

Cue Sheet

Guides for
Teachers

The Pout-Pout Fish

Tuesday, March 10, 2026
10:15am & 12:15pm

Questions to ask students BEFORE the performance

- What are emotions? Name some of the types of emotions you've felt or are feeling today.
- How do you express an emotion without using words?
- Have you ever felt unhappy or sad? What helped you feel better?

Questions to ask students AFTER the performance

- How did the Pout-Pout Fish change from the beginning of the show to the end?
- How did other characters try to help Pout-Pout Fish feel better? Did this help? What would you have done differently?



About the Performance

A live theatrical adaptation of Deborah Diesen's beloved picture book, *The Pout-Pout Fish* brings the underwater world of the Pout-Pout Fish to the stage through storytelling, music, and puppetry. The musical follows Mr. Fish, the story's protagonist and explores themes of friendship and confidence. Unable to be cheered up by anyone, Mr. Fish meets Miss Clam and learns the legend of a magical pearl said to reflect one's happiest self. Thrust into an unexpected journey when a strong current sweeps him and the pearl away, he faces (at-first) frightening creatures and difficult choices before finding what he's been looking for all along.

Four storytellers perform multiple roles in the production, each represented by a different puppet. The colorful puppets representing the show's stars and aquatic life are manipulated onstage by the actors, who remain visible to the audience during most of the show.



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Vocabulary

adventure (*ad-ven-chur*) – an exciting trip or experience where something new happens

clam (*klam*) – a shellfish that lives in the ocean and has two hard shells that open and close

courage (*kur-ij*) – being brave even when you feel scared

current (*kur-uhnt*) – water that moves in one direction in a river or ocean

dreary (*dreer-ee*) – dark, dull, and a little sad feeling

fish (*fish*) – a type of animal that lives in water, has fins for swimming, and breathes underwater with gills

gloomy (*gloo-mee*) – dark or sad-looking

legend (*lej-uhnd*) – an old story that may or may not be true

ocean (*oh-shuhn*) – a very big body of salty water that covers much of the Earth

pearl (*purll*) – a small, shiny, round treasure that can be found inside a clam

protagonist (*proh-tag-uh-nist*) – the main character in a story

pout (*powt*) – to push your lips out to show you are upset or unhappy

reef (*reef*) – a group of rocks or coral under the ocean where sea animals live

reflection (*ri-flek-shuhn*) – an image you see in water or a mirror

shimmer (*shim-er*) – to shine softly or sparkle

weary (*weer-ee*) – very tired

Beyond the Show

Gloomy to Glowing

Ask students to start by making a “pout-pout” face and slouching their shoulders like they are spreading “dreary wearies.” Then, slowly transform into a confident and brave fish by standing tall, lifting their head, and smiling. Afterwards, discuss how our body language can reveal our feelings.

Silver Lining Circle

Have students sit or stand in a circle. One student shares a short “gloomy” situation, such as missing the bus to school. The next student must respond with something positive or hopeful about it, such as the opportunity to catch a ride with a friend or family member and learn about their day. Continue around the circle. Afterwards, discuss how Shimmer helps Mr. Fish by offering new ways to look at things and how friends can help us see things differently, changing our perspective.

Changing Characters

In the performance, each actor performs multiple roles in the story. How do they make each character different and believable? Ask students to think of a character that is different from who they normally are and change their body language, tone of voice, emotions, and appearance to act like them.

Click here!

For additional educational resources including a study guide and activity ideas, visit the TheaterWorks USA website.

Facts about Popejoy Hall

- Popejoy Hall officially opened on October 1, 1966.
- The hall can seat up to 1985 people.
- Most walls inside the hall are not parallel or perpendicular to the stage. Curves, angles, and soft or textured surfaces scatter the sound throughout the hall so that audiences can hear performances better.
- Popejoy Hall has an orchestra pit which raises and lowers. It is the largest elevator in the building.
- The ceiling over the stage is three times the height of the curtain opening. Sets can be lowered into place by pulleys and raised high enough to be stored completely out of sight when not in use.

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