As part of DCT’s mission to integrate the arts into classroom academics, the *Behind the Curtain Resource Guide* is intended to provide helpful information for the teacher and students to use before and after attending a performance. The activities presented in this guide are suggested to stimulate lively responses and multi-sensory explorations of concepts in order to use the theatrical event as a vehicle for cross-cultural and language arts learning.

Please use our suggestions as springboards to lead your students into meaningful, dynamic learning; extending the dramatic experience of the play.

Script by Mark J. Frattaroli
Based on the book *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt
DALLAS CHILDREN’S THEATER, one of the top five family theaters in the nation, serves over 250,000 young people and their families from 197 zip codes, 101 cities and 89 counties and 27 states each year through its mainstage productions, touring, educational programming and outreach activities. Since its opening in 1984, this award-winning theater has existed to create challenging, inspiring and entertaining theater, which communicates vital messages to our youth and promotes an early appreciation for literature and the performing arts. As the only major organization in Dallas focusing on theater for youth and families, DCT produces literary classics, original scripts, folk tales, myths, fantasies and contemporary dramas that foster multicultural understanding, confront topical issues and celebrate the human spirit.

DCT is committed to the integration of creative arts into the teaching strategies of academic core curriculum and educating through the arts. Techniques utilized by DCT artists/teachers are based upon the approach developed in the Integration of Abilities and Making Sense with Five Senses by Paul Baker, Ph.D.

DCT Founder and Executive Artistic Director Robyn Flatt defines the artistic mission and oversees the operations of the organization, consisting of 38 full time staff members and nearly 200 actors, designers, theater artists and educators.

TEKS that your field trip to Dallas Children’s Theater satisfies are listed at the back of this Resource Guide.
CURTAINS UP ON PUTTING A PERFORMANCE TOGETHER

Every DCT performance you see is the result of many people working together to create a play. You see the cast perform on stage, but there are people behind the scenes that you do not see who help before, during, and after every production.

The DIRECTOR
Determines the overall look of the performance.
Guides the actors in stage movement and character interpretation.
Works with designers to plan the lights and sounds, scenery, costumes and make-up, and stage actions.

The DESIGNERS
Plan the lights, sounds, scenery, costumes, make-up, and actions to help bring the director’s vision to life.
There are also designers who work to create the posters, advertisements, programs, and other media for the performance.

The STAGE MANAGER
Before the performance, they create a cue sheet to guide the crew in getting set pieces on and off the stage during the performances.
During the performance, the stage manager uses this cue sheet to direct people and things as they move on and off the stage.

The CREW
Build and operate the scenery, costumes, props, and light and sound during the performance.

The CAST
Includes all of the performers who present the story on stage.

The AUDIENCE
That’s right! There can be no performance without you—the audience. The role of the audience is unique because you experience the entertainment with the performers and backstage crew.
You are a collaborator in the performance and it is important to learn your role so you can join all the people who work to create this Dallas Children’s Theater production.
CURTAINS UP ON THE ROLE OF THE AUDIENCE

Watching a play is different from watching television or a sporting event. When you watch T.V., you may leave the room or talk at any time. At a sporting event you might cheer and shout and discuss what you’re seeing. Your role as a member of the audience in a play means you must watch and listen carefully because:

- You need to concentrate on what the actors are saying.
- The actors are affected by your behavior because they share the room with you. Talking and moving around can make it difficult for them to concentrate on their roles.
- Extra noises and movement can distract other audience members.

Are you ready for your role in this performance?
Check the box next to the statements that describe proper etiquette for an audience member.

- [ ] Try your best to remain in your seat once the performance has begun.
- [ ] Share your thoughts out loud with those sitting near you.
- [ ] Wave and shout out to the actors on stage.
- [ ] Sit on your knees or stand near your seat.
- [ ] Bring snacks and chewing gum to enjoy during the show.
- [ ] Reward the cast and crew with applause when you like a song or dance, and at the end of the show.
- [ ] Arrive on time so that you do not miss anything or disturb other audience members when you are being seated.
- [ ] Keep all hands, feet, and other items out of the aisles during the performance.
1. Draw a picture of what the audience might look like from the stage. Consider your work from the viewpoint of the actors on stage. How might things look from where they stand?

2. Write a letter to an actor telling what you liked about his or her character.

3. Write how you think it might feel to be one of the actors. Are the actors aware of the audience? How might they feel about the reactions of the audience today? How would you feel before the play began? What about after the show ends?

