th>play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sketch</td>
<td>shoe</td>
<td>path</td>
<td>fly</td>
<td>hop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Peter Rabbit was told not to go into Mr. McGregor's _________________.
Flopsy and Mopsy walked on the ________________ past Mr. McGregor’s garden.
Beatrix Potter made a ________________ of Peter Rabbit in her notebook.
The scarecrow's foot was made with a ________________ that belonged to Peter Rabbit.
Peter Rabbit lost his blue ________________ in Mr. McGregor’s garden.
Beatrix was sad because she could not ________________ hopscotch outside.
“Oh, Peter, you are a ________________ rabbit!”
Peter Rabbit had to ________________ away from Mr. McGregor very quickly.
The two birds had to ________________ away from Mr. McGregor very quickly.
Peter Rabbit became stuck under the ________________ to Mr. McGregor’s garden.
Drama & Language Arts Activities:

Rhyme

Stand Up, Sit Down, Rhyme, Rhyme, Rhyme!
This activity will be used in the post-show experiences after school and public performances of *Peter Rabbit and Me*. Goals include increasing social and emotional learning for our audience and expanding their engagement with the production.

Teachers can lead it again at their schools and child care centers using words from the play, or use this activity with other rhyming books, poems, or songs, with some preparation of props.

- Ask the children if they can tell me what it means when two words rhyme. When words rhyme, their ends sound the same (even though the spelling might sometimes be slightly different). Did you hear rhyming words in our story? Nod your head yes if you heard rhyming words in our story. Call on a student and ask him or her which words he or she heard that that rhymed. Repeat the child’s answer, and reinforce their response.

- Next look at specific words that you have prepared from the story, and ask the children if they can help you find more rhyming words. Everybody stands up, and you show them a picture which has its word on it as well. Example: *bat*. Ask the children to say the word aloud. You may want to repeat the word, accentuating the vowel sound and consonant where the rhyme will be detected.

- One at a time, show the children more pictures with their words. Ask the children, when they think they see a word that rhymes with the initial word, to sit back down. To help the younger children, you can say the word as you show the picture and tell the children to sit when they hear the rhyming word. Feel free to help them by repeating the base word for which you are finding the rhyme and the picture word right after. Example:
  
  Bat—Lizard       Bat—Coat       Bat—Cat.

- When the children hear and see the rhyming word and all sit down, you acknowledge this with enthusiasm and repeat the words “______ rhymes with ______. Very Good!” Example: “Bat rhymes with Cat. Very Good!” Then you begin again with a new base word and move through the pictures again. “Let’s try another. What word is this? *(Show a picture.)* Right, it’s ______! Now, when you think you see a word that rhymes with ______, without talking, stand back up. *(Repeat activity for the remaining pictures. End with them seated.)* “You all were such wonderful rhymers! Give yourself a round of applause!”

Suggested rhyming words inspired from the script:

- funny/bunny
- cider/spider
- loose/goose
- wiggle/jiggle
- underwear/scare
- lizard/wizard
- mouse/house
- please/cheese
- bat/cat
- grow/scarecrow
- true/rescue
- sing/bring
Ms./Mr. Rhyming Expert

This can be a fun way for you to do some acting that engages the children; as we say in the improvisation theatre world, “It makes your partner look good.” The children will feel good about the words they know, and increase their vocabulary from the words you add.

- Create a character for yourself who has a costume piece like a hat, or coat, or a big necklace or pendant. Tell the children as you put it on that this item makes you the Rhyming Expert (or whatever name you create for your character). Explain that once you have this item on, you are so smart and clever that you are able to find a word that rhymes with any word they give you!

- Have the children raise their hands and give you a word. Then repeat their word three times being very animated—acting out the word the child has said. Example: The child says bee, and then as you repeat the word and you’re thinking of a word to rhyme with bee, you fly and buzz around and light on flowers and other bee-type things. This helps with word comprehension, as you are showing the meaning of the word.

- When you (the expert) come up with your rhyming word, it would be helpful for the children if you act out the word as you say it, again three times. Example: tree. You can be the tree with branches.

