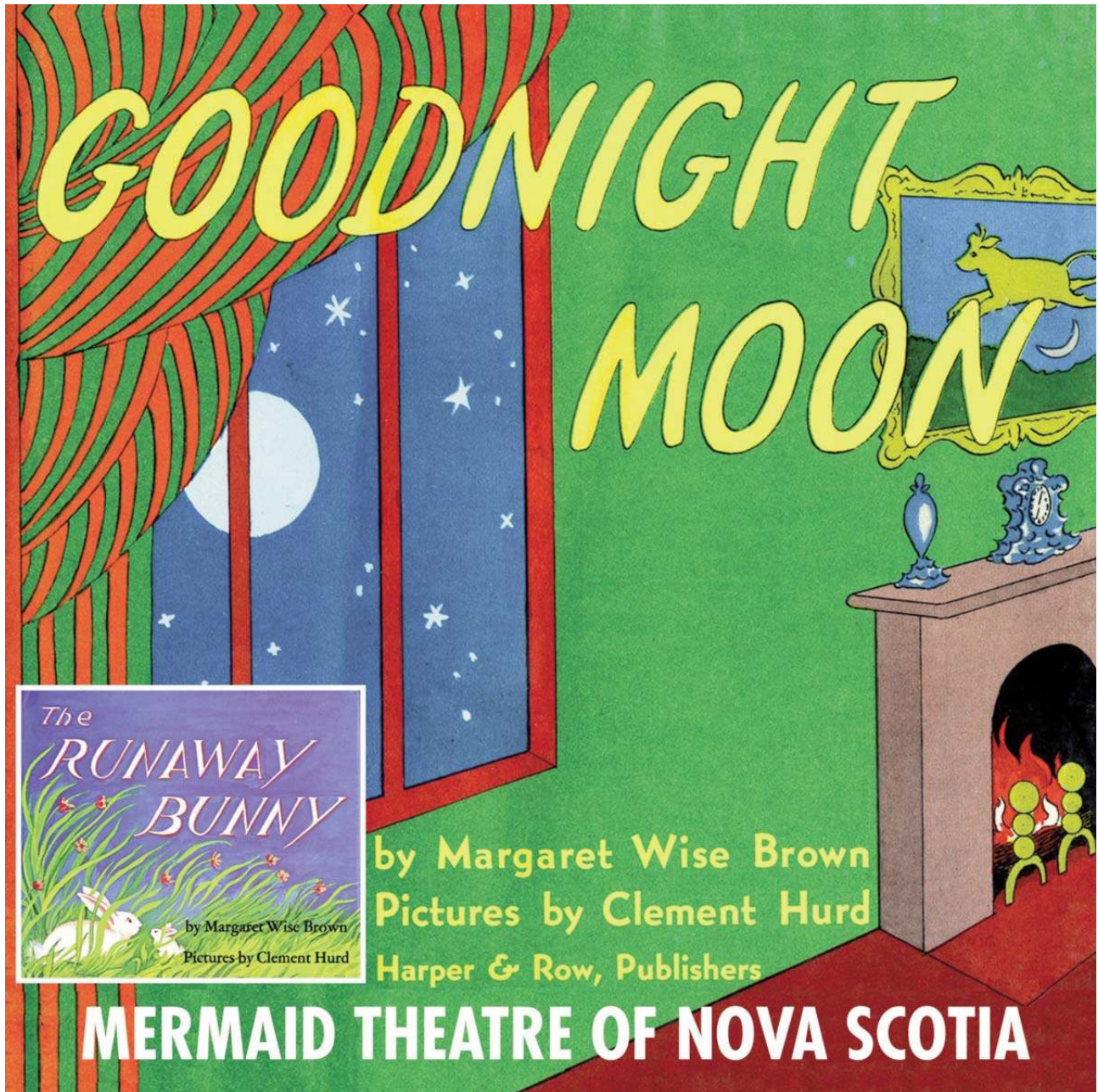




Youth Education Series at Lebanon Opera House



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Dear Teacher/Parent:

We have included the following study guide from Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia to help make your students' theater experience with *Goodnight Moon & The Runaway Bunny* as meaningful as possible. For many, it will be their first time viewing a live theatrical production. We have learned that when teachers discuss the play with their students before and after the production, the experience is more significant and long-lasting. Please use this study guide as inspiration for creating your own activities and areas for discussion. We hope you and your class enjoy the show!

About Lebanon Opera House Youth Education Series

Each year, LOH presents a series of events for school children in the Upper Valley community. Made possible by support from the series' sponsors, the YES! events provide many of the community's school children with their first exposure to live performances. The series features school-day matinees by national touring companies that specialize in shows for young and family audiences.

About Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia

Mermaid Theatre ranks among North America's most respected theatres for the young, and plays an important ambassadorial role for Nova Scotia and for Canada. The company regularly crosses Canada and the United States, travels abroad frequently, has performed for more than four and a half million spectators on four continents, and offers productions in seven languages.

The company's choice of material is based on the belief that young people can benefit substantially both in their emotional and aesthetic development, from early exposure to literature, the arts, and the power of imagination. The company's objective is to produce work which is good theatre – entertaining, informative and stimulating to all the senses. As important is the goal of encouraging literacy and generating enthusiasm for the art of reading.

In recognition of its accomplishments, Mermaid has been awarded export Excellence Awards by both Nova Scotia (2001) and the Government of Canada (2001, 2005); was awarded the Crystal Tourism Ambassador Award by Nova Scotia's tourism industry in 2008, and in the Fall of 2009 received the Atlantic Presenters Association's first annual award for excellence in artist management. The company's touring circuit is unparalleled in North America.



Youth Education Series at Lebanon Opera House

Please review this common theater etiquette with your class before attending the performance.

Do:

- Arrive at Lebanon Opera House early.
- Use the restroom before the performance.
- Turn off cell phones, alarms, and other electronic devices.
- Wait for your school or group to be dismissed.
- Keep your feet on the floor.
- Show your appreciation of the performers by applauding.
- Stay with your group or school at all times.
- Watch and listen closely to the performers.

Don't:

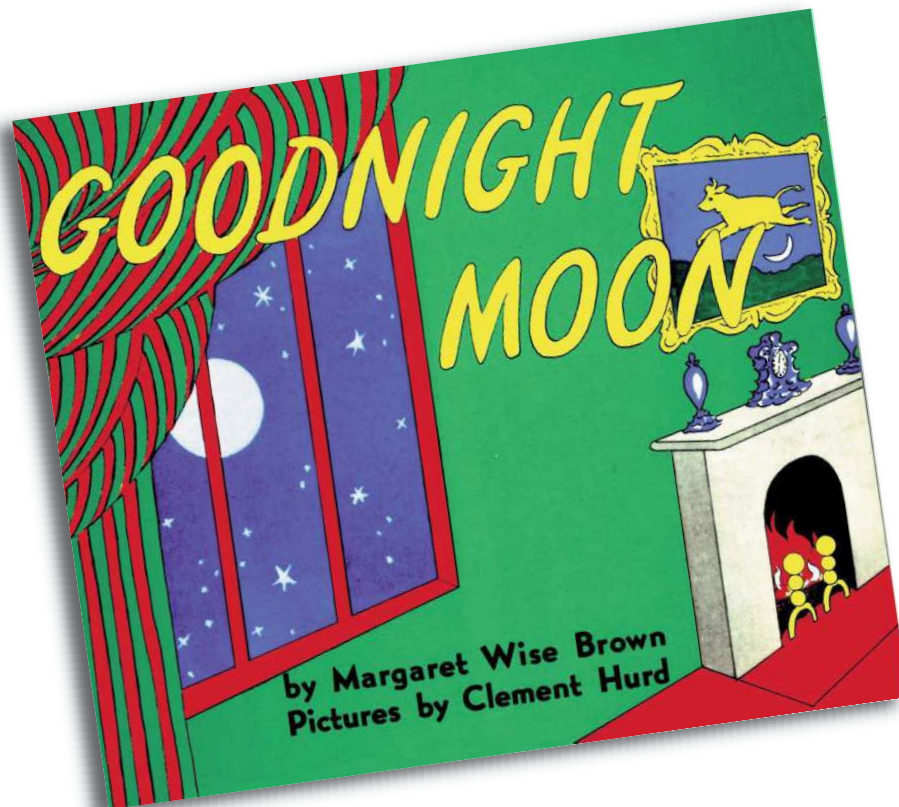
- Stand in the aisles.
- Put your feet on the seats or balcony railing.
- Talk, sing, hum or fidget.
- Take pictures or record the actors during the performance.
- Leave the theater during the performance.
- Kick the seat in front of you.
- Eat, drink or chew gum in the theater.
- Leave your seat before the performers have taken their curtain call.

Enjoy the show!



The Stories

1



In *Goodnight Moon*, a young rabbit goes through a bedtime ritual of saying goodnight to every object in sight and in his imagination, from the pictures on the walls to the brush and comb, to the moon and stars, to "the old lady whispering 'hush.'" The text is written in the form of a rhyming poem.

