

SHOW STUDY GUIDE



**Based on the book by Richard & Florence Atwater
Adapted for the stage by Pins & Needles Productions
Music by Luke Bateman, Lyrics by Richy Hughes
Produced by Casa Mañana Theatre by arrangement with
Kenny Wax Family Entertainment & TC Beech**

Theatre Terminology

Actor: The people who use their imaginations to bring a character to life on stage.

Blackout: Before the beginning of a show, the lights on stage and in the audience all go out. Don't worry, they will come back on very quickly!

Box Office: Tickets are sold at the box office.

Character: A person, animal or figure in a story.

Choreographer: The person who creates and teaches the dance moves to the actors.

Costumes: The clothing the actors wear on stage.

Designer: The people who create the look and sound of the show.

Director: The person with the vision for the show. He oversees the entire production.

Music Director: The person who teaches the music to the actors and helps them sound great!

Prop: Something an actor carries or uses on stage.

Set: The structures that create the physical environment of the production.

Stage Crew: The people who help backstage. The stage crew might move sets or help with costumes.

Stage Manager: This is the supervisor of the actors, designers, and stage crew. She helps everyone stay organized and informed of the many parts of the creative process!

The ABCs of Being a Great Audience Member



Applaud!

When the show finishes and the actors come on stage to take their bows, make sure to applaud for their hard work. If you like something during the show, it's OK to give a short round of applause, too.

Be respectful!

Everyone's attention should be on the actors on stage. To help with this, make sure not to talk to the people around you, kick the seat in front of you, or stand up during the show.

Cooperate with the actors.

Sometimes, the actors need YOUR help to tell the story. If they ask the audience a question, go ahead and answer! Also, feel free to laugh if something is funny—the actors LOVE honest laughter.



ABOUT THE SHOW

Painter and decorator by day, Mr. Popper spends his time dreaming of Antarctic adventures. He is astounded when one day a packing crate arrives on his doorstep and a penguin waddles out! With original songs and performing penguin puppets, this delightful, action packed musical is based on Florence Atwater's popular book (also made into a Hollywood film starring Jim Carrey) is the perfect family treat for ages 4- 104!

PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS



Ask students to make predictions about the show they're going to see based upon their knowledge of other versions of *Mr. Popper's Penguins* they may have read or seen on film.

What characters do you think you might meet? How do you think they might help the story?

How do you imagine the scenery, costumes and props?

Do you think that there will be music? If so, how will it sound?

There are some animal characters in the play. Have students brainstorm ways they think the animals will be portrayed by the actors. Remind them to consider techniques such as movement, voice, costume and makeup.

Do you think the plot will be exactly the same as the book? Or, do you expect that the show will have some surprises? What surprises do you think you will see?

There are several penguins as characters in this show. It would be a very difficult to REALLY have penguins on stage. How do you think the directors and designers will make this happen on stage?

When going to the theatre, what are you most excited about? Is there anything you are curious about? Do you have any questions for the actors, directors, or designers?

Curriculum Connections:

Science—Adaptations,
environment

Objectives:

The students will explore the connection of animals' physical appearances and their environment. The students will use their knowledge to create a new animal, justifying its physical characteristics by the environment in which it lives.

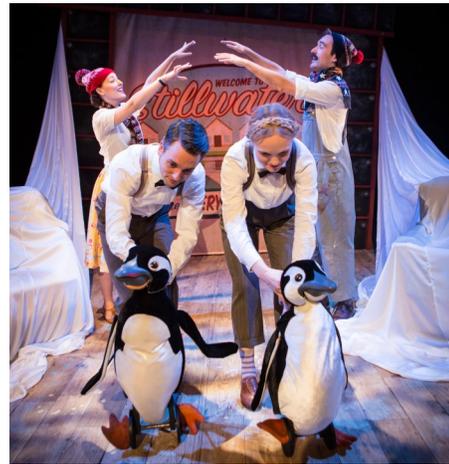
Materials:

3-column chart and writing
utensil

Paper and coloring utensil

References:

[http://sciencenetlinks.com/
lessons/animal-adaptations/](http://sciencenetlinks.com/lessons/animal-adaptations/)



Project 1: Adapted to the Environment

When Captain Cook came to stay with the Poppers, they quickly realized that penguins weren't adapted to the London environment. But what does this even mean? Learn about animal adaptations through this activity!