- Have the children repeat the two words a couple of times: bee/ tree, bee/tree. Or do a call response, with you saying bee and the children saying tree so they hear the rhyming sound. Even better, have them repeat your movements while saying the words.
Cool Down

As teaching artists and as actors and directors, we have learned the importance of calming a group down at the end of a lot of excited physical activity. It helps for group cohesiveness and transitioning to the next activity. Here are a few suggestions from the IRT Artist-in-the-Classroom (AIC) staff. One of these activities may be done during your visit.

Relaxation Narrative

This can be a guided image journey that you lead students to imagine while they are sitting or lying down. Or it can be a narrative like the one provided that you lead the children through in a calm voice with maybe soft instrumental music accompanying you.

Here is an on-line example: [http://www.childdrama.com/appletree.html](http://www.childdrama.com/appletree.html)

An image journey has the students seeing the pictures in their minds. What is important is that the students relax their muscles and bones, and breathe, and do their best not to talk.

- We start by guiding the students to lie down on their backs and close their eyes. We tell them that we are here to keep them safe, so our eyes are open.

- We say something like, “Relax your arms, your shoulders, your legs, your feet…. You are so relaxed your body becomes very light, so light you are floating up into the sky and you can float through the sky with the clouds and see all the buildings in your neighborhood….”

- From there the narrative can go anywhere you take it. You bring them back to where they started and then have them sit up and tell you about their journey. Ask them leading questions, such as what buildings did you see? Did you smell any food when you floated by that restaurant? What colors did you see on your journey?

- End by complimenting their imaginations and thank them for sharing, and then move to your next activity.
Cool Down:
Yoga

Yoga is becoming an integral part of the lives of theatre practitioners because of the health benefits. It increases flexibility and improves breathing and more. See this web link: http://www.yogaforbeginners.com/benefits01.htm

Leading the children in some simple yoga poses can help the group decompress and have some fun. There are poses with names that are applicable to many subjects, even *The Velveteen Rabbit* (for example: Mountain, Tree, Rabbit, Horse, Boat, Child's, and more...).

Keep in mind that there are variations on each pose for beginners and the less flexible. What is important is the breathing. Here are a couple of web links for more information.

http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/how-to-combine-breath-and-movement-in-yoga.seriesId-333200.html
http://www.sparkpeople.com/blog/blog.asp?post=you_asked_am_i_breathing_right_during_yoga

There are a large number of yoga teachers in and around Indianapolis who you can reach out to for a reasonable cost, who would really enjoy coming to work with your students.
Book Recommendations
from Children’s Librarians at the Indianapolis Public Library
and from the IRT Education Staff

Peter Rabbit
The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter
The Tale of Benjamin Bunny by Beatrix Potter
The Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies by Beatrix Potter
Beatrix Potter: The Complete Tales by Beatrix Potter
Beatrix Potter Nursery Rhyme Book by Beatrix Potter
The Further Tale of Peter Rabbit by Emma Thompson, illustrated by Eleanor Taylor
The Christmas Tale of Peter Rabbit by Emma Thompson, illustrated by Eleanor Taylor

Gardening
The Curious Garden by Peter Brown
A Gardener’s Alphabet by Mary Azarian
Hoe, Hoe, Hoe, Watch My Garden Grow, written & illustrated by Mark Daddona
Paddington Bear in the Garden by Michael Bond, pictures by R. W. Alley
The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss, pictures by Crockett Johnson
The Little Gardener (Teenie Greenies) by Jan Gerardi
From Seed to Plant by Gail Gibbons
Two Little Gardeners by Margaret Wise Brown
Roots, Shoots, Buckets, & Boots: Gardening Together with Children
written and illustrated by Sharon Lovejoy.
Gardening with Children by Monika Hannemann and others, edited by Sigrun Wolff Saphire
Kids’ Container Gardening: Year-Round Projects for Inside and Out by Cindy Krezel

Vegetables
The Vegetables We Eat by Gail Gibons
Rah, Rah, Radishes!: A Vegetable Chant by April Pulley Sayre

