



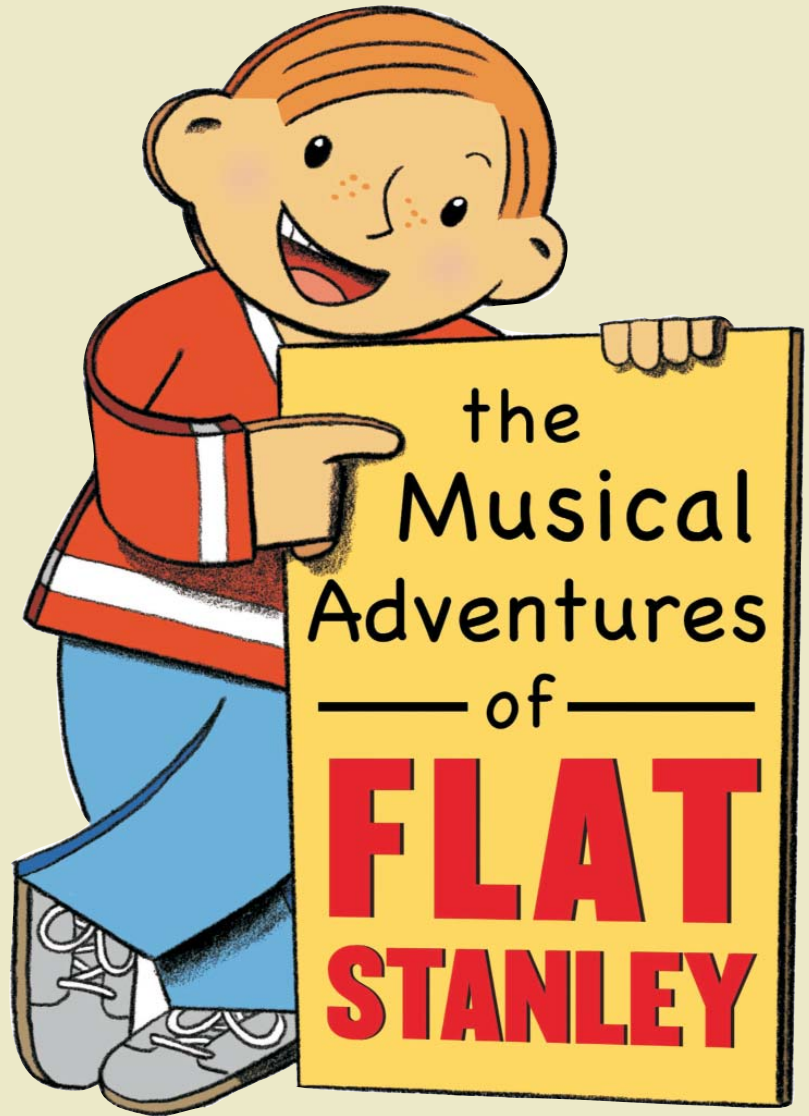
the
Musical
Adventures
— of —
**FLAT
STANLEY**

Dear Teacher,



The State Theatre in New Brunswick, New Jersey welcomes you and your students to the school-day performance of *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley*. The musical is based on stories taken from Jeff Brown's popular series of *Flat Stanley* books.

These *Keynotes* provide information and activities that will help you prepare your students for the performance and then guide them in reflecting on what they saw and heard in the show. With younger students, we encourage you to read the information to them and facilitate the activities. This guide also contains a reproducible activity page for making your own Flat Stanley!



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Bank of America



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State TheatreNJ.org Keynotes

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The State Theatre, a premier nonprofit venue for the performing arts and entertainment.

What's the Story?



Stanley Lambchop and his little brother, Arthur, are in their bedroom. Stanley says he hopes to leave his boring life behind and go on adventures. As Stanley falls asleep, Corky, the bulletin board, warns him to be careful about what he wishes for...

In the morning, Stanley's family discovers that during the night, Stanley's bulletin board fell down on him—leaving him completely flat! Worried, Mrs. Lambchop takes Stanley to see a doctor, a psychiatrist, and a trainer. No one is able to find anything wrong with him, other than the fact that, well—he's flat.