Begin with a review or introduction of terms that students will use in this lesson (continent, climate, habitat, predator, prey). Ask students to explain what is meant by each of these terms. If these terms are new to your students, you could write each word on the board and take time to define and explain each of them, with examples.

Following are basic definitions for these terms:

- Continent - a large landmass on Earth
- Climate - the normal weather conditions in a particular area
- Habitat - the normal environment in which an organism lives
- Predator - an organism that lives by eating other organisms
- Prey - an organism that is eaten, or preyed upon

Begin the lesson by drawing a three-column chart on the board; each vertical column will represent an animal, and each row will contain a question (listed below). Start by announcing the discovery of a fascinating new animal—then choose a student (who should remain silent during the following class discussion) to represent this new animal. Ask the class to help you learn more about the new animal by answering a few basic questions about its habitat.

- What shall we name this new animal? (For example, a boy named Dylan who likes to skateboard could be called "Dylan Skateboardicus.")
- What is the weather like in this animal's habitat?
- How does this animal find shelter?
- How does this animal find food?
- Does this animal have any predators?
- What behaviors show this animal has "adapted" to its environment?

Now ask students to name a different animal (a real animal). Ask them the same questions and fill in the chart. Repeat again with a final animal.



Project 2: Use a Map to Plan Your Exploration!

Teachers, feel free to use a map of the city, state, country, or world, depending on your grade level.

Mr. Popper longs to explore Antarctica. I bet there are places you would like to explore, too! Let's pick some places to explore, plan our route, and research our means of transportation.

1. On your map, draw a circle where you live (or where you will start your journey) put a star on 3—5 places you would like to visit. (Teachers, you may want younger children to do all of these steps in different colored pencils.)
2. Put a number from 1-3 (or 4 or 5) next to the stars. This is the order in which you will visit these locations.
3. Plan your route by drawing an arrow from home to location 1 to location 2 and so on, until you draw a final arrow from your last location back home.
4. Look at each arrow and determine the best means of transportation to get from one point to the next. Are you travelling across the ocean? Maybe you want to take a plane or a ship. Are your two locations close to one another? Maybe you can just drive a car or take a train (trains are very popular means of transportation in many countries!) Write a mode of transportation next to each arrow.
5. Share your journey with a friend, and make sure to listen to their journey! Tell them why you want to visit each place and why you decided to use a certain means of transportation.

Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies—maps, landforms, transportation

Objectives:

Students will create and analyze maps. Students will plan a route and determine best modes of transportation.

Materials:

Blank Maps

Colored pencils

Curriculum Connections:

Science—biomes, researching the environment

Art—landscapes, color

Objectives:

The students will explore various biomes, concentrating on what the environment looks like.

The students will determine what colors a painter might use to paint a landscape of their chosen biome.

Materials:

- Painter's swatch (in materials)
- Coloring instruments
- Research materials such as web access or library books
- - Blank cardstock or white construction paper (if extending project to creating a landscape.)



Project 3: Colors and Biomes

Mr. Popper is a painter who is fascinated by many places in the world. When he paints, each color he uses reminds him of a different biome such as the green forest or the blue of the ocean.

In this activity, you will have a chance to discover what colors you would use if you had to paint a landscape of a certain biome.

1. Use web sources, books, or other classroom materials to introduce students to the various biomes. Or, you can use this activity in a more directed manner if you are studying a particular biome.
2. Focus research upon the physical appearance of the environment, such as landmasses, plants, or weather conditions.
3. Using the sheet in the materials section at the end of this guide, students can pretend they are painters and use the blank “swatches” to fill in what colors they would use if they were creating a landscape of their biome.
4. To extend the learning, have students justify their color choices by writing a few sentences below the swatches.
5. To extend even further, have students draw a landscape using their color scheme!



**Curriculum
Connections:**

ELA-writing

Objectives:

To discover the similarities and differences between versions of *Mr. Popper's Penguins*.

Materials:

Venn diagram

Pencils

Project 4: Similarities and Differences

Mr. Popper's Penguins started as a children's book and was later turned into a movie of the same name. Now it is a live-action musical! What are some similarities and differences in this and other versions?

Watch the movie and/or read the book as a class prior to your visit. Following your visit to the theatre, discuss aloud as a group, write one page, or complete a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting the book, movie and the musical.

