

# STUDY GUIDE

## ELEMENTARY KINDERGARTEN & 1st GRADE



# Princess Thimbelina



**Bits 'N Pieces Puppet Theatre**

Study Guides are produced in partnership with Broward County Public Schools.

## Plot Summary

Once upon a time in Denmark, a magic flower sprouted in a garden near Copenhagen. A friendly Flower Witch had planted it. It was no ordinary wildflower but one that was filled with magic. In the flower's center, bursting from between its petals, grew a tiny fairy child. No larger than your thumb, or a thimble on your finger, her name was Thimbelina. She was a princess of the flowers from the Land of Faerie.

A big green bullfrog stomped out of the swamp and hopped into her garden. He promised he was her handsome prince, but when she gave him a kiss, he turned out to be a wart! An awful frog was he, with nothing to do but tell lies to the child. She bade him leave, and he hopped away.

Cupid, bouncing up high in the sky upon a cloud, saw the beautiful fairy child and flew in for a closer look. He wanted to help, so he gave Thimbelina a magic heart. If she used it wisely, she would find happiness.

A bright, shiny bird from the Scottish Highlands flew across the sky. Hungry for a bite, he landed. Instead of food he found Thimbelina! He taught her how to dance the Highland fling. But then he had to fly south. Winter was approaching, and he'd freeze his tail feathers!

Too late! Too late! The Snow Queen arrived with her mantle of snow and ice. She covered the bird with frost and froze icicles on Thimbelina's nose. The bird limped away. The Snow Queen flew off triumphant, and tiny Thimbelina was left to freeze in the snow.

Brr! Thimbelina would surely have frozen and died if good fortune had not been with her. A mole, too cold underground, had tunneled up out of the earth to warm himself in the sun. He squinted at a mound of snow that shivered, sneezed and jumped! It was a tiny girl. The mole took her home and let her live with him.

The mole was waiting for his sweetheart to arrive. He planned to marry a spider to live by his side, so Thimbelina performed the wedding ceremony. The couple was happy, but Thimbelina was still alone.

Outside the mole's home spring had sprung. Thimbelina remembered her magic heart and wondered when her turn for happiness would come. Cupid flew in. There had been a mistake! She had the heart of the Prince of the Flowers; he had hers. They fell in love with the help of Cupid's arrow. Happiness had come to Thimbelina's magic land.



## About the Author: Hans Christian Andersen

### At A Glance

**Born:** April 2, 1805, Odense, Denmark

**Died:** August 4, 1875, Rolighed, Denmark

Hans Christian Andersen, like many of the heroes in his own fairy tales, was born into a humble family. His mother was a sickly woman, his father a poor cobbler of shoes. As a child, Hans had a mind filled with dreams.

With puppets and dolls, stories and songs, he entertained his friends and family. He dreamed of the day he would be king. At thirty years old, Hans published his first book of fairy tales. Followed by more stories, plays and poems he found a spot in his audiences' hearts and carved out his kingdom.

Andersen died a famous old man at 75 years of age. Within his own life he had published a half a million words of fantasy for all time, and forever after. He was the last great teller of fairy tales, stories of people, fairies and inanimate objects that talked. Though today we have writers of science fiction and fantasy on other planets, Hans wrote of a time when witches and goblins, talking clothes and princesses lived in your neighborhood, just around the corner, once upon a time.

### Fun Facts

- Hans Christian Andersen wrote 168 fairy tales and stories. The story of Thumbelina was among the first published in 1835. His first book of fairy tales was published in 1835. The book was very successful. He continued writing children's books, nearly one each year, until 1872. His stories have been translated into more than 100 languages.
- Most known as a fairy tale author throughout the world, Hans Christian Andersen's artistic talent extended beyond the written word. He also used paper for ink drawings and scissor art. More than 1,000 of his colorful paper cuttings, ranging from simple to quite intricate, still exist today. Many of these can be viewed online at The Royal Danish Library website.
- In the original story (1836), the main character was named "Tommelise" and her name has changed in different versions of the story. In 1864 the name "Thumbelina" first appeared. In this play, she sits upon a thimble – so they choose to name the character THIMBELINA!

