

TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT'S  
INSIDE THE GUIDE:

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

BULLYING STATISTICS

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

(with Common Core, Missouri GLE,  
and National Core Arts Standards)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

# THE HUNDRED DRESSES



## EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

From the Newbery Honor winning  
NOVEL BY Eleanor Estes

ADAPTED BY William Kent Williams

### SYNOPSIS

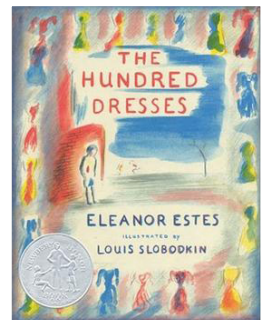
Wanda Petronski, the new girl in Room 13, is a Polish immigrant who lives in a shabby house and doesn't have any friends. Every day she wears the same faded blue dress, but tells her new classmates that she has a hundred dresses at home. Her classmates tease Wanda about her hundred dresses until one day she disappears from school. As guilt overtakes the children, they decide to find out what happened to Wanda and to make amends. But is it too late? Bullying, friendship and forgiveness are at the center of this play adapted from the beloved Newbery Honor Book by Eleanor Estes.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

When she was a child, Eleanor Estes watched her friends bully a classmate – a Polish girl who wore the same worn dress each day. She stood by as a bystander, but felt guilty as she grew older. Eventually she became a children's librarian, wanting to teach others the lesson she wished she had learned as a child.

"As my mother grew older, she just felt really badly about the way that little girl had been treated and isolated," explained Estes's daughter, Helena. "She thought, 'Well, there's only one thing I can do...I can write a story.' So she did." Eleanor Estes wrote down her childhood memories while recovering from tuberculosis, and became a children's author. Her many published works are widely read; but *The Hundred Dresses* continues to be the most popular, remaining in print since its publication in 1944. It was awarded the Newbery Honor in 1945.

Speaking about *The Hundred Dresses* Eleanor Estes said, "I am holding up a mirror, and the scene reflected in the mirror is a true image of childhood, and the mirror, besides reflecting, also speaks and echoes the clear, profound, unpremeditated utterances, thoughts, and imageries of these children. I like to make children laugh or cry, to be moved in some way by my writing."



Eleanor Estes

# THE TRIANGLE of Oppression

Wanda is repeatedly bullied by her classmate, and the other students play a part in allowing this to happen. In small groups, ask students to come up with a frozen image or tableau of an example of oppression they've seen at their school. Have students identify and assume each of the roles of Perpetrator, Target, Bystander, and Collaborator. Remind them to keep it real and based on what they have witnessed. Share the images of each group with the class and discuss them.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Which role do you think people play most often? Why?
- What do you think stops people from becoming an Upstander or Ally?

**MISSOURI PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS**  
**PS1C K-8** Citizenship and contribution within a diverse community

## NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

**ANCHOR STANDARD #1** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work

**ANCHOR STANDARD #5** Develop and refine artistic work for presentation



## BULLYING Statistics

More than **1 out of every 5 (20.8%)** students report being bullied.

(National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016)



More than half of bullying situations **(57%) STOP** when a **PEER INTERVENES** on behalf of the student being bullied.

(Hawkins, Pepler, & Craig, 2001)

Students who experience bullying report that **ALLYING AND SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS FROM THEIR PEERS** (such as spending time with the student, talking to him/her, helping him/her get away, or giving advice) were the most helpful actions from peers.

(Davis & Nixon, 2010)

Targeted students reported that the most helpful things teachers can do when a student is bullied are: **LISTEN** to the targeted student, **CHECK IN** with them afterwards to see if the bullying stopped, and give the student **ADVICE**.

(Davis & Nixon, 2010)



The percentage of individuals who have experienced cyberbullying at some point in their lifetimes has nearly **DOUBLED (18% TO 34%)** from 2007-2016.

(Patchin & Hinduja)

**90%** of teens who report being cyberbullied have also been **BULLIED OFFLINE**.

("Seven Fears and the Science of How Mobile Technologies May Be Influencing Adolescents in the Digital Age," George and Odgers, 2015)

**ONLY 40–50%** of cyberbullying targets are aware of the identity of the perpetrator.

(Patchin & Hinduja, 2016)



**25%** of African-American students, **22%** of Caucasian students, **17%** of Hispanic students, and **9%** of Asian students report being bullied at school.

(National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016)

**74.1% OF LGBT** students were verbally bullied (e.g., called names, threatened) in the past year because of their sexual orientation and 55.2% because of their gender expression.

(National School Climate Survey, 2013)



There is a strong association between **BULLYING AND SUICIDE-RELATED BEHAVIORS**, but this relationship is often mediated by other factors, including depression, violent behavior, and substance abuse.

(Reed, Nugent, & Cooper, 2015)

Students need not be the targets of bullying to experience negative outcomes. **OBSERVING BULLYING IS ASSOCIATED WITH ADVERSE MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES**.