Points to consider include:

- What characters are featured in each version?
- Which characters appear in only one version?
- What locations or settings did they take place in?
- Did certain scenes or plot points only appear in one version and not the other?
- How did the penguins adapt to their new environment?
- How did the Poppers feel about having the penguins?
- What happens in the end of the story?
- What locations appeared in the stories?

Curriculum Connections:

Math— Addition and multiplication. Word problems.

Objectives:

To use computer based learning games to solve math problems.

Materials:

Access to computers

Project 5: Penguin Math

Students can help solve these penguin math problems below before they play penguin math computer games.

Mr. and Mrs. Popper started off with just one penguin. He got lonely, so they added one more. That meant they had...TWO penguins!

Pretty soon, the penguins began multiplying at an alarming rate...they had babies! If the two penguins multiplied by five, how many baby penguins would their be? If the two penguins multiplied by seven, how many baby penguins would their be?

1. Use any one of these fantastic web-based learning games to do a little more penguin math:

<http://www.multiplication.com/games/play/penguin-jump>

http://www.mathplayground.com/pop_penguin_and_the_place_value_race/game.html

http://www.mathplayground.com/ASB_PenguinJumpMultiplication.html

Project 6:

Creative Problem Solving

Mr. and Mrs. Popper had their fair share of problems come up when they began raising their penguins! Although they found their situation quite challenging, they did not give up. Instead, they created a plan of action to solve their problems.

1. List 3-5 problems that the Poppers came across when raising their penguins.
2. Write a couple of sentences stating their plan to address the problem.
3. Do you think that this solution worked? Why or why not? Make sure to back up your answer with evidence from the story!

To extend this activity, let students think about their own lives and problems they may encounter. They can come up with a plan to help them solve their own problems.

1. List 1 problem that you are having, either in school, home, in a hobby, or anything else.
2. Write a couple of sentences stating your plan to address the problem.
3. How will you know if your solution works? What would it look like if your problem is solved? What would tell you that you need to try another solution?
4. Share your plan with a partner!

Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies—Being a good citizen, problem solving skills

Objectives:

To self-reflect on challenges and determine how to improve!

Materials:

Journal

Writing utensil

Curriculum Connections:

Science—Arctic animals, biomes, animal classification

Objectives:

Students will research about Arctic animals and use their knowledge to quiz each other on the different animals.

Materials:

- Access to internet or books about the Arctic.
- Paper and pencils.

Project 7: What Am I?

1. Children use the internet or classroom books to research what animals live in the Arctic.
2. Each child chooses an animal and creates a series of defining characteristics such as, “My fur looks white,” “I am a carnivore,” and “I am a mammal.”
3. Students then walk around the room and quiz each other by reading their sentences to a partner. Each person has a chance to read their characteristics and to guess what type of Arctic animal it was!
4. If you would like, keep score of correct responses on the board by having students score their partners. The person with the most correct answers can have 5 minutes to share all they know about Arctic animals in front of the class.

Curriculum Connections:

Science—Animal classification, animal characteristics

Social Studies—Following the rules

Music—Parodies

ELA—creative writing

Objectives:

The students will create rules to teach animals how to behave in a certain place.

Materials:

Writing or coloring instruments and paper may be needed



Project 8: Animals in unfamiliar places

Mr. and Mrs. Popper learned pretty quickly that penguins have no idea how to live in an everyday house in Stillwater! They needed to teach Captain Cook how to behave at home. In this activity, kids get the chance to do the same thing!

1. Each student chooses an animal and a location that the animal would not typically encounter, such as an elephant at school, a giraffe at the grocery store, or a monkey in the library.
2. Students think of the many ways that animal could get into trouble in the new location and try to teach them the right way to behave. Depending on the skill level and learning style of the child, they can decide among:
 - Writing a short narrative
 - Drawing a picture
 - Writing a list of “Dos and Don’ts”
 - Writing a dramatic scene in dialogue Format
 - Using a popular song to write a parody
3. Students share their creations in pairs, groups, or in front of the class.

Curriculum Connections:

ELA—Plot, Character

Theatre—Movement, tableau

Objectives:

To work as a group to recreate plot points of *Mr. Popper's Penguins*.

