

Arden Children's  
Theatre Presents...

Madeleine  
L'Engle's

A Wrinkle  
in Time



Teacher Resource Guide

**Dear Teachers,**

**Thank you so much for joining us for another Children's Theatre production - *A Wrinkle in Time* by John Glore, based on the literary classic by Madeleine L'Engle. We can't wait to begin this magical, theatrical journey with you and your students.**

**In the following pages, you will find a collection of resources, worksheets, activities, ideas, etc. related to our production of *A Wrinkle in Time*. Feel free to pick and choose the materials that best help you and your students engage with the show.**

**We can't wait to have you here at the Arden!**



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# About the Writers

**MADELEINE L'ENGLE** (1918–2007) was the author of more than sixty books. Born in 1918, L'Engle grew up in New York City, Switzerland, South Carolina, and Massachusetts. L'Engle graduated with honors from Smith College and then returned to New York to work in the theater. While touring with a play, she wrote her first book, *The Small Rain*, originally published in 1945. She met her future husband, Hugh Franklin, when they both appeared in a play *The Cherry Orchard*. Once she was married, L'Engle gave up the stage in favor of the typewriter. While raising her three children, she wrote four more novels. Hugh Franklin temporarily retired from the theater, and the family moved to western Connecticut. For ten years, they ran a general store. Her book *Meet the Austins*, an American Library Association Notable Children's Book of 1960, was based on this experience. Her science-fantasy classic *A Wrinkle in Time* was awarded the 1963 Newbery Medal. Two companion novels, *A Wind in the Door* and *A Swiftly Tilting Planet* (a Newbery Honor book), complete what has come to be known as the “Time Trilogy,” a series that continues to grow in popularity with every new generation of readers. Her 1980 book, *A Ring of Endless Light*, won the Newbery Honor. L'Engle passed away in 2007 in Litchfield, Connecticut.



Madeleine L'Engle (above) [source](#)



John Glore (above) [source](#)

**John Glore** is a writer and director focused on bringing stories to life on the stage. He writes plays (adaptations and original work for young audiences and plays for adults), fiction, and non-fiction. He was, until recently, the associate artistic director of Tony Award-Winning South Coast Repertory in Southern California. He has received many awards for his plays and is currently working on writing his first novel!



# A Wrinkle in Time Summary

It was a dark and stormy night. **Meg Murry** lies awake, worrying about her father who has been missing for over two years. She joins her oddly gifted younger brother, **Charles Wallace**, and scientist mother in the kitchen for a midnight snack. They are soon surprised by a visit from a strange woman named **Mrs. Whatsit**, who seems to be able to read minds. She startles Meg's mother by confirming the existence of a **tesseract**— a wrinkle in the fabric of space and time.

The next afternoon, Meg and Charles Wallace visit Mrs. Whatsit and find **Calvin O'Keefe**, a popular and intuitive boy from Meg's school, waiting for them. They meet Mrs. Whatsit and her two friends, **Mrs. Which and Mrs. Who**, who explain that the children must travel through space and time to rescue Mr. Murry, who has been captured by an evil force.



They travel to the planet **Uriel**, where Mrs. Whatsit transforms into a beautiful creature—something like a centaur and an angel. She shows them the evil force, **a dark shadow**, that is trying to take over the Earth and other planets. The **Evil Dark Thing** is then defeated by a star's light. Mrs. Whatsit explains that this is what Mr. Murry is fighting and that they all must fight it to free him. Before they leave, Mrs. Who gives the children a few gifts, including her **glasses**, and she warns them to stay together on their journey.

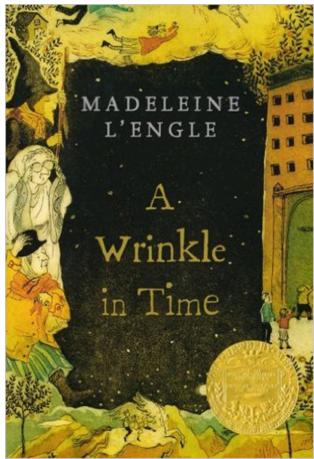


(Some elements of summary adapted from: [source](#))



