Performances

Presents

Amber Brown is NOT A Crayon

Tuesday, December 6th, 2005
10am, Concert Hall

Study Guides are also available on our website at www.fineartscenter.com - select Performances Plus! from Educational Programs, then select Resource room.

The Fine Arts Center wishes to acknowledge MassMutual Financial Group for its important role in making these educational materials and programs available to the youth in our region.
Amber Brown Is Not A Crayon

A one-act musical based on the book by Paula Danziger
Amber Brown and Justin Daniels are best friends. They work together in Mrs. Cohen’s class at school, play together after school, save their chewed gum in one big ball, and laugh at the same jokes. They are a team of two, even though their classmate, Hannah Burton, thinks they are immature. They are a team of two, even though Justin is moving to Alabama.

Justin’s mom, Mrs. Daniels, often watches Amber when her mom, Mrs. Brown, works late. When Mrs. Bradley, comes to see about buying the Daniels’ house, Amber and Justin work hard to make her hate it, but their plan fails.

The house is sold, and the two friends must deal with lots of changes they do not want to face. For the first time in their friendship, Amber and Justin are fighting and might not ever speak to one another again.

Other Amber Brown Books written by Paula Danziger:

- Amber Brown Goes Fourth
- Amber Brown Is Feeling Blue
- Amber Brown Is Green With Envy
- Amber Brown Sees Red
- Amber Brown Wants Extra Credit
- Forever Amber Brown
- Get Ready for Second Grade, Amber Brown
- I, Amber Brown
- Orange You Glad It’s Halloween, Amber Brown?
- Second Grade Rules, Amber Brown
- What a Trip, Amber Brown
- You Can’t Eat Your Chicken Pox, Amber Brown

For more information on these books, visit: www.scholastic.com/titles/amberbrown/amber1.htm
Coloring Amber Brown

Extra Colors for Amber on Stage

The musical *Amber Brown Is Not A Crayon* is based on Paula Danziger’s novel. “Based on” means that the book provides the story for the musical. Some characters and events remain the same, but there are some changes and additions. The changes and additions are like extra colors added to the story by the theatre company, ArtsPower National Touring Theatre.

Important Theatre People

- The **playwright** writes the lines of dialogue the actors speak.
- The **composer** writes the music.
- The **lyricist** writes the words to the music.
- The **actors** audition for roles in a play, memorize lines, songs, and stage direction, and then perform on-stage.
- The **designers** create sets, costumes, and lighting.
- The **director** rehearses the actors and makes artistic decisions.
- The **stage manager** oversees all backstage elements of a show and supervises the actors before and after the performance.
- The **producers** raise the money and manage the entire production.

Learning Activity

Coloring the Page for the Stage

Here are some changes or different “colors” to watch for in the musical *Amber Brown Is Not A Crayon*. Fill in the blank lines below after you see the performance.

1. In the novel, the teacher is Mr. Cohen. In the musical, the teacher is ________________________.

2. In the novel, there are classmates named Bobby, Jimmy, and Brandi. In the musical, the classmate is ________________________.

3. In the novel, Justin has a little brother named Danny. In the musical, ________________________.

After the performance, discuss:

- Why do you think ArtsPower National Touring Theatre may have made these changes?
- How else did the work of the theatre company color the novel’s story to present it on the stage?
Coloring Amber with Characters

In the theatre, actors who play characters tell the story on stage. In *Amber Brown Is Not A Crayon*, four actors play seven characters. Two actors play Amber and Justin. Two other actors play the mothers, the teacher, the home buyer, and Hannah.

**Doubling**

When an actor plays more than one character, it is called “doubling.” You will know that actors are doubling—have become new characters—when they change the ways they use their voices and bodies.

During rehearsals, the director works with actors who double to “color” characters differently by making them:

- seem younger or older.
- speak differently.
- move differently.

**Learning Activity**

Imagine that you are an actor who must double as 10 different characters! Color the way you play a character by making changes in your body, movement, and voice. Work in pairs and say this line: “You’re not going to Alabama.” as spoken by:

- a snobby know-it-all
- a sad child
- a scolding teacher
- a cool teenager
- a disappointed parent
- a tired airplane pilot
- an army sergeant
- a sweet grandparent
- a bratty brother or sister
- a mean boss

Share the ways you changed your body’s movements and voices for each character with the whole class. During the performance, look for the changes the actors make when they double. Why do you think theatre companies like ArtsPower have actors double in roles?

Amber and Justin are the only two characters in the musical who do not “double” as other characters.

Photo by Carol Rosegg
Coloring Amber with Lines

Playwrights are people who write plays. They add color to a story on stage with their lines of dialogue. The audience receives information about the plot (story) and the characters through the lines. Actors add color to the story by the ways they speak or “deliver” their lines.

Learning Activity

Colorful Deliveries

To learn more about Amber and Justin, read their lines below.

Deliver each line aloud with colorful expression.