## **How To Make a Giant Puppet Show**

**By Bits 'N Pieces Theatre**

So you say you would like to make a giant puppet show? You're going to need at least 18 months to do it. It takes a year and a half to create the puppets, script, lyrics, music, choreography and sets for one giant puppet musical. There are 11 giant puppet shows in the Bits 'N Pieces repertoire. Since we don't reuse old puppets for new, each puppet production is built as an original work of art. It's taken sixteen and half years to build all of our shows.

### **Where to start?**

The words come first. The story is the beginning of each new show. It can be a classic or contemporary piece of literature, a saying or an interesting event. From this first glimmer of an idea, Director Jerry Bickel writes the script and lyrics. He collaborates with a composer to create the musical score.

### **A little clay, a little papier-mache, and a lot of hot glue:**

Once the story is firm, Designer and Master Puppeteer Holli Rubin begins to build the puppets. From a giant block of clay, she sculpts the heads and casts them in plastic papier-mache. The moving facial parts are installed before Holli costumes each character. Each puppet represents weeks of creation, thousands of stitches and many hot-glue burns.

### **How the puppets come to life:**

The musical's dances are created by a choreographer. Actors first rehearse the show without the giant puppets. Once they learn their choreography, they wear the puppets and adapt their puppet's movements for the stage. Special rehearsals with video cameras help the puppeteers learn where improvements can be made in their performance. While one production is on tour across the country, a new show can be created between engagements in the Tampa, Florida studios. Three months are devoted to writing the show. Twelve months to design and build the puppets. Finally, three more months are used to rehearse, record, add special effects and edit. A year and a half total, and the new show can open for its first public performance. Refinement continues throughout the tour until the production reaches its final form: a new giant puppet musical in the Bits 'N Pieces Puppet Theatre repertory.

## Language Arts Connections

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

After watching the play Princess Thimbelina, complete the chart below.

*(ELA.K.R.1.1; ELA,1.R.1.1)*

<b>Draw a picture of your character.</b>          	<b>Write one sentence about the character.</b>  <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>What was the problem in the story?</b>  <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<b>Where does the story take place?</b>  <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

In the box below, draw a picture representing your favorite part in the show. Explain why you liked it, who your favorite character was, and what you learned from the story. *(ELA.K.C.1.3, ELA.K.C.5.1; ELA.1.C.1.3, ELA.1.C.5.1) (TH.K.C.2.1, TH.K.O.2.1; TH.1.C.1.2, TH.1.O.2.1)*



**This part was my favorite because:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**My favorite character was:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I learned:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

