



James *and the* Giant peach

Adapted for the stage
by David Wood
From the book
by Roald Dahl



Financial assistance for this theatre has been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; the Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis; and the St. Louis Regional Arts Commission.

ADAPTED BY David Wood
BASED ON THE BOOK BY Roald Dahl
DIRECTED BY Adam Flores
MUSIC DIRECTOR Jermaine Manor
SCENIC DESIGNER Scott Loebel
COSTUME DESIGNER Kristie Chiyere Osi
CHOREOGRAPHER Michael Baxter
STAGE MANAGER Britteny Henry

CAST

OLD MAN, MISS SPIDER, RHINOCEROS Giac Noelle
AUNT SPIKER, LADYBIRD, MRS. TROTTER Christina Yancy
JAMES TROTTER Daniel Mcrath
AUNT SPONGE, CENTIPEDE, MR. TROTTER Janna Linae
OLD GREEN GRASSHOPPER, VOICE OF EARTHWORM, TV REPORTER Thomas Patrick Riley
SWING/UNDERSTUDY Mo Moellering



SETTING THE STAGE

Join James and all of his giant insect friends as they take flight in the most magical, fantastical vessel you could ever imagine: **a larger-than-life peach!** All James wants is to find friends and explore the world around him, but his mean aunts just won't let him. Then, a mysterious man shows up and, with a little bit of magic, changes his life forever!

With strong themes of escaping darkness and embracing adventure with the power of friendship, this play is full of heart, humor, and imagination.

SNEAK PEEK: As you watch the play, look closely at the world that James inhabits. How did we make all the stuff happen? What materials did we use? Our director was inspired by everyday objects all around us. A simple umbrella can become a giant peach, or a large sheet on a clothesline can become an endless sky of possibilities. Magic is all around us if only we use our imagination, and let our ordinary, "mundane" world become truly *magical*.

WHO'S WHO?

James Trotter, the hero of our story, who dreams of adventure and having friends.

He lives with his terrible **Aunt Sponge** and **Aunt Spiker**, who are mean to him and make him do all of the work.

A mysterious **Old Man** visits and changes his entire life.

On his adventure, James meets an incredible group of new friends: **Miss Spider** is kind and resourceful, **Old-Green-Grasshopper** is wise and musical, **Ladybird** is full of love and excitement, **Earthworm** finds it hard to see the beauty around him, and **Centipede** has so many legs he keeps losing count!





WHIMSICAL WORDS

R B H Q U E E R P D L F R M M
 N V Y T L D Y D C I N O T I H
 Q I L F O R T N I G H T D J L
 T R T E T A L O S E D J E Z Z
 R T S L I M D B J C U H U T W
 I U A K J D R E U W B Z H Y U
 F O H C K O W I S T F U L L Y
 L S G A A A R X A T Y C O O N
 E I M H M F Y Z A D Q I S N Z
 V T W S M U S G B I O R J A L
 O Y K M E K Q B S Z H P A S T
 X O P A L H B W U G Z X R H I
 O Q K R I K B V R B L K L A S
 W X Y V D T R P D G S C Q M S
 P F K A D M I R A T I O N D D

ACTIVITY: Search for the vocab words below

VOCABULARY

TONIC (*NOUN*) - a medicine

TYCOON (*NOUN*) - a businessperson with a lot of money and power

QUEER (*ADJECTIVE*) - odd, strange, or weird; different from normal

RAMSHACKLE (*ADJECTIVE*) - ready to collapse

WISTFULLY (*ADVERB*) - full of a kind of sad desire

FORTNIGHT (*NOUN*) - two weeks or 14 days

VIRTUOSITY (*NOUN*) - great skill, usually in music or arts

GHASTLY (*ADJECTIVE*) - terrible, frightening, horrifying

DESOLATE (*ADJECTIVE*) - without life, deserted, no warmth or comfort or hope

DILEMMA (*NOUN*) - a situation involving a difficult choice, a problem

TRIFLE (*NOUN*) - a little bit, slightly

ABSURD (*ADJECTIVE*) - unreasonable, silly, or ridiculous

ADMIRATION (*NOUN*) - a feeling of respect and approval



WHAT'S THE STORY?