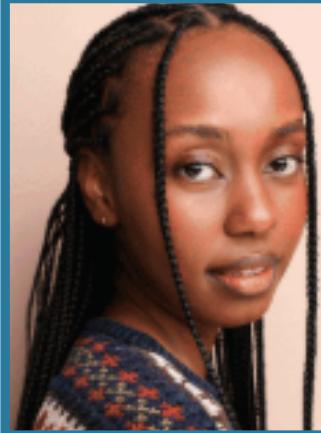
# A Wrinkle in Time Summary

Now knowing what they are up against, they travel through time and space, or **tesseract**, to the planet **Camazotz** where Mr. Murry is imprisoned. This planet looks very similar to Earth, except everything is in perfect order. The people all move in perfect rhythm to the pulse of **IT**, a giant disembodied brain that rules all behavior on the planet. The kids soon arrive at the Central Intelligence building where they are questioned by the **Man with Red Eyes**. He tries to overtake Charles Wallace's mind, and despite his exceptional intelligence, Charles Wallace is overpowered. He begins to robotically voice the message of IT and then leads Meg and Calvin to Mr. Murry. Meg and Calvin manage to pull Mr. Murry from his holding cell, but they are unable to defend themselves from IT's power.



They tesseract to a planet called **Ixchel**, leaving Charles Wallace behind. On Ixchel, Meg is cared for by a blind, furry creature whom she names **Aunt Beast**. The three Mrs. W's reappear and tell Meg that she has one thing that IT does not have, but she must discover this weapon herself. Meg realizes that she must return to **Camazotz** alone to save **Charles Wallace**. Back on Camazotz, Meg confronts **IT** and realizes that her power to love will defeat the evil darkness. Her love restores Charles Wallace to his true identity, and together they tesseract back to Earth. The family joyously reunites back home on Earth, and the Mrs. W's visit the happy scene.

# Meet the Actors



**Mersha Wambua** *they/she*  
(Meg)

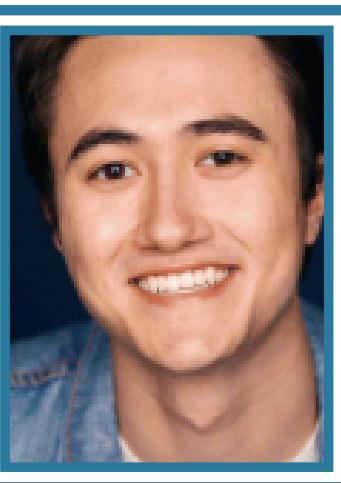
**Fun Fact:** She loves playing Animal Crossing: New Horizons on her Nintendo Switch. She has logged in 1300 hours on the game.

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**Jayson Brown** *he/him*  
(Charles Wallace and others)

**Fun Fact:** He rides a longboard!



**Daniel Burgess** *he/him*  
(Calvin & others)

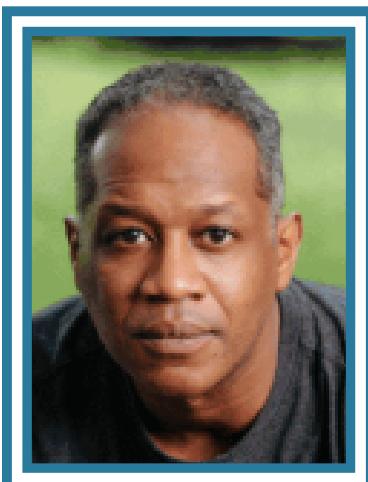
**Fun Fact:** He loves to juggle! (but only with a maximum of 3 objects)