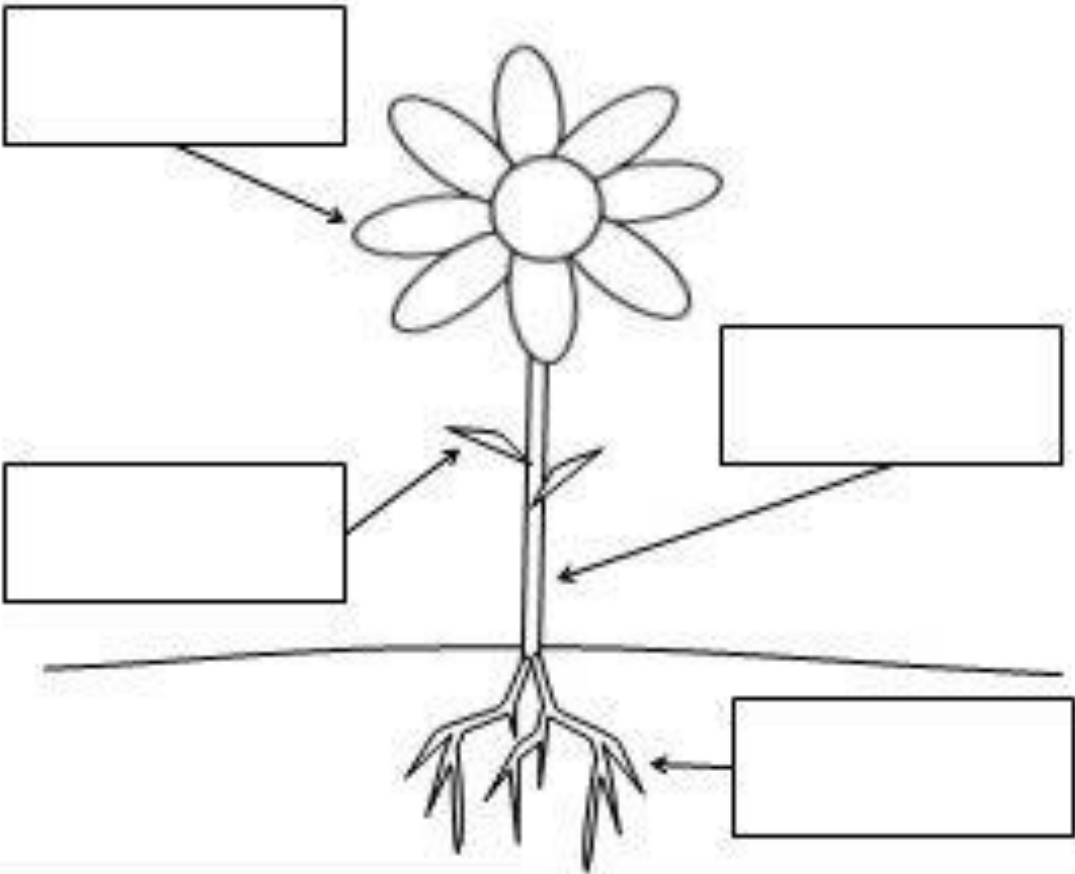
## Parts of a Flower

(SC.K.L.14.3, SC.1.L.14.2, SC.1.L.14.3, ELA.K.C.1.4)

Do your best to identify the various parts of the flower:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Parts of a Flower



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

stem	leaf
petals	roots

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**Parts of a Flower (Continued)**

How are flowers similar and different to humans? Think about the parts (both inside and outside) that help both to stay alive and to grow and reproduce. Write at least one similarity and one difference:




## Arts Integration

### Characterization/Improvisation *(TH.K.S.2.1, TH.1.C.1.1, TH.1.S.3.1)*

Have students reenact scenes from the play (with or without words). First have the students discuss specific scenes – who were the characters, where did it take place, what happened?

You can also have students create puppets and reenact scenes with them!

### Reflection *(TH.K.C.2.1, TH.K.O.3.1, TH.1.C.2.2)*

Have a class discussion about the performance. What were their favorite parts and why? How is it different to experience a story through a book compared to in a play?

### Creation *(ELA.K.C.5.1; ELA.1.C.5.1) (TH.K.S.2.1, TH.1.C.1.1, TH.1.S.3.1) (VA.K.S.1.2, VA.1.S.1.3) (SC.K.N.1.2, SC.K.N.1.4)*

Have students observe flowers in nature and select their favorite. Then have the students share details of the flower using the template on the next page. As an extension activity, consider having students create characters based on the flowers and act out scenes between the characters.

## Language Arts / Science / Visual Arts Connection

*(ELA.K.C.5.1; ELA.1.C.5.1) (VA.K.S.1.2, VA.1.S.1.3) (SC.K.N.1.2, SC.K.N.1.4)*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about your favorite flower! Take time to look at nature all around you and find the flower you like the best. Then, use this chart to share details about your favorite flower you found and show us what it looks like.

<p>My favorite flower is:</p> <hr/> <p>It feels like:</p> <hr/> <p>It smells like:</p> <hr/> <p>This is my favorite flower because:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>My flower looks like:</p>
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## Academic Vocabulary

- **Character** – a person, animal, being, creature, or thing in a story
- **Petals** – the often bright and colorful leaves that make up a flower
- **Mole** – a burrowing mammal with tiny eyes, concealed ears, and soft fur that eats insects
- **Thimble** - a cap or cover used in sewing to protect the finger that pushes the needle
- **Cupid** – God of love
- **Garden** – an area of ground where herbs, fruits, flowers, or vegetables are grown
- **Underground** – below the surface of the ground
- **Nearsighted** – able to see near things more clearly than distant ones