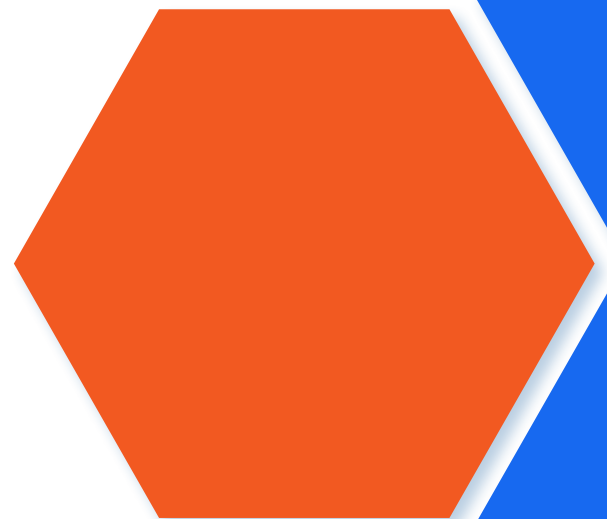
After his parents are tragically eaten by a rhinoceros, little James Trotter is sent to live with his terrible aunts, Sponge and Spiker. For years they are very nasty towards their nephew, making him do all of the chores: cooking and cleaning and all of the things that they don't want to do themselves. Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker are completely in love with themselves and very rude and mean to everyone else! They won't let James climb trees or go on picnics or read books, and they say terrible things to him. James wishes for the chance to explore and have fun and even go to the beach, but he isn't allowed.

One night an old man appears, with crocodile tongues full of magic and power. He gives them to James, telling him that they will make him very happy! Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker scare James, and he loses his new gift. Then, suddenly, they notice a peach starting to grow on a nearby tree - a tree that has never had a peach grow on it before! It grows bigger and bigger until it is so large that it reaches the ground, larger than Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker and James combined! Instead of eating it, Sponge and Spiker decide to use the peach to get famous.

Soon, people are coming from all over to buy tickets to see the peach, and Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker are making a lot of money. While James is cleaning up the trash from all of the visitors, the peach begins to glow. James decides to climb inside, where he sees a whole group of giant insects! They've all been waiting for him to arrive. There's Miss Spider, Old-Green-Grasshopper, Ladybird, Earthworm, and Centipede. And now that James has joined them, they are ready to set off on an adventure, one where James can escape his terrible aunts. As the peach rolls away down the hill, it squashes Sponge and Spiker.

The peach rolls all the way down the hill and flies off a cliff, landing in the sea! They float along, enjoying the relaxing ride, until a bunch of sharks find them. The sharks start to eat the peach, putting everyone in danger, but James has an idea to save them: they'll tie the peach to a bunch of seagulls and fly to safety! Using Miss Spider's strong thread, they get ready, everyone working together. Earthworm is used as bait for the birds, and they're able to catch and harness hundreds of birds. The peach is carried away to safety.

Everyone on the peach is still hungry, so James suggests they all eat the peach. Suddenly, Centipede falls overboard into the ocean below. James jumps in after him, battling fish and a giant octopus, before they are pulled back up to the peach with the others. They continue on their journey until they see land. They've made it to New York City! They cut some of the seagulls free, allowing them to fall slowly towards the city below, where they land on top of the Empire State Building. They are invited to stay in Central Park together, where they can remain happy friends forever.



