

# TEACHER'S GUIDE TO



Adapted by Alison Gregory from the Junie B. Jones series by Barbara Park

**feel free to make as many copies as needed.**

**A Production of PUPPET ARTS THEATRE  
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## **Junie B. Jones - Curriculum Connections**

Grades: K through 4

Reading Program, Drama, Communication, Language Arts, Relationships & Family,  
Literature Based;

### **Dear Teacher:**

We have created the following study guide to help make your students' theatre experience with Puppet Arts Theatre production of "Junie B. In Jingle Bells, Batman Smells!" as meaningful as possible. For many, it will be their first time viewing a live theatrical production presented with puppets. 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. Our study guide provides pre and post production discussion topics, as well as related activity sheets. These are just suggestions; please feel free to create your own activities and areas for discussion. We hope you and your class enjoy the show!

### **Summary of the Play**

The play is based on two books of Barbara Park's, "Junie B. Jones First Grader: Jingle Bells, Batman Smells! (P.S. So Does May.)" and "Junie B. Jones First Grader: Shipwrecked."

Junie B. Jones, our very precocious and bright first grader, spends the length of the show reminding us of the importance of sharing, respecting authority, being kind to others, and – as is appropriate this holiday season – the joy of giving. Junie B. (she's not just "Junie" ... do not forget the "B." or you will hear about it) shares the stage with five classmates and their teacher, Mr. Scary. Part of the play flashes back to the class's recent Columbus Day extravaganza, but most of the play focuses around Christmas and the class's upcoming performance of "Jingle Bells." Junie B., ever the rebel, refuses to stick to the original lyrics and dives off into her own rendition of the song using the "Jingle bells, Batman smells, Robin laid an egg" lyrics. This deviation enrages her classmate, May, who is known for tattling and for disliking Junie B. To sour the apple even further, Junie B. blindly selects May as her Secret Santa and is left with the task of purchasing a gift for her. Junie B. struggles with the desire to be selfish (or "a shellfish" as they say in the

play) and purchase a gift for herself rather than a gift for May. Junie B. makes the right decision in the end, and presents May with the coveted Squeeze-A-Burp toy, as opposed to the two lumps of coal Junie B. previously selected from her father's barbecue grill.

### **Pre-Performance Discussion**

1. If time permits, read the above-mentioned books with your class. (Our show is based very closely on these books, and the students will enjoy hearing familiar dialogue and seeing the situations depicted in the books in our show.) Explain that they will see a live dramatic presentation with puppets and actors that uses dialogue to tell a story based on these books. What do students expect of the live performance after reading the books?

2. Junie B. Jones has a very unique way of speaking. She adds many parenthetical statements to the end of sentences, sometimes uses malapropisms (incorrect usage of a word), and occasionally uses poor grammar (much of this has improved in first grade, since the early kindergarten books). While students may find her use of language humorous, stress that it is not correct. While reading the books, you may ask them to identify Junie's grammatically incorrect phrases, and as a follow-up, you may use the attached worksheet: Junie-Speak 101 (appropriate for grades 2 and up).

3. Throughout the show, Junie B Jones keeps a journal, in which she writes about everything she says and does, and also her feelings, drawing, and anything else she can imagine. Do any of your students keep journals? What kinds of things do they write in them? Are their journals private?

### **Junie B's "Special" Vocabulary**

Blabbermouth	Bladermouth
Tattle telling	Tattletailing
the best	bestest
invasion of piracy	invasion of privacy
fighting like cats and hogs	fighting like cats and dogs
I shaked	I shook

The worstest	the worst
shellfish	selfish

### **Post-Performance Discussion**

1. As soon as possible after the performance, engage your students in conversation about the production. How did the play differ from the books? How were they similar? Who was their favorite character and why?
2. Junie B. doesn't want to be different from her classmates (who in fact, are all unique in their own way!) Talk about Junie B's schoolmates and the things that make them special. For example: Sheldon is allergic to smells; Herb is the Junie B's best friend at school; José can speak Spanish. And what about Lucille? List some ways that being different can be good – and ways that having things in common can be good.
3. Junie B Jones is a feisty first grader, and sometimes she makes mistakes or gets in trouble. But she always learns something. What lesson did she learn after her fight with May or after the Columbus play?

### **AFTER THE SHOW**

1. Discuss the story together in class.
2. Have some of the children tell the story of the play in sequence.
3. Discuss some of the characters in the story. Have the students write a brief character sketch of their favorite character.
4. Discuss the moral of the play and some of the details that support it.  
Why Junie B. has changed her mind?
5. Have the students sequence the story in their own words by writing character descriptions, and details that would support the moral.
6. Have students draw their favorite part of the story.

## *Activities*

(Note to teachers: some of these activities (and work sheets) are designed for older students, and some are intended for younger children – please use your judgment in deciding which are appropriate for your class.)

### 1. CREATIVE DRAMATICS: JUNIE B, STAR OF THE WHOLE ENTIRE

**CLASSROOM!** Your class probably noticed the similarity between the Junie B books and our stage production. Your class can make their own Junie B play! Select one of the books in the series, and assign different chapters to each student, or groups of students, to dramatize. (Your students may want to look at published plays, to get an idea about clear formatting.) When all the groups have finished with their section, they can read them aloud for the class. If time and resources permit, they can even create simple props and costume pieces and perform for other classes, or for their parents.

2. **MEMORY GAME: BABY’S GOT A BRAND NEW LUNCHBOX!** Direct the class to sit in a circle, and instruct the first student to fill in the blanks: “In my lunchbox, I’ve got \_\_\_\_\_.” Going around the circle, the next student mentions the first item, plus a second. The next student mentions the first two items in order, plus a new lunch food, and so forth, so that by the end the circle might say “In my lunchbox, I’ve got an apple, a sandwich, milk, cookies, a fruit bar, chips, pizza...” et cetera. For an extra challenge, you might try eliminating students when they are incorrect – the last one in the circle who can remember all the food is the winner!

### 3. JOURNAL ACTIVITIES: WRITING DOWN THE STORY OF MY LIFE

Your class can keep their own top-secret personal beeswax journals, and write (and draw) in them daily. You may wish to give them suggested topics to get them started. Older students can write about their lives, likes, and dislikes, and younger students who don’t yet have writing skills may draw.

## ***Internet Connection to Junie B.***

Visit Junie B. Jones at her home on the world wide web. This site has a letter to children from Junie B, a list of all the Junie B books, a biography of author Barbara Park, and several fun activity sheets. [www.juniebjones.com/](http://www.juniebjones.com/)

Random House has another site, especially designed for teachers, which feature study guides for using the books in the classroom: [www.randomhouse.com/teachers/](http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/) and search for Junie B.

An interview with Barbara Park:

[www.rif.org/readingplanet/bookzone/content/park.msp](http://www.rif.org/readingplanet/bookzone/content/park.msp)

## Junie-Speak 101

### Worksheet

**Junie B. Jones** has a very unique (unusual) way of speaking. Sometimes, her grammar is not exactly perfect. And sometimes Junie B. mispronounces words. Below are several phrases from the books or featured in our production. Rewrite the sentences to make them grammatically correct. (We've underlined the incorrect phrases, to give you a head start!) You can also read the Junie B. Jones books and pick out incorrect phrases of your own!

1) Me and Herb walked to Room One.

2) I quick opened my journal.

3) It was the funnest dream I ever had.

4) I do not know him that good.

5) Here is the bestest part of all!

6) This year shalt be no different!

7) My forehead had drops of sweaty.

8) It was very fun!

9) I shaked my hand with her.