# Meet the Actors



**Doug Hara** *he/him*  
(Mrs. Whatsit & others)

**Fun Fact:** He has been a beekeeper for 3 years and tends to 200,000 bees!



**Steven Anthony Wright** *he/him*  
(Father, Mrs. Which, and others)

**Fun Fact:** He loves to cook and especially enjoys making comfort soul food and brunch food.



**Julianna Zinkel** *she/her*  
(Mother, Mrs. Who, & others)

**Fun Fact:** She is a Girl Scout troop leader!

## Understudies

Symphony Thompson, Fern MoreHouse, Leanna Doyle

# *A Wrinkle In Time* Vocabulary

**ALTITUDE:** the height of an object in relation to the ground

**ARROGANCE:** extremely confident, sometimes to the point of being rude

**ATOM:** smallest unit of measurement

**BICKERING:** arguing

**BRUTISH:** strong and sometimes violent

**BURDEN:** a weight; something you carry with a lot of difficulty

**CAVIAR:** fish eggs, often eaten as a delicacy

**COMPULSION:** Urge. Constraint. An irresistible impulse to act

**DENSITY:** how much mass or space that something takes up

**DETIMENT:** injury or damage

**DIGNITY:** pride; being worthy of honor or respect

**DISTRAUGHT:** extremely upset

**FRANTICALLY:** emotionally out of control

**FRIVOLING:** acting silly or foolish

**IMPULSIVE:** acting without thinking

**LIVERWURST:** a lunch meat or sausage sometimes eaten on a sandwich

**MEGAPARSEC:** an astronomical unit of measure equaling 3.26 million light years; also a nickname for Meg

**PARAPHERNALIA:** a lot of extra things

**PIFFLE:** to talk foolishly or about things that don't matter

**PUTRID:** disgusting; often smelling awful

**QUIVERED:** shook

**RESIST:** to fight against

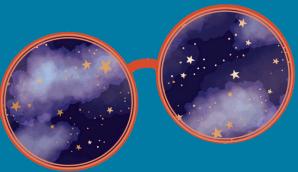
**TESSERACT:** a scientific concept. In *A Wrinkle in Time* it refers to the ability to quickly travel in time and space