4. Which job would you like to try? Acting, Directing, Lighting and Sounds, Stage Manager, Set designer, Costume designer, or another role? What skills might you need to complete your job?
CURTAIN'S UP ON THEATER VOCABULARY

ACTOR any theatrical performer whose job it is to portray a character

CAST group of actors in a play

CENTER STAGE the middle of the stage

CHARACTER any person portrayed by an actor onstage. Characters may often be people, animals, and sometimes things.

CHOREOGRAPHER the designer and teacher of the dances in a production

COSTUME DESIGNER the person who creates what the actors wear in the performance

DIRECTOR the person in charge of the actors' movements on stage

DOWNSTAGE the area at the front of the stage; closest to the audience

HOUSE where the audience sits in the theater

LIGHTING DESIGNER the person who creates the lighting for a play to simulate the time of day and the location

ONSTAGE the part of the stage the audience can see

OFFSTAGE the part of the stage the audience cannot see

PLAYWRIGHT the person who writes the script to be performed. Playwrights may write an original story or adapt a story by another author for performance.

PLOT the story line

PROSCENIUM the opening framing the stage

PROJECT to speak loudly

PROP an object used by an actor in a scene

SET the background or scenery for a play

SETTING the time and place of the story

SOUND DESIGNER the person who provides special effects like thunder, a ringing phone, or crickets chirping

STAGE CREW the people who change the scenery during a performance

STAGE MANAGER the person who helps the director during the rehearsal and coordinates all crew during the performance

UPSTAGE the area at the back of the stage; farthest from the audience
CURTAINS UP AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

Attending a play is an experience unlike any other entertainment experience. Because a play is presented live, it provides a unique opportunity to experience a story as it happens. Dallas Children’s Theater brings stories to life though its performances. Many people are involved in the process. Playwrights adapt the stories you read in order to bring them off the page and onto the stage. Designers and technicians create lighting effects so that you can feel the mood of a scene. Carpenters build the scenery and make the setting of the story become a real place, while costumers and make-up designers can turn actors into the characters you meet in the stories. Directors help actors bring the story to life and make it happen before your very eyes. All of these things make seeing a play very different from television, videos, computer games, or CDs of stories.

Hold a class discussion when you return from the performance. Ask students the following questions and allow them to write or draw pictures of their experience at DCT.

• What was the first thing you noticed when you entered the theater?
• What did you notice first on the stage?
• What about the set? Draw or tell about things you remember. Did the set change during the play? How was it moved or changed?
• Was there any space besides the stage where action took place?
• How did the lights set the mood of the play? How did they change throughout? What do you think the house lights are? How do they differ from the stage lights? Did you notice different areas of lighting?
• What did you think about the costumes? Do you think they fit the story? What things do you think the costume designers had to consider before creating the costumes?
• Was there music in the play? How did it add to the performance?
• What about the actors? Do you think they were able to bring the characters to life? Did you feel caught up in the story? What things do you think the actors had to work on in order to make you believe they were the characters?
CURTAINS UP ON ADAPTATION

An adaptation is a change made in something so that it can fit a new use. This performance of TUCK EVERLASTING is an adaptation of a book, which is meant to be read, into a play, which is meant to be performed and viewed. Mark J. Frattaroli took the story written by Natalie Babbitt and adapted it so that it could be performed for an audience on stage.

Consider these questions for discussion before you attend the DCT production:

- What kinds of things did Mark J. Frattaroli have to consider in writing a script of the story?
- What kinds of things would Natalie Babbitt have been concerned about in giving permission for an adaptation of her story? Encourage students to research the interesting connection between author Natalie Babbitt and Mark J. Frattaroli.
- Do you think the performance will be shorter or longer than the book?
- What will the characters look like? Will they match their descriptions? What differences can you expect?
- What about the story? What changes might you expect in adapting it for the stage? Why would these changes be necessary?

After the performance, consider these questions:

- Were there any characters or events that were in the book but not in the play? Why do you think these choices were made?
- Did the changes make the story stronger or was it weaker because of them?
- What do you think the set and costume designers need to consider when bringing the book to the stage?
- What things helped to tell the story on stage?