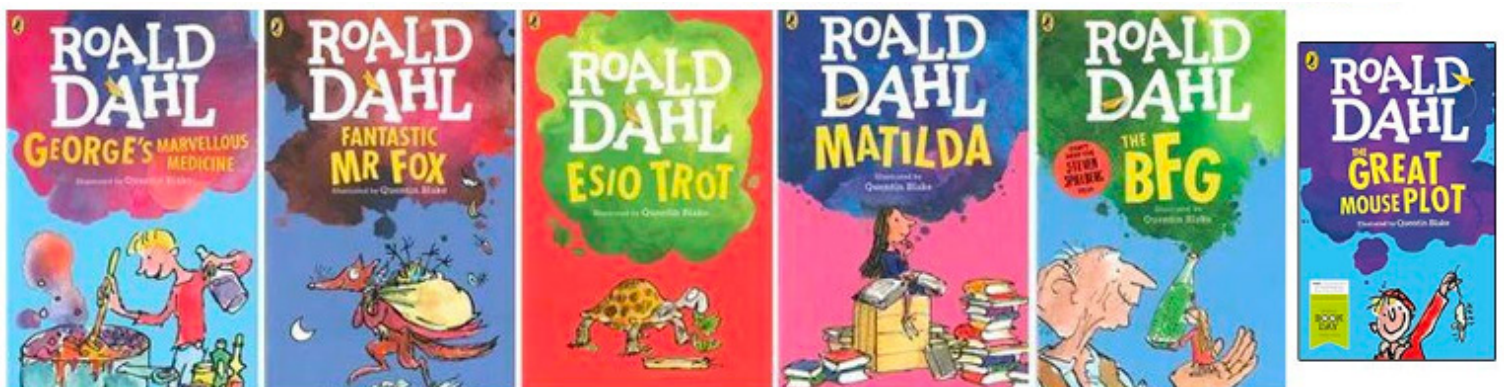
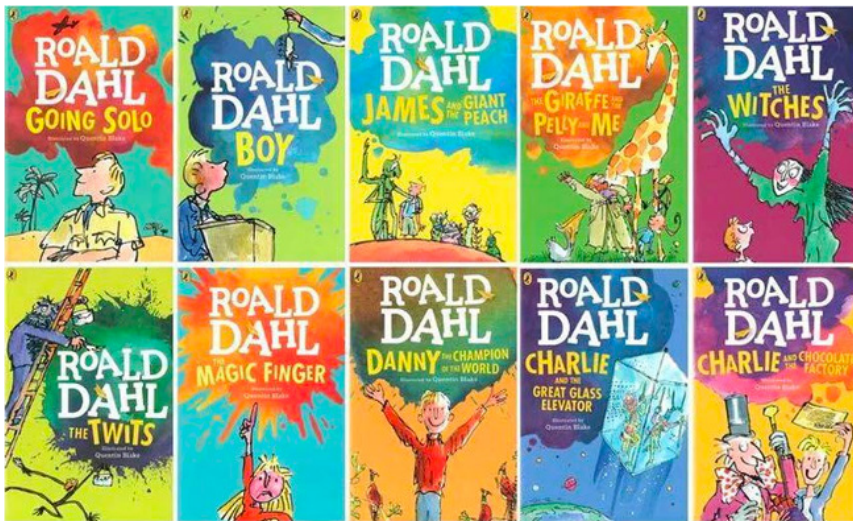


MEET THE AUTHOR

THE WHIMSICAL ROALD DAHL

Roald Dahl was a Welsh novelist who was born in 1916. He was an adventurer and a member of the Royal Air Force during World War II. He would write about his Air Force adventures and publish them, gaining him a lot of attention.

After the war, Dahl began to write books. He was really well known for his macabre stories - this is a word that means "horrible and frightening" because these stories usually dealt with death and injuries. When he started writing children's stories, he kept these same dark and strange elements, but just made them appropriate and whimsical for younger audiences. Many of his works feature scary adult villains and lonely, smart children who have unimaginable adventures. If you like *James and the Giant Peach*, check out these other works by Roald Dahl:



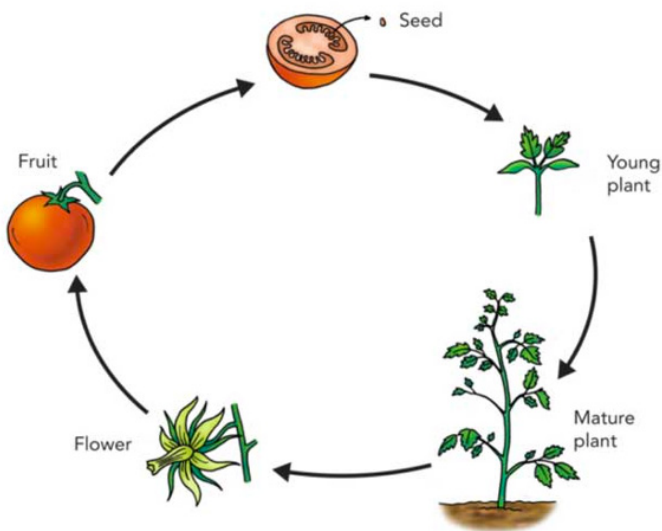


THAT'S A GIANT PEACH!