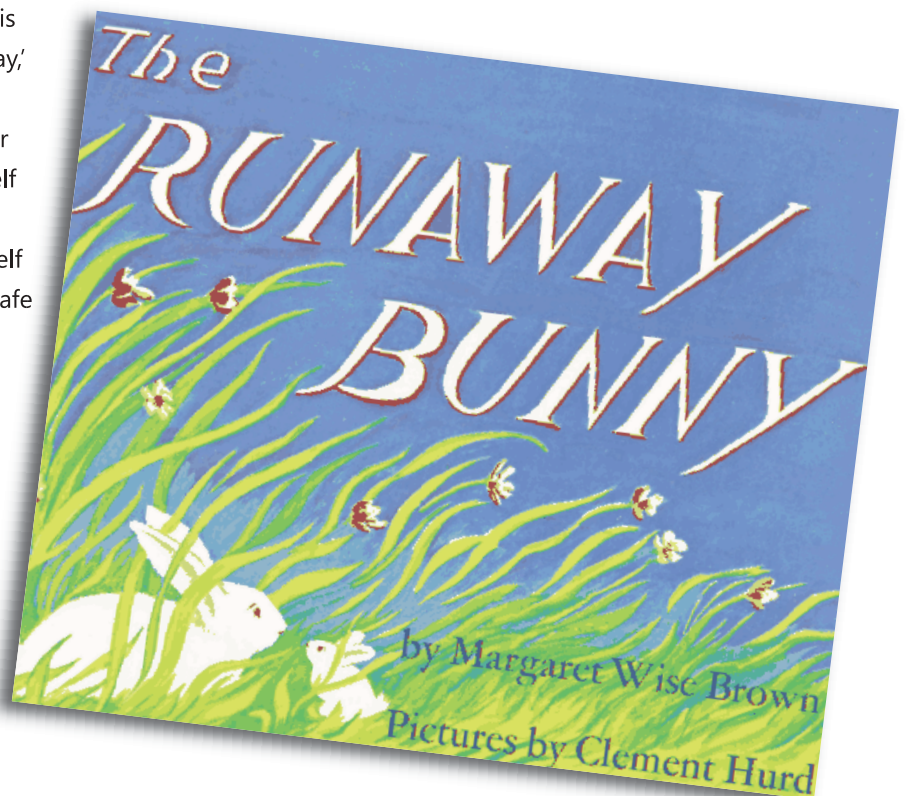
Ask your students:

- Can you name any of the things the bunny says goodnight to in the story? How many can you think of?
- Do you like going to bed?
- What are some of the things you do to get ready for bed?
- Who do you say goodnight to before bedtime?

In *The Runaway Bunny*, a young bunny tells his mother he wants to run away. "If you run away," says his mother, "I will run after you." And so begins an imaginary game of chase. Whatever the little bunny declares he will change himself into—a fish, a rock, a bird, a boat, etc.—his mother replies that she, too, will change herself so that she can always keep her little bunny safe and protected.

Ask your students:

- Can you name any of the things the bunny says he will become? How many can you name?
- If you could change into anything you wanted, what would you become? Why?
- Why do you think the little bunny wanted to run away?
- Have you ever wanted to run away? Why?



Meet the Creators



When Margaret Wise Brown (1910-1952) began to write for young children, most picture books were written by illustrators, whose training and talents lay mainly in the visual arts. Brown was the first picture-book author to achieve recognition as a writer.

After graduating from Hollins College in 1932, Brown worked as a teacher and also studied art. It was while working at the Bank Street Experimental School in New York City that she started writing books for children. Her first book was *When the Wind Blew*, published in 1937 by Harper & Brothers. Brown went on to develop her *Here and Now* stories and *Noisy Book* series while employed as an editor at William R. Scott. In the early 1950s, she wrote several books for the Little Golden Books series, including *The Color Kittens*, *Mister Dog*, and *Sailor Dog*.

Clement Hurd (1908-1988) was an American illustrator of children's books. He is best known for his collaborations with author Margaret Wise Brown. He also illustrated a number of books written by his wife Edith (a friend of Brown's), as well as *The World Is Round*, a children's book written by Gertrude Stein.

The son of a New York mortgage banker, Hurd was educated at St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, studied architecture at Yale University and painting with Fernand Léger in Paris. On seeing two of his paintings, Brown asked him if he would consider illustrating children's books.

Have You Read...?

In addition to *Goodnight Moon* and *The Runaway Bunny*, Margaret Wise Brown and Clement Hurd also teamed up to create *My World* and *Bumble Bugs and Elephants*.

Other books by Margaret Wise Brown include:

- *My World of Color*
- *The Moon Shines Down*
- *Two Little Trains*
- *Sneakers, the Seaside Cat*
- *The Little Fir Tree*
- *The Important Book*

Ask your students:

- Have you heard of any of these books?
- How many have you read?
- Do you remember the stories?
- Do you remember any of the pictures?