Later, Arthur is sure that he is in big trouble with his parents. The "cool kids" convinced Arthur to turn Stanley into a kite and Arthur left him stuck in a tree.

Stanley begins to think that it isn't so great being flat, after all. Then the letter carrier, Mrs. Hermes, suggests that he travel the world by sending himself everywhere in an envelope. This idea thrills Stanley. His adventures begin!

Stanley's first adventure is to visit a friend in Los Angeles. Before he can find his friend, he meets a talent agent, who decides that Stanley could be a star. She encourages Stanley to visit her old friend in Washington, D.C. to figure out what his special talent might be.

Stanley mails himself to Washington and gets delivered to the National Archives. Here he meets Dusty (the curator) and Indie—the Declaration of Independence. Indie encourages Stanley to continue his adventures in Paris. While Stanley mails himself to Paris, Arthur sends him a letter.

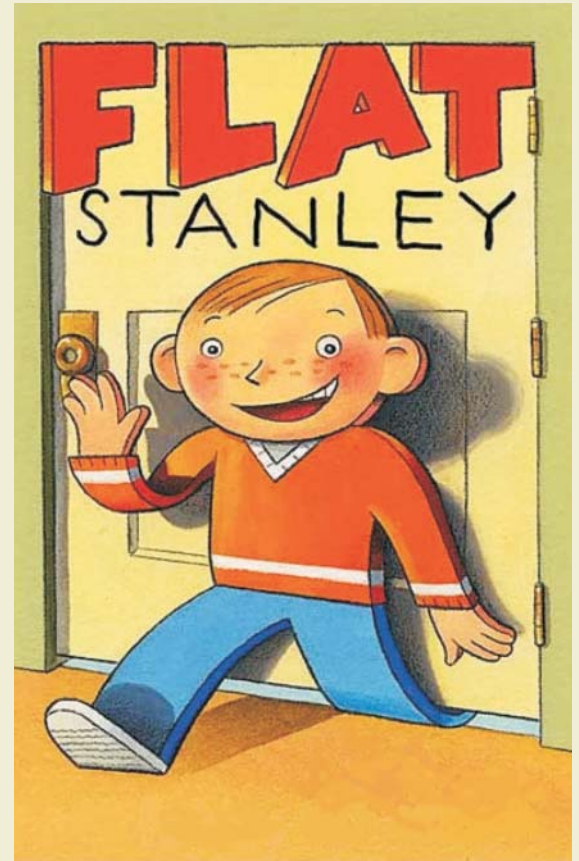
In Paris, Stanley goes to the Louvre and meets two paintings: Mona Lisa and Johnny. After a quick French lesson, Stanley saves the day (and the paintings) by catching a thief. As he is being congratulated, he receives another letter from home.

Stanley gets a call from the talent agent. He has been cast in a movie filming in Honolulu, Hawaii. He heads straight to Hawaii. After shooting his scene, he is surprised when he receives a big package in the mail. What could be in the box?

Have you ever wished for something? What did you wish for? Did you get your wish? Did getting your wish turn out the way you expected?

What should you do if someone pressures you to do something you know is wrong?

Where's the most interesting place you've ever traveled?



From Page to Stage... with Music!



The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley is adapted from the book, *Flat Stanley* by Jeff Brown. The show has the same basic story and characters as the book; but since books and plays tell their stories in very different ways, the performance will not be exactly the same as the book. Some parts may be left out and others exaggerated. Some parts may be completely new. This can be done without making the overall story too different from the original book.



How does a book tell a story? How does a musical play tell a story? How are they the same? How are they different?

Ask students to think about what they imagine when they read the book *Flat Stanley*. Explain that this is what the playwright (the person who writes the script for the musical play) has to imagine to create the performance. The playwright writes down dialogue and descriptions to guide the director, designers, and actors who bring the show to life.

Tell your students not to expect everything in the book to be in the show.

Can you guess what parts of *Flat Stanley* might be left out in the musical? Would you add anything if you were the playwright? Share your predictions with a classmate. After the performance discuss what you were right about and what you were wrong about. Did you enjoy the show, even if it wasn't exactly the same as the book?