HOW PLANTS GROW BIG AND STRONG

The peach in James and the Giant Peach grows larger-than-life thanks to a little bit of magical help. You, too, can grow your own large, delicious fruit! It probably won't be big enough to climb inside and go on a wild adventure, but there are many good ways to give plants the important things they need to grow big and strong and survive.

All plants start their life as seeds. With a lot of sunlight, water, oxygen, and the right kind of dirt, plants can grow to be very large or tall. They might grow under the ground, like potatoes, or in tall trees, like apples. They might grow with flowers or leaves. But, an important thing to remember about plants is that they are part of a cycle. That means that they come from other plants!



Take a peach for instance: it starts its life as a seed and then grows from a young plant all the way to a peach that is juicy and ripe and perfect for eating. But inside that fruit is a bunch of other seeds, which can be planted in the ground to grow new peaches! Not only do plants need help from the outside (like the sunlight, water, oxygen, and dirt), but they also need a little help from plants just like themselves to get started.

THEMATIC CONNECTION: James needed his friends' help to survive his terrible aunts, but he also needed to be brave himself to find happiness. In order to be happy and grow big and strong, we need to find it in everything around us, but also in ourselves!

Think about what you need to grow big and strong. ***Make a list in the box below:***



SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

ADAPTING TO THE WORLD AROUND YOU

The journey in James and the Giant Peach is a wild one! James and his friends go rolling all the way down large hills, bouncing off cliffs, floating miles across the sea, flying through the sky-that's a scary adventure full of danger. Sometimes James and his friends find themselves struggling to survive. They use their intelligence and imagination to get themselves out of tricky situations, adapting to the world around them to make it to their final destination in New York City!

Even in a world without a giant magical peach, animals and insects have to adapt to survive. To adapt means to change something, either something about yourself or the way you do something, in order to make it easier and often less dangerous.

Take a human! When we first start to swim and we're not the best at it, we might wear floaties on our arms or a ring around our waist to help keep us above the water. This is how we adapt to an environment that is new and a little scary. Then, we learn to use our legs and arms to move through the water, or to hold our breath longer so that we can stay under the water longer - that's adaptation, too! We've changed the way we do something in order to make it easier to survive - and once it's easier, it's a lot more fun!

James is surrounded by a lot of friends who have adapted in order to survive. *Let's look at the different kind of insects that we meet in our story, and learn a few ways they've adapted to survive:*



Grasshoppers have long, strong hind legs that help them jump, which helps them get away from dangerous predators and jump over tall grass so they can travel further and faster. They also have really good hearing, so they can hear danger coming.



Centipedes actually have poisonous claws that allow them to trap their food. Their many legs help them move farther and faster. Also, they are nocturnal insects, which means they are awake during the night and sleep during the day - this helps them find food and hide from danger.



Spiders have eight legs that allow them to move really fast. They also have hairs on their body that allow them to sense danger coming. They can make silk webs that allow them to live off the ground and away from animals that might want to hurt them.



Ladybugs have short legs, which help keep them low to the ground and smaller. They are often bright and colorful with spots, which actually keeps predators away. They produce a fluid that tastes very bad, so they are less likely to be eaten.