**UNABRIDGED:** the full version of something; not edited or summarized

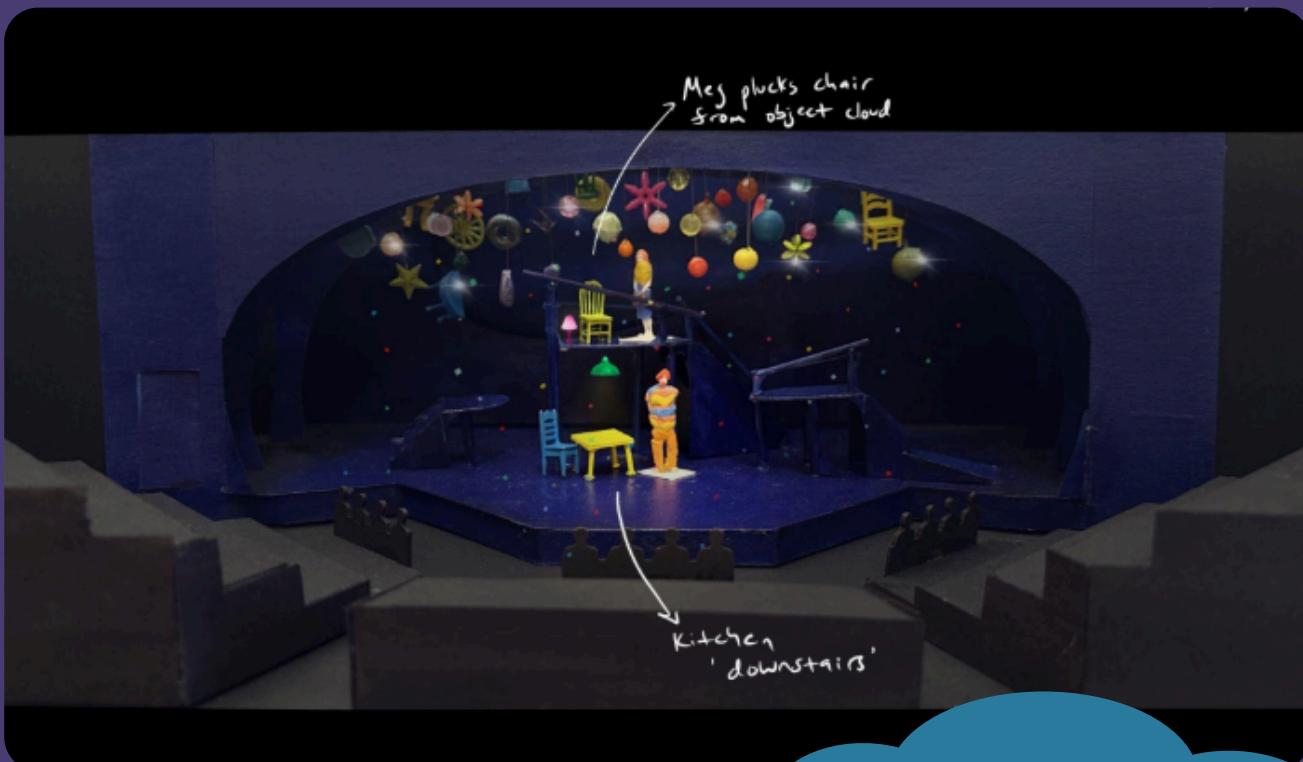
# Pre-Show Discussion Questions

1. In *A Wrinkle in Time* the word “tesser” means to travel through time and space. If you could “tesser” anywhere in space and time, where would you go?
2. If you could go on a time and space journey, would you go alone or with others? If you’d go with others, who would you invite to accompany you on your journey and why?
3. Imagine what life would be like on other planets and galaxies using your five senses. What would another planet look like, sound like, or feel like? What about smell or taste?
4. What does it feel like to belong? How do you help to make others feel they belong in your family, friend group, school, or other places?
5. Have you ever had to do something scary or difficult even though you did not feel brave in the moment? What makes you feel brave when you’re afraid?
6. What are some strengths and talents you have that make you proud? What are some strengths and talents that your friends have? Your family?

# A Wrinkle in Time Set Design



In *A Wrinkle in Time* the characters travel through the universe! To show that on the stage, our Set Designer chose to make an “object cloud” or a bunch of items hanging above the stage.



During the show, see how many of these things you can find in the object cloud!

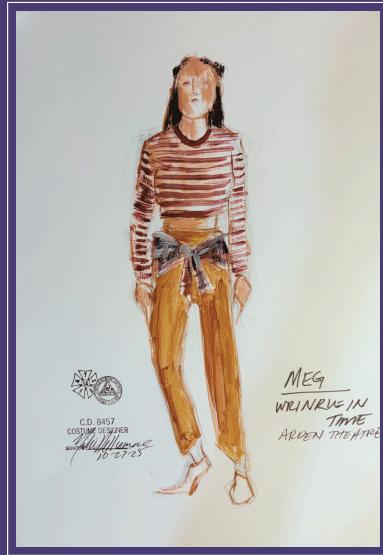


|              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| Chair        | Clock         |
| Stool        |               |
| Umbrella     | Tennis Racket |
| Wheel        |               |
| Rake         | Rubber Duck   |
| Guitar       |               |
| ★ Frying Pan | Teapot        |
| Lamp         |               |

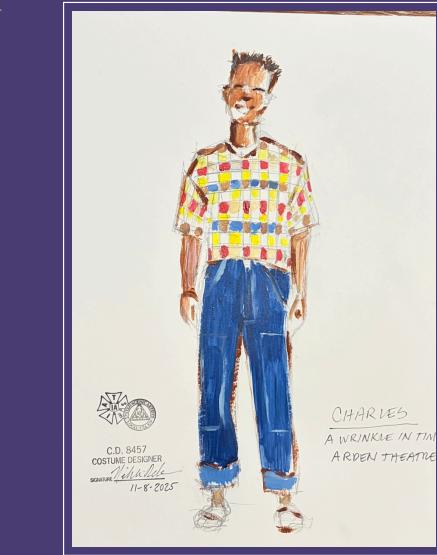
# A Wrinkle in Time Costume Designs

Here are some costume designs for characters in the show! What do you notice about the costumes for Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin below?

MEG



CHARLES WALLACE



CALVIN



Here are some costume designs for people who live in Camazotz. How are these costume designs different from Meg, Charles, Wallace, and Calvin? Why do you think they wear different colors on Camazotz?

CAMAZOTZ WOMAN



CAMAZOTZ MAN



MAN WITH RED EYES



# A Wrinkle in Time Costume Designs

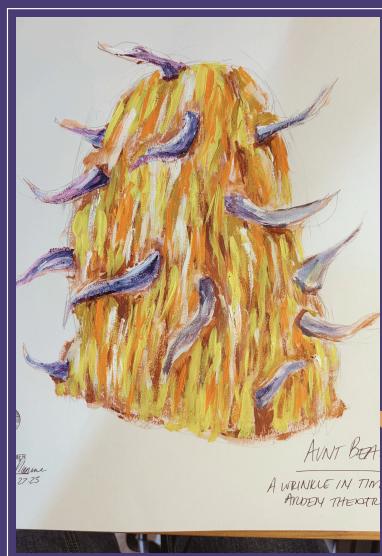
Here are some costume designs for strange and mystical characters like Mrs. Who, Mrs. Which, and Aunt Beast. How are these costume designs different from the characters on the previous page?



Mrs. Who's costume has a lot of colors, layers, and movement. She also wears her very important glasses!



Aunt Beast looks very different from any other character in the show. Why do you think this is? What would you do if you saw Aunt Beast?



Mrs. Which's costume is inspired by her name and her former nature as a star. What is different about her costume and Mrs. Who's?

What do you think Mrs. Whatsit's costume will look like?