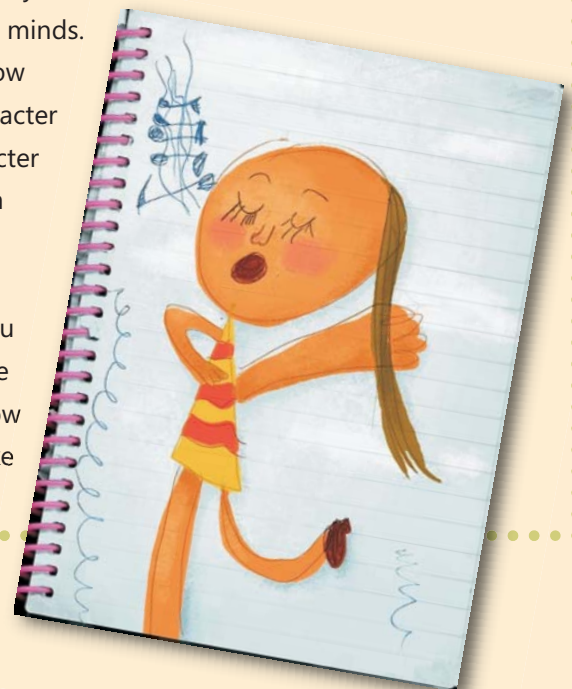
Why Do We Like to Sing?

The characters in *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley* sing A LOT—to one another, about one another, and together. The characters sing whenever their emotions are too strong to be expressed by spoken words alone.

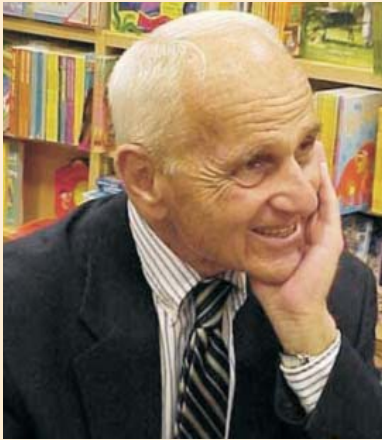
With your class, talk about how the words of songs in other plays or movies they have seen stick in their minds.

What do they know about who a character is or how a character feels because of a song?

Do you like to sing? Why? Do you sing when you are happy or sad? How does singing make you feel?



Meet Jeff Brown



Jeff Brown was born in New York City in 1925 and died in 2003. In addition to having a successful career as a children's book author, he was a story editor and assistant film producer in Hollywood. He also worked as a short-story writer and editor for such popular magazines as *The New Yorker*, *Esquire*, and *The Saturday Evening Post*. His *Flat Stanley* series has

sold nearly one million copies in the United States. The author talks about how he came up with the idea for the *Flat Stanley* books:

More than thirty years ago, I was saying goodnight to my now grown-up sons, J.C. and Tony (Flat Stanley is dedicated to them), and J.C. stalling for my chat time, asked me not to leave the bedroom. He was scared, he claimed, and when I asked him what he was afraid of he couldn't think of anything. As I started out again, he had an inspiration. "I'm afraid my big bulletin board will fall on me," he said. I told him that that was ridiculous; the big board on the wall above his bed had been securely mounted by me, and even if it got loose it would do so so slowly that he wouldn't even notice it, just go off to sleep, and by the time it rested fully upon him he'd be sound asleep and wouldn't wake, so the board would just lie there all night. Then I thought of small joke and said: "Of course, when you wake up in the morning, you'll probably be flat." Both boys thought that was a hoot and many evenings after that one, we'd make up stories about adventures you could have if you were flat. Best idea I ever had, and I didn't even know I'd had it. Not for many months, until a friend in the kid-book business, who knew about the flat stories, suggested I make them into a book.

As to the name of his famous title character, Brown explains,

My wife and I had a dinner party, and one of the guests was a now quite well-known writer named Janet Malcolm. My kids came in to say goodnight, and Janet asked J.C. if he was going to be a writer. When J.C. said yes, she asked if he'd use a pen name, then had to explain 'pen name' to him. He'd have one, he said without hesitating: Stanley. Stanley Lambchop. A year later, I used it in the book to please J.C.