## Arts Vocabulary

- **Adaptation** – alter a text to make it appropriate for the stage
- **Cast** – the group of actors who work together to perform the show
- **Characterization** – use body, voice, and movement to create a representation of a person or animal
- **Improvisation** – creating (a scene or role play) ‘on the spot’ without any planning ahead of time – making it up as you go
- **Musical Theatre** – form of theatre performance that includes singing, and dancing as well as acting
- **Choreography** - the art of arranging dances

**Standards Alignment:** The activities in this study guide are aligned with the standards listed below. When teachers incorporate the arts, they increase student engagement, offer multiple points for students to access the curriculum, and provide alternative means for students to demonstrate what they know.

Benchmarks For Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.)	
<b>Kindergarten</b>	
Reading – Prose and Poetry	
ELA.K.R.1.1	Describe the main character(s), setting, and important events in a story.
Communication – Writing	
ELA.K.C.1.3	Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and/or writing, express opinions about a topic or text with at least one supporting reason.
ELA.K.C.1.4	Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and/or writing, provide factual information about a topic.
Communication – Creating and Collaborating	
ELA.K.C.5.1	Use a multimedia element to enhance oral or written tasks.
<b>Grade 1</b>	
Reading – Prose and Poetry	
ELA.1.R.1.1	Identify and describe the main story elements in a story.
Communication – Writing	
ELA.1.C.1.3	Write opinions about a topic or text with at least one supporting reason from a source and a sense of closure.
Communication – Creating and Collaborating	
ELA.1.C.5.1	Use a multimedia element to enhance oral or written tasks.

Florida Theatre Standards	
<b>Kindergarten</b>	
Critical Thinking and Reflection	
TH.K.C.2.1	Respond to a performance and share personal preferences about parts of the performance.
Organizational Structure	
TH.K.O.2.1	Draw a picture of a favorite scene from a play.
TH.K.O.3.1	Compare a story that is read to one that is acted out.
Skills, Techniques, and Processes	
TH.K.S.2.1	Pretend to be a character from a given story.
<b>Grade 1</b>	
Critical Thinking and Reflection	
TH.1.C.1.1	Create a story and act it out, using a picture of people, animals, or objects as the inspiration.
TH.1.C.1.2	Draw a picture from a favorite story and share with the class why the scene was important to the story.
TH.1.C.2.2	Identify elements of an effective performance.
Organizational Structure	
TH.1.O.2.1	Describe in words or by drawing a picture, the most exciting part in the story line of a play.
Skills, Techniques, and Processes	
TH.1.S.3.1	Use simple acting techniques to portray a person, place, action, or thing.

**Florida Visual Arts Standards**

**Kindergarten**

**Skills, Techniques, and Processes**

VA.K.S.1.2 Produce artwork influenced by personal decisions and ideas.

**Grade 1**

**Skills, Techniques, and Processes**

VA.1.S.1.3 Create works of art to tell a personal story.

**Florida Science Standards**

**Kindergarten**

**Life Science**

SC.K.L.14.3 Observe plants and animals, describe how they are alike and how they are different in the they look and in the things they do.

**Nature of Science**

SC.K.N.1.2 Make observations of the natural world and know that they are descriptors collected using the five senses.

SC.K.N.1.4 Observe and create a visual representation of an object which includes its major features.

**Grade 1**

**Life Science**

SC.1.L.14.2 Identify the major parts of plants, including stem, roots, leaves, and flowers.

SC.1.L.14.3 Differentiate between living and nonliving things.

**Nature of Science**

SC.1.N.1.2 Using the five senses as tools, make careful observations, describe objects in terms of number, shape, texture, size, weight, color, and motion, and compare their observations with others.

# Student Work Samples

Teachers:

Thank you for your continued support of the SEAS Program. Using the suggestions and/or activity pages included in this Study Guide, please collect student work samples, and upload them using the link below.

Please click on the link below to upload your student's work samples to their respective show folder:

[Click Here to Upload Student Work Samples](#)

Should you have any questions, please contact Lauri Foster at:  
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