Use the compare and contrast template on the next page to illustrate the similarities and differences between the book and DCT’s performance of TUCK EVERLASTING.
COMPARE AND CONTRAST TEMPLATE

Book

Play

Both
NATALIE BABBITT

“[Natalie Babbitt] is an illustrator, not only with pen and brush, but also with words.”
—Kirsten Chapman, interview with the author, 1988

Natalie Babbitt was born and grew up in Ohio where she spent much of her childhood reading fairy tales and myths and drawing. She received art lessons from her mother, a landscape and portrait painter who provided lots of paper, paint, pencils and encouragement for her daughter. Mrs. Babbitt went on to specialize in art at Laurel School in Cleveland, Ohio and at Smith College. She married Samuel Fisher Babbitt after graduation and they lived in Connecticut, Tennessee, and Washington, D.C. and raised their three children. Natalie Babbitt and her husband first collaborated on a children’s book called The Forty-Ninth Magician before she decided to become an author on her own. In addition to Tuck Everlasting, Mrs. Babbitt has authored and illustrated several children’s books including The Search for Delicious, Dick Foote and the Shark, and Phoebe’s Revolt.

CURTAINS UP ON DISCUSSION

Use the following questions to encourage discussion with your students.

• If you had a chance to live forever, would you do it?
• The man in the yellow suit wants to bottle the water and sell it. What might happen if he was allowed to do so?
• Imagine you are one of the Tucks. What do you think an average year might be like? What might you do? Where might you go?
• Why is it so important to Angus Tuck to make Winnie realize that living forever is not fun and not something you should ever want?

Hold a class debate in which students portray characters from stories that share the theme of immortality vs. mortality. Encourage them to choose characters from literature throughout the ages. Examples might be some of the Greek gods and goddesses, the Twilight series' vampires, Superman, Sauron from the Lord of the Rings trilogy, the Percy Jackson series' characters, and even Wolverine and Sabertooth from the X-Men series.

Once students have chosen their characters, they must choose which side of the debate to argue. Encourage them to list the pros and cons of both everlasting life and mortality, and consider these from the viewpoint of their literary character.

Add a little drama to the debate by allowing the students to portray their characters in manner and dress while the debate is held. Be sure to assign a moderator who can keep the debate on track and make sure it sticks to the question at hand.
Consider the changes in style and technology the Tucks must have experienced in their lifetimes. How had fashion, the arts, and technology changed from the beginning of their story to the time they returned to Treegap? What differences might they have seen in the language of the people or their educational levels? Consider the political issues they had seen come and go.

Encourage your students to do a little research in one of the areas mentioned and create one of the following for display:

- A collage using headlines from the period through which the Tucks travel in TUCK EVERLASTING. Include social and political issues they would have experienced.
- A fashion portfolio of styles the Tucks would have needed to wear to fit in to the changing times. Draw your own or use pictures from magazines to "dress" the Tuck family. You might even try a set of paper dolls with outfits to match. Remember to consider their ages, lifestyles, and the areas in which they traveled.
- Research the language of the times. How might the speech of seventeen-year-old Jesse have changed from 1880 to 1950? Put together a collage of common terms and phrases used during each decade or so. Where did the term or phrase come from and what made it a part of popular culture?
- Design a home makeover for the Tuck's cottage. How would the furnishings have changed? What kind of repairs and updates might be needed in order for them to return to Treegap to live?

Working With Wheels
The image of the wheel recurs several times in TUCK EVERLASTING, from the wheels on the Tucks' wagon, to the reference of the ferris wheel of time, and in Angus Tuck's conversation with Winnie on the pond. What does this theme mean for each of the characters and for the story? Discuss with your students this image of the wheel and encourage them to create their own wheels that show what they feel are the important moments in their lives to this point. Encourage them to use their imaginations to create a wheel and to draw or cut out pictures to represent ideas and add them to their wheels.

Ideas might include: birthday, first day of school, first ride on a bike, first lost tooth, important times in their family life, and other moments that hold a place of importance with each student. Provide an opportunity and space to display the wheels once they are completed.

CURTAINS UP ON WRITING

“At midnight, I will make a difference in the world.”
- Winnie Foster

Try your hand at making a difference in the world of Winnie Foster and the Tucks by changing the ending of TUCK EVERLASTING. Choose one of the characters whose viewpoint you can share as an alternative to the ending Mrs. Babbitt chose. What might have happened if Winnie drank from the spring or was alive in 1950 when the Tucks returned? What if one of the Tucks had discovered a “cure” for immortality? How would the ending be different if the man in the yellow suit had gotten hold of the water? What about other events in the story? If they had a different outcome, how would the ending change?
CURTAINS UP ON HISTORY

Create a timeline of events in American history that the Tuck family would likely have participated in or known about. Use the Curtains Up on Math activity on the next page to help determine the years you will need to include in the timeline.

Be creative in presenting your timeline by including pictures, a collage of events, or write “headlines” to describe the events.

Choose one of the historical events and discuss how the Tuck family may have been involved in or reacted to it when it occurred.
CURTAINS UP ON MATHEMATICS

Use the following quotes from the play to determine a timeline for the events in TUCK EVERLASTING. Hint: most of the play takes place in 1880.

“Eighty-seven years ago, the four of us... We came out from a long way in the east lookin’ for a place to settle.”
- Jesse, Miles, and Mae Tuck

“I’m one hundred and four years old.” ...“Well if you must know, I’m seventeen.”
- Jesse

“Winifred Foster Jackson. Dear Wife. Dear Mother. 1870-1948. So. Two years. She’s been gone two years.”
- Angus Tuck

“Well, it’s been nearly seventy years, Tuck, since that time with Winnie. Things are bound to change in seventy years.”
– Mae Tuck

“I was more’n forty by then. I was married. Had two children. But from the look of me, I was still twenty-two.”
- Miles Tuck

Include the following events in the lives of the Tuck family in your timeline.
- The year Miles was born
- The year Jesse was born
- The year the Tucks first came to Treegap
- The year they met Winnie
- The year they returned to Treegap
CURTAINS UP ON READING

If you enjoyed *Tuck Everlasting*, you might like to try one of these others by Natalie Babbitt:

Dick Foote and the Shark
Phoebe’s Revolt
The Search for Delicious
Knee-Knock Rise
The Something
Goody Hall
The Devil’s Storybook
The Eyes of the Amaryllis
Herbert Rowbarge
The Devil’s Other Storybook
Nellie: A Cat on Her Own
Bub: Or the Very Best Thing
Ouch! (co-written with Fred Marcellino)
Elsie Times Eight
Jack Plank Tells Tales
117.16 - Theatre, Grade 4.
   4.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.
      A - Relate sensory and emotional responses to theatre.
   4.2 - Creative expression/performance. The student interprets characters, using the voice and body expressively, and creates dramatizations.
      B - Describe clearly characters, their relationships, and their surroundings.
   4.4 - Historical/cultural heritage. The student relates theatre to history, society, and culture.
      A - Explain theatre as a reflection of life in particular times, places, and cultures.
   4.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
      A - Identify and apply appropriate audience behavior at performances.
      D - Compare theatre artists and their contributions.

117.19 - Theatre, Grade 5.
   5.2 - Creative expression/performance. The student interprets characters, using the voice and body expressively, and creates dramatizations.
      B - Describe characters, their relationships, and their surroundings in detail.
   5.4 - Historical/cultural heritage. The student relates theatre to history, society, and culture.
      A - Relate theatre to life in particular times, places, and cultures.
   5.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
      A - Analyze and apply appropriate audience behavior at a variety of performances.
      D - Analyze and compare theatre artists and their contributions.

117.34 - Theatre, Grade 6.
   6.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
      A - Analyze and apply audience behavior at all performances.
      D - Compare selected occupations in theatre.

117.37 - Theatre, Grade 7.
   7.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.
      E - Compare and contrast dramatic performances to life.
   7.2 - Creative expression/performance. The student interprets characters, using the voice and body expressively, and creates dramatizations.
      B - Define characters by what they do, what they say, and what others say about them.
   7.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
      A - Identify and demonstrate appropriate audience behavior at various types of performances.
      D - Compare career and avocational opportunities in theatre.

117.40 - Theatre, Grade 8.
   8.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.
      E - Compare dramatic performances to life.
   8.2 - Creative expression/performance. The student interprets characters, using the voice and body expressively, and creates dramatizations.
B - Analyze life interactions, choices, and responses to describe character motivation.

8.4 - Historical/cultural heritage. The student relates theatre to history, society, and culture.
A - Demonstrate knowledge of theatre as a reflection of life in particular times, places, and cultures.

8.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
A - Analyze and practice appropriate audience behavior at various types of live performances.
D - Compare career and avocational opportunities in theatre.