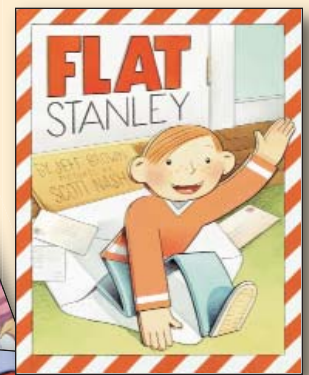
Have You Read...?

The first *Flat Stanley* book was published in 1964. The series includes:

- *Flat Stanley*
- *Stanley In Space*
- *Stanley and the Magic Lamp*
- *Invisible Stanley*
- *Stanley's Christmas Adventure*
- *Stanley, Flat Again!*

Ask your class:

- Have you heard of any of these books?
- How many have you read?
- Do you remember the stories?
- Do you remember any of the pictures?



Familiar Faces

When Stanley visits the Louvre Museum in Paris, he stops a thief from stealing two paintings. Do you know these famous works of art?

The “Mona Lisa” is by the Italian artist and inventor, Leonardo da Vinci. He spent many years working on this painting, and finished it in 1519. It is a picture of a woman named Lisa del Giocondo. (“Mona” is an Italian word meaning “Madam” or “Lady”—not her first name.) Many people have commented on Lisa’s mysterious smile. What do you think she might be smiling about?



Though Stanley keeps her from getting stolen, “Mona Lisa” has not always been so lucky. In 1911, a worker at the Louvre managed to steal the painting and keep it hidden in his apartment for two whole years!

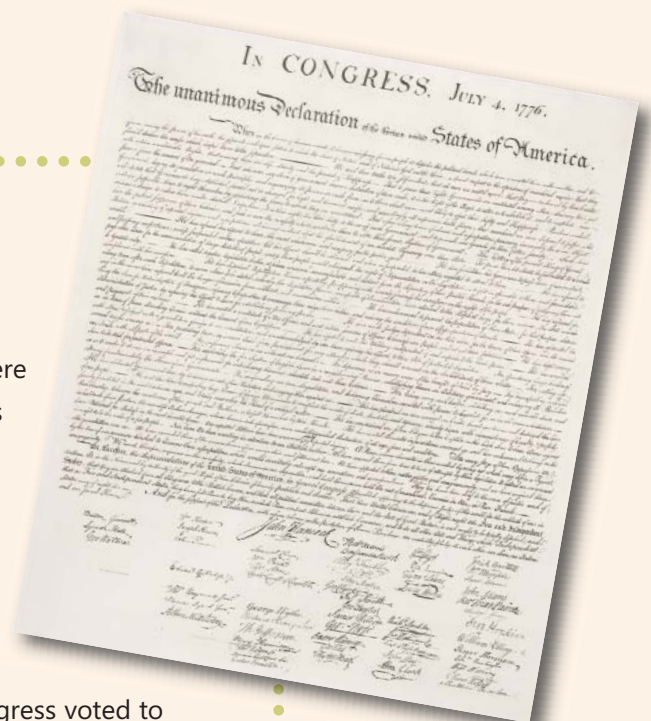


The “Blue Boy” was painted by the English artist Thomas Gainsborough around 1770. No one knows for sure the name of the boy in the picture, so the painting takes its name from his fancy blue satin suit. The painting is almost six feet tall and four feet wide. The “Blue Boy” lives at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California—not at the Louvre.

The Declaration of Independence

One of the most important pieces of American history, the Declaration of Independence helped to create the United States of America. It announced to the world that the 13 American colonies were no longer a part of the British Empire and explained why the colonies made this decision. One of the main ideas found in the Declaration is that every person has the right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”—rights that the colonists believed they did not have while they were ruled by Great Britain.

The Declaration of Independence was written in June of 1776 by Thomas Jefferson and was not signed until more than a month later. On July 2, 1776, 12 of the 13 colonies in the Second Continental Congress voted to approve it. July 4, 1776, the day America celebrates as Independence Day, was not actually the day it was signed but the day it was read publicly in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Things to Do and Discuss



Make Some Predictions!