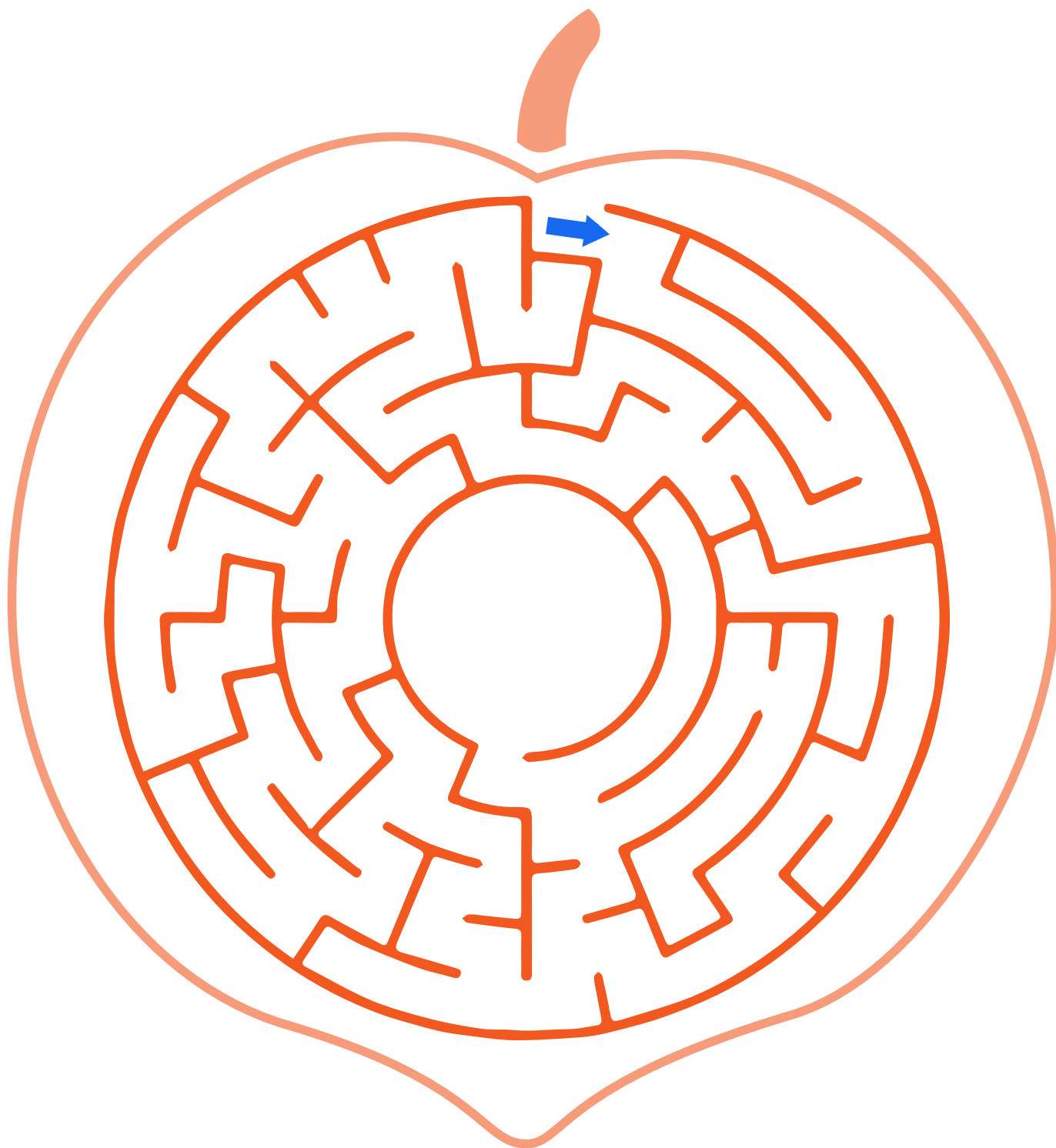


Earthworms live underground, which makes it much easier to survive (especially since birds like them so much). Their long, narrow body allows them to move through dirt easily. They have no bones, so they can curve and turn without any problems at all.



JUST FOR FUN!

Help James find his way to the center of the peach!





PLENTY OF PEACH!

James certainly doesn't have a great home while living with his aunts, who are mean and unloving. When he discovers new friends inside the peach, they build a new home together!

**Using your imagination, design your dream home inside the peach below.
What are all of the things you would want and need to be happy in your new space?**

