



Resource Guide | for Educators and Audiences

We include information about our production along with creative activities to make connections both before and after the show. For educators, all activities are aligned to the North Carolina Essential Standards as well as the Common Core Standards and National Core Art Standards for theatre. Look for the symbol below throughout the guide.



NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances. NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.A.1.1: Recall the basic parts of a story, such as characters, setting, and events. National Theatre Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. National Theatre Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

My Wonderful Birthday Suit

by Gloria Bond Clunie

Recommended for ages 4 and older



Director

Gloria Bond Clunie

Themes explored

tolerating differences,
acceptance, understanding
and celebrating diversity

Summary of My Wonderful Birthday Suit

A surprise birthday party gives three children something truly amazing to celebrate - their differences.

Rainbows, moonbeams and a bit of birthday magic make for a super-fun party! But friendships are questioned when judgments and comments about skin color slip out. By sharing experiences, the children learn important lessons about understanding and acceptance that pave the way to forgiveness. This spectacular story told with music, an awesome puppet named Bobo the bird and the wonder of a magical Thinking Tree will give everyone something to ponder. Each of us is a gift “wrapped” in our own unique way but it’s what’s on the inside that truly makes us special. This powerful conversation-starter proves that you’re never too young (or too old) to be kind.

The BIG QUESTIONS about the show

1. At the birthday party the characters learn that words can hurt. What words hurt the characters in the play and why? Why did Ooblahdah say things about the color of Shebopshebe’s skin? How do you think that made Shebopshebe feel and why?
2. The Thinking Tree is a key part of this story? What makes the Thinking Tree so important? What are the characters able to do at the Thinking Tree that help them?
3. One of the characters says that they are sorry for the words they said. Why is it important to say you are sorry? What could have happened if the character didn’t say they were sorry?



NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.A.1.2: Analyze the relationships between events, characters, and settings. NCES-Music.(K-5).MU.MR.1: Understand the interacting elements to respond to music and music performances. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.(K-5).2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. National Theatre Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Meet the cast



Will Burton-Edwards



Reneé Welsh-Noel



Courtney Reasoner

Presented by:



About the playwright



Gloria Bond Clunie studied at Northwestern University (BS, Theater, MFA, Directing) in Evanston, Illinois, where she went on to become an award-winning playwright, director and educator. Gloria is a founding member of the Playwriting Ensemble at Chicago's Regional Tony Award-winning Victory Gardens Theater where her plays *North Star*, *Living Green* and *Shoes* premiered. She is also the founding Artistic Director of Evanston's Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre. Awards include a Joseph Jefferson Award, a Scott McPherson, Theodore Ward African-American Playwriting Prizes, NEA and Illinois Arts Council Fellowships, the Children's Theatre Foundation of America Medallion Award and the Evanston Mayor's Award for the Arts. Earlier this year, she served as playwright and director for the premiere of *My Wonderful Birthday Suit* commissioned by Chicago Children's Theatre.



NCES-TheaArts.4.TA.CU.2.2: Understand the role of the playwright in relation to script construction techniques, such as dialogue, protagonist, and antagonist. **National Theatre Anchor Standard 11:** Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Recommended Reading

If you enjoyed the show, check out these books at your local Charlotte Mecklenburg Library branch. Check availability at cmlibrary.org.

The Skin You Live In
by Michael Tyler

Skin Again
by Bell Hooks

It's Okay to Be Different
by Todd Parr

The Colors of Us
by Karen Katz

Shades of People
by Shelley Rotner

Side by Side
by Rachel Bright

Neither
by Airlie Anderson

Rabbit!
by Rodrigo Folguiera

THEATRE CORNER

Every play Children's Theatre of Charlotte produces is created by a talented team of designers, technicians, actors and a director. As a class, discuss what you experienced when you saw the performance.

1. Name three things you noticed about the set. Did the set help tell the story? What sort of set would you have designed?
2. What did you like about the costumes? Did the costumes help tell the story? What sort of costumes would you have designed?
3. What role did lighting play in telling the story? How did the lights enhance what you were seeing?
4. Talk about the actors. Were there moments you were so caught up in the story you forgot you were watching a play?
5. Were there any actors who played more than one character? What are some ways you can be the same person but play different characters?



NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances. **NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.AE.1.2:** Understand how costumes [and technical elements] enhance dramatic play. **National Theatre Anchor Standard 8:** Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. **National Theatre Anchor Standard 9:** Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

For more activities like a bow-making tutorial and content surrounding this show, [click here](#) to access Children's Theatre of Charlotte's Pinterest boards.



Write to Us!

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CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.(K-5).1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.