In the musical, an actor will play Stanley both before and after he is flattened. Actors will also play other flat objects he meets on his adventures including pieces of paper and paintings. Brainstorm ways in which you think this can be represented on stage. Think about costumes, gestures, and movements of playing a flat person or object.



Learn French!

When Stanley is in Paris, he learns some French words to fit in. This helps him catch the Sneak Thief. Do you know what these French words mean in English?

bonjour (boh-ZHOOR)

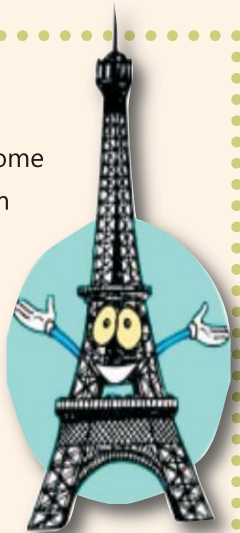
au revoir (oh reh-VWAHR)

oui (WEE)

merci (mair-SEE)

s'il vous plaît (seel voo PLAY)

Do you know these words in any other languages besides English and French? Share with your class!



Space and Shape

Once Stanley is flattened he becomes two-dimensional. What is the difference between an object that is two-dimensional and three-dimensional? Can you find objects in your classroom that are two-dimensional? Three-dimensional?



Words to Know Before You Go to the Show

Listen for these words in the show. Can you use them in a sentence?

archives - a place where public records or historical documents are kept

atlas - a book of maps

curator - a person in charge of a museum or art collection

Houdini - Harry Houdini, a famous magician and escape artist

hypnosis - a trance state resembling sleep that may cause a person to be open to suggestions

psychiatrist - a doctor who treats people with problems of the mind

Sinatra - Frank Sinatra, American singer and actor who was popular in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s.

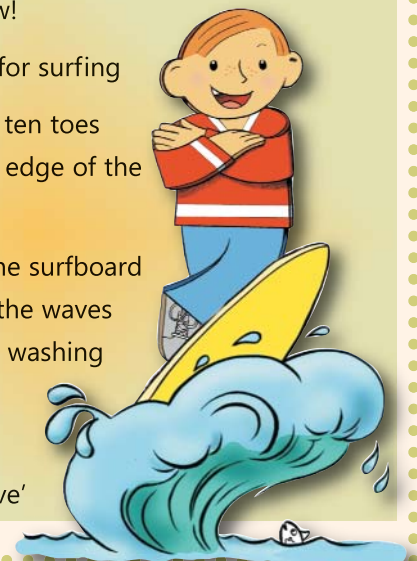
Stanley goes surfing during his adventures. Here are a few cool surfing terms to know!

a-frame - a perfect wave for surfing

hang-ten - ride with your ten toes hanging over the front edge of the surfboard

maytagged - thrown off the surfboard and tossed around by the waves (like being in a Maytag washing machine!)

shocka nar nar - 'totally awesome' or 'great wave'



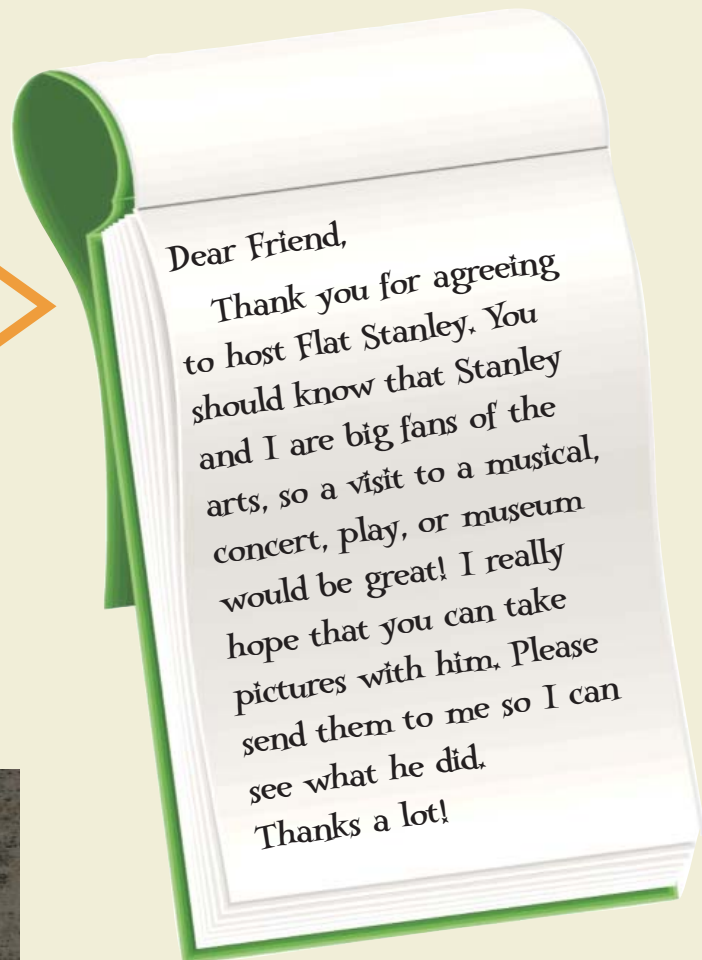
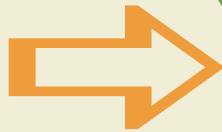
Where in the World?