Try different ways of delivering the same line.

**AMBER**

- Excuse me. Amber Brown is a person. Amber Brown is not a crayon.
- See? It’s good having a best friend. We help each other out - keep each other organized - work together!
- I’ve come to realize that I, Amber Brown, hate change.
- Fine! You throw that out and I’m never going to speak to you again.

**JUSTIN**

- We might as well face it. We are the biggest gross-out kings of our whole school!
- Between us, we’ll make sure no one ever buys that house!
- How come whenever parents tell you they’re treating you like an adult, they always make you feel like a baby?
- Man, I wish I didn’t have to move.
Because *Amber Brown Is Not A Crayon* is a musical, the story is told in words and songs. The music and songs tell the audience about the characters, plot, and setting. Lyrics are the words of songs. They add color to the story on stage.

What do these lyrics that Amber sings tell you about her feelings and the story, in general?

**Guess I’ll be the one who’ll say**  
I’m sorry.  
But I’m not the one who should say  
I’m sorry!  
He’s the one who should say  
He’s sorry.

**So I’m not just brown and dull,**  
I’m ev’ry color you can see.  
A crazy technicolor rainbow—  
That’s me!

**We’re the gross-out kings.**  
We’re the best!  
Look out world—  
Don’t get too close!  
Ee-ew!!!  
They’re gross!

**I’m tired of people walking out the door!**  
So to be my friend, here’s my rule:  
Better plan to stay! Cause no one’s gonna  
Leave me anymore!

After the performance, write some lyrics for a colorful song about Amber. Use the tune to "Yankee Doodle."

Begin with:  
"Amber Brown is not a crayon.  
Amber is a person...."  
and create all new words.  

(Challenge: Make your lyrics rhyme!)
How does an audience add great color to a performance?

- Watch closely. Reading, writing, or talking takes your focus away from the performance.
- Listen carefully.
- Become quiet the moment you see an actor or hear the music begin.
- Laugh or applaud if you enjoy the play.
- Remember that you and the actors are in the same room.
- Talking, whispering, or making noise during the performance makes it hard for actors to do their best.
- Help other audience members with your quiet attention.

If it weren’t for Paula Danziger, there would be no performance! In 1994 she wrote the book that became the musical. She wanted to be a writer ever since she was in second grade.

Ms. Danziger passed away in 2004, but her colorful characters and stories live on in more than 25 books and now in ArtsPower’s musical.

To learn more about Paula Danziger, visit
- www.scholastic.com/titles/paula/index.htm
- www.penguinputnam.com/static/packages/us/yreaders/amberbrown/aapd.html

Amber Brown Is Not A Crayon is brought to you by ArtsPower National Touring Theatre, an Actors’ Equity Association theatre company based in Montclair, New Jersey.

Why is ArtsPower called a national touring theatre?
The actors and a stage manager:
- present performances all over the United States.
- pack the set, costumes, lights, and recording equipment in a van.
- set up, change, and pack the set.
- take care of costumes and props—objects such as backpacks, passports, paper lunch bags, and chewing-gum balls—handled by actors.
- stay in hotels when they travel.
- sometimes present 12 performances in 12 different places in a week.
Write To Us!

After you attend **Amber Brown Is Not A Crayon**, please share your thoughts with ArtsPower, or visit ArtsPower online at http://www.artspower.org and click on “Contact Us” on the top tool bar. (We welcome your drawings, too!)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher’s Name:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Your School:</td>
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<td>City, State:</td>
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<td>Date:</td>
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ArtsPower National Touring Theatre  
39 South Fullerton Avenue  
Montclair, NJ 07042-3354

I, ________________________________, saw **Amber Brown Is Not A Crayon** at ____________________________.

My favorite character in **Amber Brown Is Not A Crayon** was ____________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

My favorite part was when  ______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

Here’s what else I have to say about the show: ________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

Sincerely,

Your Name: ______________________________________
Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of the building, procedures are in place to ensure that the audience can exit safely.

Sections 4, 5, 6
Exit through the lobby.

Sections 1, 2, 3 & Pit
Exit toward stage.

Note: Interior house conditions may necessitate alternate exit routes.

Mezzanine 1, 2, 3
Exit rear through lobby.

Balconies 1, 2 exit toward stage, up two flights and down interior fire escape

Orchestra Below
NOTICE TO ALL TEACHERS AND CHAPERONES

- PERFORMANCES BEGIN PROMPTLY AT 10AM OR NOON.
  Many of our performances sell-out. This means we can have up to 1,600 students to seat. Please help us by arriving at least 30 – 15 minutes prior to the start of the performance. This will allow our ushers to get everyone seated and for you and your students to visit the rest rooms and get settled. It is important that we begin our performances on time so that all schools can meet their lunch and/or dismissal times.

- PLEASE CHECK LOCATION OF PERFORMANCE WHEN MAKING YOUR BUS RESERVATION.