(Rivers, Potteat, Noret, & Ashurst, 2009)

For more information and statistics visit <http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/stats.asp>

## NAME SCRAP

Invite students to write their name and one fact they are comfortable sharing about themselves on a scrap of paper. They should only write one short sentence and their name, then fold the paper in half. Students will mingle and share their papers in third person, without looking at the scrap, (i.e. "This is Maddie and her favorite thing to do is bake."), then trade facts and papers so that when they find a new partner, they share the name and fact of their previous partner. Encourage students to memorize these facts and avoid looking at the paper as much as possible. Students should trade papers several times. At the end of the activity, gather students together and ask them to share the name and fact they believe is written on the scrap they are holding. The person the scrap is written about can then verify if their fact was remembered correctly.

### MISSOURI COMMUNICATION ARTS GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

**LS1B K-8** Demonstrate listening behaviors

### MISSOURI PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

**PS2A, B, C K-8** Interacting with others in ways that respect individual and group differences

### COMMON CORE STANDARDS

**SL.3.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions

## SPACE BETWEEN

Ask students to arrange themselves representing characters from *The Hundred Dresses*, so that the space between them symbolizes how close their relationships are at the beginning of the play.

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Who feels close to whom?
- Who feels distant and estranged?
- What would the space look like by the end of the play?

### MISSOURI PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

**PS2A K-8** Identify the interpersonal skills necessary to build quality relationships

### MISSOURI THEATER GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

**PP1B K-8** Express impressions and observations related to dramatic activities and performances

## "WHERE I'M FROM" POEM

Wanda comes from a much different background than many of her other classmates. They don't take the time to understand what they have in common and what makes her unique. Use the following prewriting questions to write "Where I'm From" poems for students to reflect and honor who they are and their upbringing. Students should answer the questions with detailed, describing words (i.e. delicate flowers, smiling Aunt Rose, bubbling beef stew).

### WHAT MAKES ME SPECIAL?

- One interesting item you would find in my home is...
- One special place you would find in my neighborhood is...
- The name of a relative or family friend who is special to me is...
- Something adults always say to me is...
- At family gatherings, we always eat...
- An activity I really enjoy outside of school is...
- A sound you often hear in my home is...
- A smell you find in my home is...
- A special place my family likes to visit is...

To write the poem, students should write three sentences using the following template:

I am from \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

*For instance: I am from delicate flowers, smiling Aunt Rose, and bubbling beef stew.*

### MISSOURI ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

**W2C K-8** Compose well-developed writing texts for audience and purpose

### NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

**ANCHOR STANDARD 2** Organize and develop artistic ideas and work

## JOURNAL ENTRY

Ask students to write a journal entry from Wanda's perspective about her experience coming to a new school. What does she like about school? What is difficult? What does she wish people knew about her? What was it like to leave her old home? How did she feel when she saw her new home for the first time?

### MISSOURI ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

**W2C K-8** Compose well-developed writing texts for audience and purpose

### NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

**ANCHOR STANDARD 2** Organize and develop artistic ideas and work

# RESOURCES

## FOR EARLY READERS

- *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi
- *La Mariposa* by Francisco Jiménez, illustrated by Simón Silva
- *Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan* by Mary Williams, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

## FOR ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL READERS

- *Mai Ya's Long Journey* by Sheila Cohen
- *The Stone Goddess* by Mingfong Ho
- *Drita, My Homegirl* by Jenny Lombard
- *Blue Jasmine* by Kashmira Sheth

## OTHER BOOKS BY ELEANOR ESTES

- *The Moffats*
- *Ginger Pye*
- *The Witch Family*
- *The Tunnel Hugsy Goode*

## FOR PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

How to prevent bullying and make your school a more welcoming environment:

- [nonamecallingweek.org](http://nonamecallingweek.org)
- [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov)
- [bornthiswayfoundation.org](http://bornthiswayfoundation.org)
- [tolerance.org/classroom-resources](http://tolerance.org/classroom-resources)

## FURTHER RESOURCES ON IMMIGRATION

- [loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/themes/immigration/](http://loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/themes/immigration/)
- [teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/)



3311 Washington Ave.  
St. Louis, Missouri 63103  
P: 314.932.7414 F: 314.932.7434

### MISSION

Inspired by the intelligence and emotional wisdom of young people, we create professional theater, foster inclusive community and nurture meaningful learning through the arts.



### PRESENTING SPONSOR:



### MAJOR SUPPORT:



# DISCUSSION Questions

1. Why does Wanda claim she has 100 dresses at home when she wears the same dress every day?
2. This book was published 75 years ago, but its themes are still relevant today. What have you experienced at school that is similar to what happens in the play?
3. Do you know your family's country of origin? How long ago was their arrival in the U.S.A.? Are there members of your family for whom English is a second language?
4. Have you ever been a "new kid" at your school? What did other students do to make you feel welcome or unwelcome?
5. How would you describe the treatment new students receive at your school?
6. What does it feel like when people call you names or insult you?
7. What are some positive ways we can respond to negative language?
8. Is it possible to speak politely and still be unwelcoming?
9. Maddie says that Wanda throws her a lifesaver. What does she mean? Have you experienced this in your own life?
10. If you've read the book *The Hundred Dresses*, why do you think the playwright William Kent Williams made the changes he did? Which version did you like better and why?