After seeing the musical, it will be clear to you and your students that Stanley loves to sing, dance and act. Explain to your class that people all over the world also love to do these things, too.

Turn your classroom into a museum celebrating the performing arts around the world.

1. Make copies of Flat Stanley (page 8). Have students color and decorate him.
2. Students should create a space on the back to write their name, address, and email address.
3. Ask students to think about where they can send him; where he will meet other people who like to perform. Prompt them to think about their family and friends or even other theaters across the country.
4. Have students mail Stanley to the places they have thought of. Make sure they include a self-addressed envelope for Stanley to get back to them.
5. Have them include a letter like the one here.
6. Once Stanley comes back, have students chart the locations he visited on a large map in your classroom. Explore the arts traditions of those places and find pictures, objects, and other items representing those arts to place in your museum.
7. Have students lead other classes and/or their families on a guided tour of the museum.



Make a copy of Flat Stanley that students can bring with them to the State Theatre! Take a picture with him in the theater getting ready for the show and email it to us at education@StateTheatreNJ.org.

Where else can you bring your Flat Stanley?

Make Your Own Flat Stanley!



What's My Job?



Going to see a play at a theater is not the same as watching TV. When you are sitting in audience at the State Theatre, the actors will be in the same room as you. They will be able to hear and see everything that goes on in the audience. Use the key to find out what your job is at the performance.



look



listen



performance



audience



clap

When I go to a



, I am part of the



. This is a

very important job. I have to



and



carefully.

If I talk or move around, the actors and the



will have a

hard time paying attention to the



When the



is over, it's okay for me to



.

Resources



Audio

Flat Stanley Audio Collection CD. By Jeff Brown (author) and Daniel Pinkwater (reader). HarperChildrensAudio, 2006

Books

The Flat Stanley Collection Boxed Set, by Jeff Brown, illustrated by Scott Nash. HarperTrophy, 2006. Includes *Flat Stanley*, *Stanley in Space*, *Invisible Stanley*, and *Stanley, Flat Again!*

Flat Stanley (picture book edition) by Jeff Brown, illustrated by Scott Nash. HarperCollins, 2006

Hop, Skip, and Sing French, by Ana Lomba and Dominique Wenzel. McGraw-Hill, 2006. Includes audio CD. Grades Pre-K-2

The Journey of the One and Only Declaration of Independence, by Judith St. George. Philomel, 2005. Grades 3-6

Mailing May, by Michael O. Tunnell, illustrated by Ted Rand. HarperTrophy, 2000. This picture book is based on a true story about a girl who wants to visit her grandmother but can't afford the travel fare. The solution? Mail her! Grades K-2

Internet

www.flatstanley.com

The official website for The Flat Stanley Project.

www.whitehouse.gov/kids/flatstanley/01.html

Read about Flat Stanley's White House visit!

www.cnn.com/2005/EDUCATION/03/02/flatstanley

Flat Stanley article on cnn.com

www.harpercollinschildrens.com/HarperChildrens/kids

Site containing information on Jeff Brown and *Flat Stanley* for kids, parents, teachers and librarians