- The staff of the Fine Arts Center need your help! An increasing number of students are coming into the performance space with gum, food, beverages and portable music players. **None of these items is allowed in the halls for performances.** Many of these items are stowed in backpacks and are not easily noticed. Our goal is to offer high quality performances for young people. In order to enhance the experience, we ask for your cooperation in preventing these items from entering the hall.

- For the comfort of all concerned, we ask that backpacks, lunches and other gear be left on the bus. Our long-standing policy of no cameras or tape recorders still is in effect.

- At the conclusion of the performance please remain in your seats until your school group is dismissed.

*We hope that you and your students enjoy your theatre experience!*
We are pleased to announce that we have made arrangements with the UMass Parking Services to allow our patrons to park in the Campus Parking Garage for the reduced rate of just $1 during your stay.

This rate is available to home school families and schools that will arrive by private transportation rather than by bus. Please let us know at the time you make your reservations that you will be traveling by car. Parking passes will be mailed with your invoice approximately one month prior to each performance. You will be sent a sheet that includes 10 parking passes that you may cut and give out to drivers in your group. Should you require additional passes, please photocopy the sheet. The passes are valid for the garage only on the date of your reserved performance. You may park in the garage for performances in either the Concert Hall, Rand Theater or Bowker Auditorium. Parking at meters on campus does not apply.

We hope that this policy will better meet your needs. Please do not hesitate to call our office if you have questions.

Programming Office: (413) 545 – 0190.
PARKING AND DIRECTIONS FOR THE FINE ARTS CENTER
CONCERT HALL and RAND THEATER

CONCERT HALL

School Bus Parking: Students should be dropped-off at Haigis Mall off of Massachusetts Avenue. University Security will direct buses to an appropriate parking lot during the performance (typically by the football stadium). PLEASE BE SURE YOUR BUS DRIVER KNOWS THAT ALL PERFORMANCES LAST APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR AND THEY SHOULD RETURN A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE ANTICIPATED END TIME. If drivers are not with the buses, they may miss the radio call from security asking them to return for pick-up, resulting in unnecessary delays returning to your school.

Individual cars: If necessary, individuals may drop-off students with a chaperone at Haigis Mall (you will be directed by security to the mid-point turn of Haigis Mall – see map) prior to parking. We recommend parking in the Campus Center Parking Garage to avoid searching for a metered space. It is a five-minute walk to the Concert Hall. All other available parking during weekdays is at meters. Available lots and pricing (current as of 9/1/04) are listed below:

Parking in the Garage is available to our patrons at a discounted rate of $1. To receive this rate you MUST give the Garage attendant a parking pass. To receive your pass, please call our office to let us know that you will be arriving by car. Parking passes are sent with the invoices. (413)545-0190

Parking meters are enforced Monday – Friday, 7AM – 5PM. Meter rates are $1.00 per hour.

Parking Garage – near Campus Center, across from the Mullins Center off Commonwealth Avenue
Lot 34 – Behind Visitors Center with 3, 5 & 10 hour meters available
Haigis Mall – 2 hour maximum on meters
Lot 62 - Adjacent to Fernald Hall with 3 hour maximum on meters, limited spaces available.

From the North: (Vermont, Greenfield) I-91 south to Route 116. Follow signs on 116 “To the University of Massachusetts.” Exit ramp leads to Massachusetts Avenue. Turn left (east) on to Massachusetts Avenue toward the campus. Continue through one light and watch for Lot 34 by the Visitors Center on your right and the entrance to Haigis Mall on your left.

From the South: (Springfield, Holyoke) I-91 north to Route 9. East on Route 9 over the Coolidge Bridge and through Hadley. Left at Route 116 (across from Staples) heading north toward campus. Right at first exit at “University of Massachusetts” bear right onto Massachusetts Avenue toward campus. Continue through one light and watch for Lot 34 by the Visitors Center on your right and the entrance to Haigis Mall on your left.

From the West: (Northampton, Pittsfield) Route 9 east through Northampton and over Coolidge Bridge. Follow remaining directions from “From the South” above.

From the East: (Belchertown, Ludlow) North on Routes 21, 181 or 202 to Route 9 into Amherst. Right on to North Pleasant Street (main downtown intersection), north through center of town. Turn left at Triangle StreetBertucci’s Restaurant on your right), rejoining North Pleasant Street. To reach Lot 34 and Haigis Mall continue on main road, which becomes Massachusetts Avenue. Haigis Mall will be on your right, Lot 34 on your left.
For Concert Hall, Rand Theater and Bowker Auditorium – Patrons traveling by car are encouraged to park in the parking garage. Discounted parking is available in the garage for $1. A parking permit is required for discounted parking in the garage. Call the Programming Office if you require permits at (413) 545 – 0190. All other parking on campus is at available meters at the rate of $1 per hour. Parking is enforced Monday – Friday, 7AM – 5 PM.

Buses will drop-off students as indicated on map. Buses will be given parking instructions by Campus Security.