Brainstorm!

# Pre-Show Worksheet: Create a Constellation

A **constellation** is a group of stars that make a picture or design. In *A Wrinkle in Time*, Mrs. Who calls the characters names of stars - *Cor Caroli* for Charles Wallace, *Megrez* for Meg, and *Kitalpha* for Calvin. Draw your own constellation shape below using dots for stars and lines to connect them (you can use the border designs as inspiration) and create a name for your constellation inspired by your own name.



**Write your name:**

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**Write your constellation name:**

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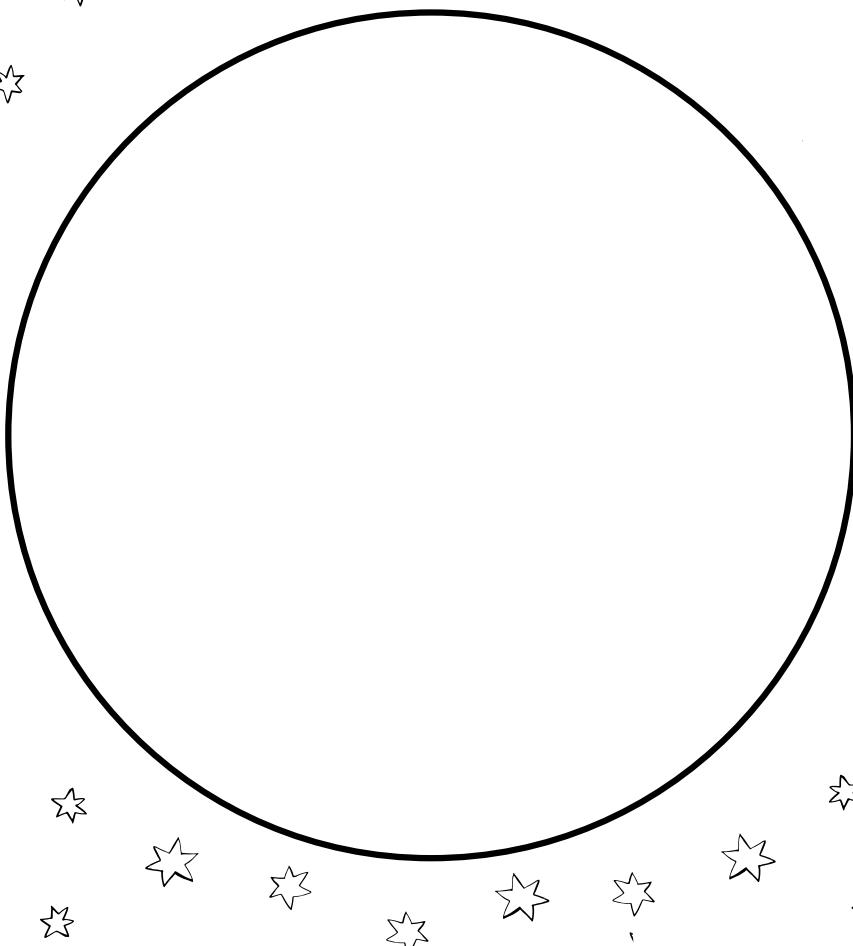


# Pre-Show Worksheet: Design Your Own Planet



In *A Wrinkle in Time*, Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin “wrinkle” or “tesser” to other planets. If you created your own planet, what would it look like? Draw your planet and answer questions below.

**Draw your planet here! Add colors, craters, and rings.**



**What's the name of your planet?**

**What kind of creatures live on your planet?**

**Do plants grow on your planet? What do creatures eat?**

**What do creatures do on your planet?**

# Discussion Questions for After the Show

- At the beginning of the play, Meg is very hard on herself and doesn't see her strengths. What helps Meg see herself differently?
- What are some of the biggest challenges the group faces on their journey? How do they overcome them? Why do you think they needed to stay together when they first go to Camazotz?
- What are some of the brave choices that Meg and other characters make? Can you think of a time when you had to make a brave choice?
- How were magical moments like “tessering” or Mrs. Whatsit’s transformation shown in the play? What “theatre magic” elements were used to tell the story?
- What would life be like for someone on Camazotz? How is it different from your own life? Do you think the citizens of Camazotz are as happy as IT says they are? Why or why not?
- How do you think Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin are changed by their adventure?