Adventure & mischief
Journey by Aaron Becker
The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend by Dan Santat
Curious George by H. A. Rey
What Do You Do With an Idea? by Kobi Yamada
The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales by Jon Scieszka
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
The Three Pigs by David Wiesner
This Is Not My Hat by Jon Klassen
Mr. Tiger Goes Wild by Peter Brown
Rabbits
It’s Not Easy Being a Bunny by Marilyn Sadler
Small Bunny’s Blue Blanket by Tatyana Feeney
The Runaway Bunny by Margaret Wise Brown
Thunder Bunny by Barbara Berger
We’re Rabbits by Lisa Westberg Peters

Teaching Theatre
101 Drama Games for Children: Fun and Learning with Acting and Make-believe
   by Paul Rooyackers
112 Acting Games: a comprehensive workbook of theatre games for developing acting skills
   by Gavin Levy
50 Early Childhood Literacy Strategies by Janice J. Beaty
Beginning Drama 4-11, Early Years and Primary by Joe Winston and Miles Tandy
Movement Stories for Children Ages 3—6, including instructional material for teachers
   by Helen Landalf and Pamela Gerke
The Preschooler’s Busy Book:
   365 Creative Learning Games and Activities to Keep Your 3-to-6-Year-Old Busy
   by Trish Kuffner
Theater Games for the Classroom: A Teacher’s Handbook by Viola Spolin
Up, Down, Move Around — Nutrition and Motor Skills: Active Learning for Preschoolers
   by Deborah Kayton Michals
A Handbook of Creative Dance and Drama by Alison Lee

About Beatrix Potter
The Ultimate Peter Rabbit: A visual guide to the world of Beatrix Potter edited by Camilla Hallinan
Beatrix Potter: A Life in Nature by Linda Lear
The Tale of Beatrix Potter: A Biography by Lane Margaret
The Magic Years of Beatrix Potter by Margaret Lane
Beatrix Potter 1866–1943: The Artist and Her World
   by Judy Taylor, Joyce Irene Whalley, Anne Stevenson Hobbs, and Elizabeth Battrick
Beatrix Potter’s gardening life: the plants and places that inspired the classic children’s tales
   by Marta McDowell.

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Other Resources

Films
*The Tales of Beatrix Potter* (1971, ballet film)
*The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1991, narrated by Carol Burnett)
*Miss Potter* (2006, biographical film of Beatrix Potter, with Renée Zellweger)
*Peter Rabbit* (2012-present, animated television series)

YouTube
The Tale of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny film 1/2
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MisrUJX3QGU
The Tale of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny film 2/2
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ojoIZ0sJO8
Vegetable Song with a hip hop beat!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wmEn8JUtmmC
Vegetables We Love You | Vegetable Song
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Hwnq22rt38

Websites
Find Peter Rabbit books, games, and news, and learn more about Beatrix Potter:
Images of Beatrix Potter, Peter Rabbit illustrations, book covers, etc.
https://www.google.com/search?q=peter+rabbit&es_sm=93&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0CAgQ_AUoAmoVChMIldfn_ajvxglVlzCICHvVAKu&bih=1026&biw=655#tbm=isch&q=beatrix+potter
One Teacher’s blog on her lesson plan using The Tale of Peter Rabbit
http://amusingsofafirstyearteacher.blogspot.com/2013/04/the-secret-kindergarden.html
Using Drama and Theatre to Promote Literacy Development
“The Ooey Gooey Lady” has a wonderful and extensive list of resources on her website:
http://www.ooeygooey.com/resources/
Miss Lucy’s Playground Songs, an extensive listing of songs in many categories;
this is the link to their archives on action songs:
http://playgroundsongs.com/category/action-song/
Why Children’s Theater Matters
http://www.education.com/magazine/article/Why_Childrens_Theater_Matters/
Study Finds Major Benefits for Students Who Attend Live Theatre
http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/10/141016165953.htm
Drama Based Instruction: activities used at the United Way child care center director’s meeting
http://www.utexas.edu/cofa/dbi/