Materials:

None

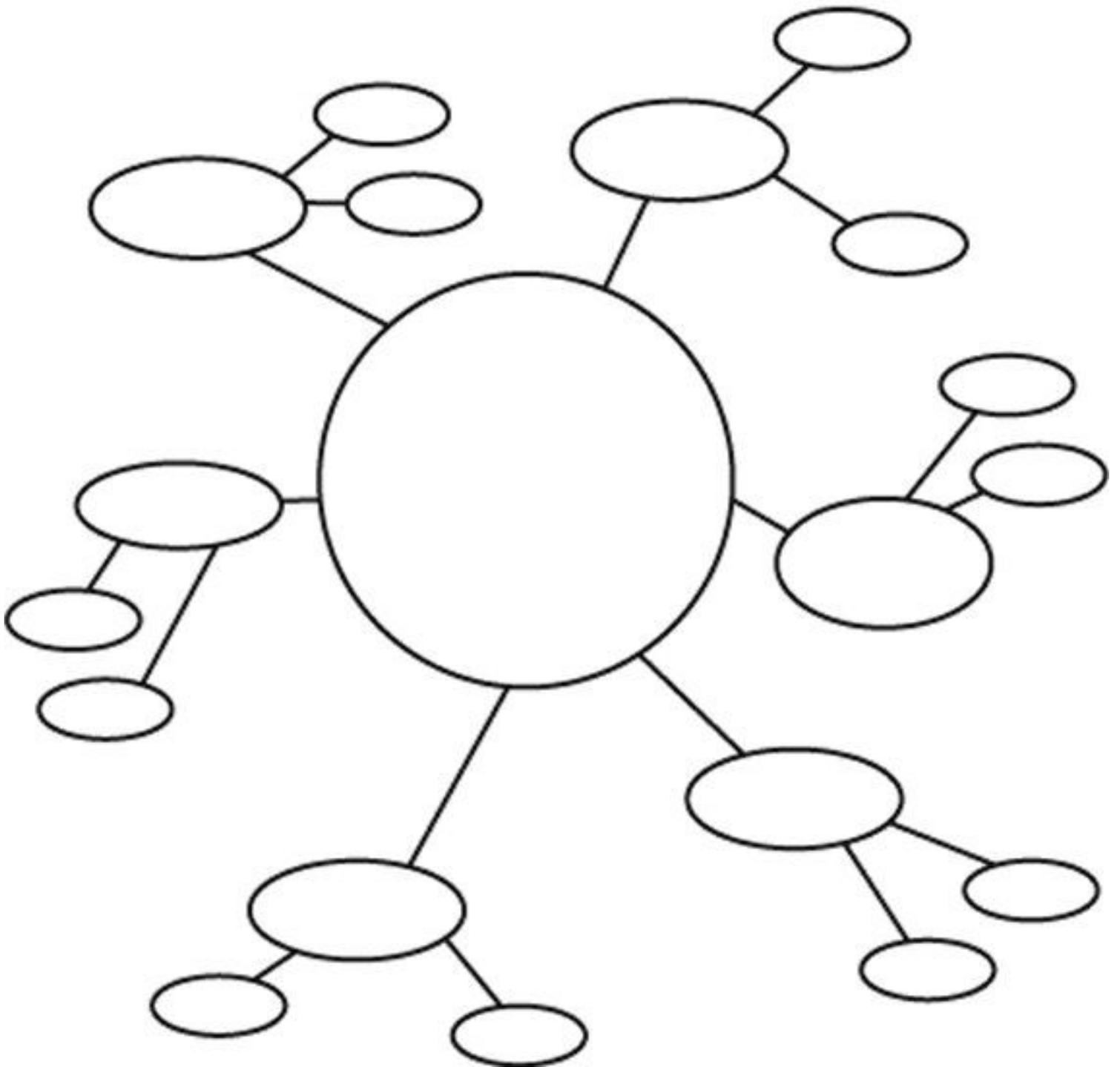
Project 10: Act It Out

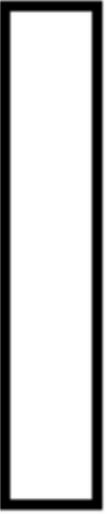
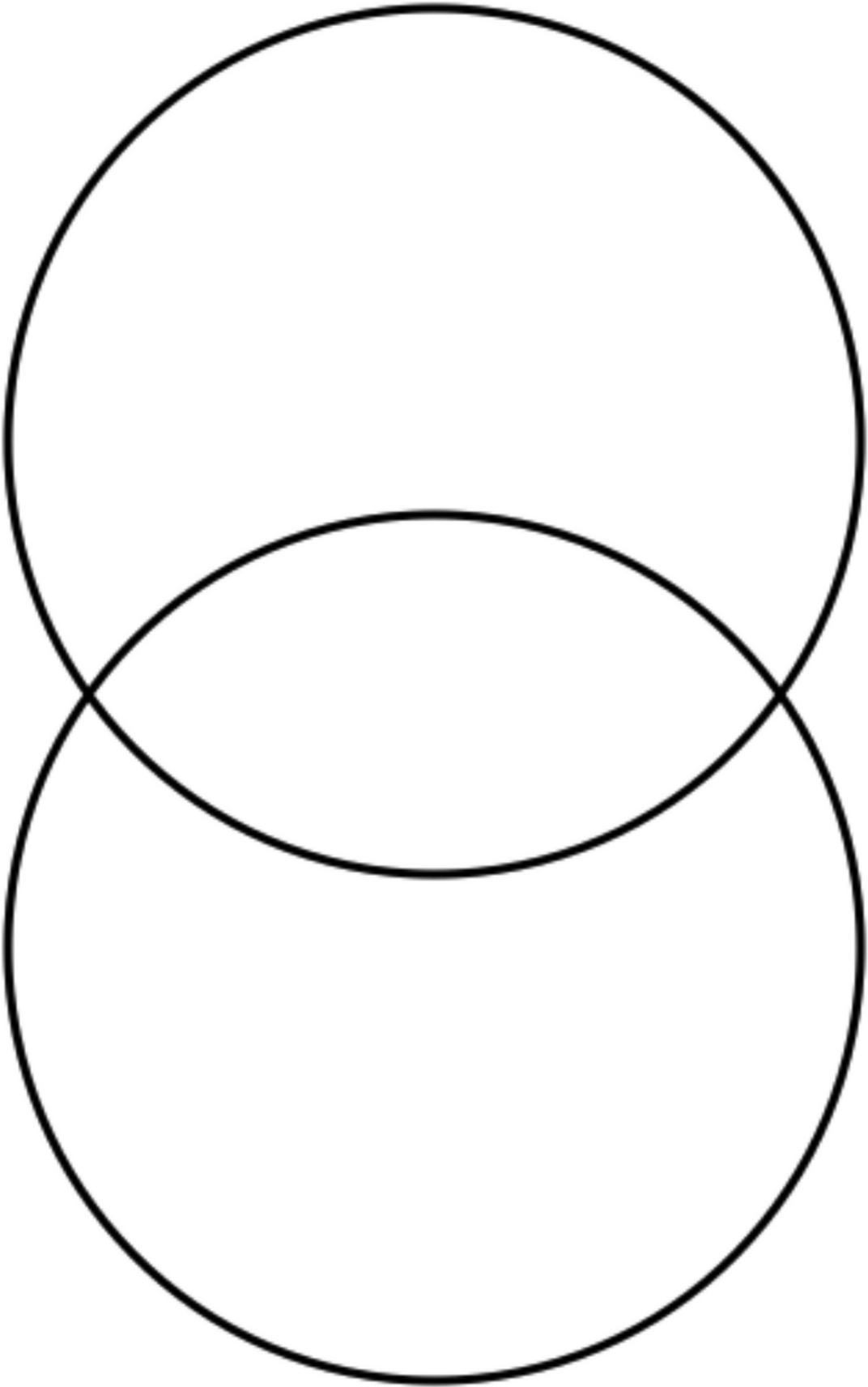
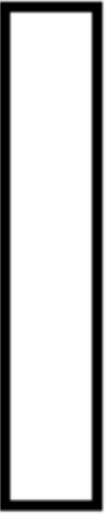
A *tableau* is when actors stand in frozen, silent “pictures,” showing different parts of a story, like the kids in the photo.

In a group of three to five, think of an event in the plot of *Mr. Popper's Penguins*. Each of you decide which character you will be, and create a tableau of that event. See if your classmates can guess which event you are trying to show! Remember – a tableau does not move or make sounds!



Mind Map





Character's Name is:

I am:

I am:

I don't like:

I like:

NAME:

