

Your Family Arts Center

DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER

THE SNOWY DAY AND OTHER STORIES BY EZRA JACK KEATS

SYNOPSIS

One Act I (approximately 45 minutes)

Ezra Jack Keats's beloved character Peter and all his friends come to life in this beautiful theatrical retelling of *The Snowy Day*, *Whistle for Willie*, *Goggles!*, and *A Letter to Amy*.

It is a winter day and Peter wakes excited to see it has snowed. After breakfast, he goes out to play. First Peter makes tracks in the snow with his feet and then with a stick. He wants to join a snowball fight with the big kids but, after watching them play, he realizes he's not old enough yet. So, he makes a snowman and snow angels instead. Peter pretends he is a mountain climber who slides down a mountain over and over again. Finally, he packs a snowball in his pocket to save for later. At home, he tells his mother about his day in the snow. After checking his pocket, Peter is sad to discover that his snowball is gone. That night he dreams that the sun has melted the snow. But, in the morning he sees freshly fallen snow and goes outside again to play with his friend, Archie.

It's spring time a few years later. Peter sees a boy playing with a dog. He notices that the dog comes to the boy anytime he whistles. Peter tries to whistle, but he can't. He blows so hard that he feels dizzy. His dog, Willie, runs up to Peter and Peter tries to whistle but still can't. His friend, Amy, whistles as she jumps rope by him. Peter thinks maybe putting on his dad's hat might help, but still can't whistle. Mom sees Peter and, after finding out what Peter is doing, she tries to teach him. Peter is frustrated but keeps practicing until he finally whistles! Peter hides from Willie and whistles. When Willie can't find him, Peter jumps out of his hiding place. They run home and Peter is so proud to show off his new talent to his parents.

Time passes, and it is now summer. Peter is playing hide-and-seek with Archie when he finds goggles! The boys immediately start playing with them. Peter imagines they are motorcycle goggles, Archie thinks they would be great for deep sea diving, and they both pretend to be astronauts with them. All of a sudden big boys show up and want the goggles. But, Peter won't let them have the goggles and, after a little scuffle, Willie runs off with them. Peter and Archie run too, and hide, waiting for Willie to find them. Willie finally does. When Peter sees that the big boys are almost to them, he shouts for Willie to meet him at the parking lot. The big boys run off to the parking lot and Peter, Archie, and Willie race over to Archie's house. They are safe at last with their goggles!

It is Autumn and almost Peter's birthday. He is excited to celebrate, and especially excited to invite Amy. His mom sees him writing a letter to Amy and, when she asks him about it, he says

that it's special to send her a letter invitation. After Peter works on the letter, his mom gives him a stamp to mail it. Before he goes to the mailbox, his mom makes him put on a raincoat. Willie tries to follow him, but Peter sends him back home. On the way to mail his letter, Peter passes Amy's house. Her bird sees him out the window and Peter tells him "it's me, Peter." To Peter's dismay, the bird starts repeating over and over "it's me, Peter" just as Willie runs up to Peter barking. Peter finally is able to sneak away without Amy seeing him. But, a storm is brewing and the wind snatches the letter. Peter has to chase it and bumps right in to Amy. Hurt and sad, Amy runs away. Peter drops her letter in the mailbox but is scared she won't come to his party after all. It's the day of the party and Peter is disappointed Amy hasn't come yet. But, she finally arrives! It's time for cake and Peter, making a wish, blows out the candles.

Notes:

- There is no intermission for this show.
- This show encourages audience engagement (actors ask the audience questions, throw snowballs, encourage dancing, etc.). Sometimes the actors come in to the house to more closely interact with audience (primarily with the front rows and those closest to the aisles).
- There is a storm towards the end of the play (with thunder sound effects).
- This play utilizes both puppets and shadow puppets.
- The set pieces are noticeably changed by crew in between the different seasons.