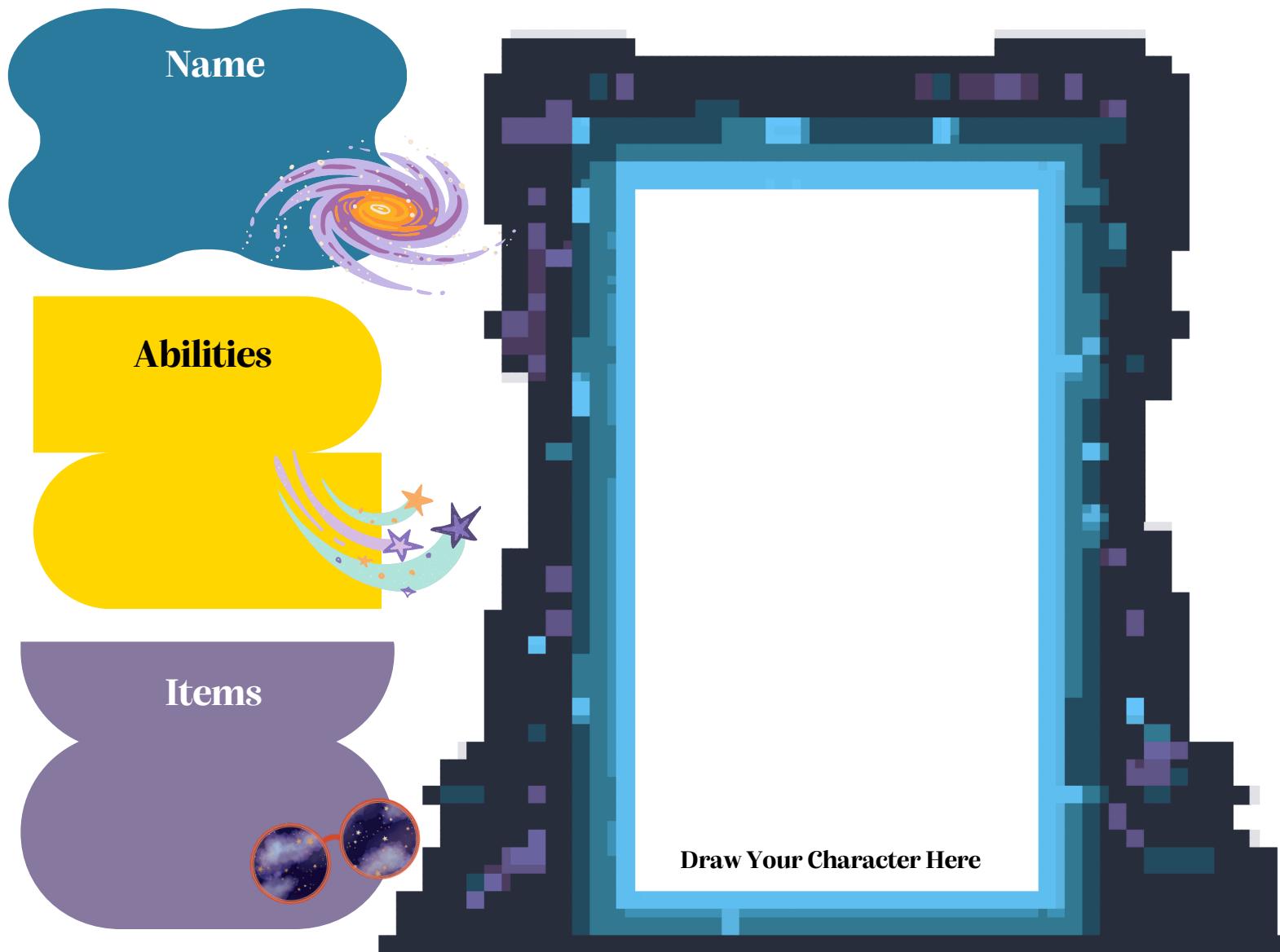


# Discussion Questions for After the Show

- Many people in the play misunderstand or judge Charles Wallace, but his family, Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which appreciate him. Mrs. Whatsit says, “yes, but at least you’re not trying to straighten him out, make him “normal.” You’re letting him be himself.” In your opinion, what makes Charles Wallace so extraordinary? Do you know anyone like him?
- Throughout the play, we meet creatures and characters who appear frightening, but are actually kind, like Aunt Beast. There were also characters or places, like Camazotz, that initially didn’t appear frightening, but were later found to be part of the “Dark Thing.” Why do you think the author chose to do this? Can you always tell what something is like by how it looks?
- In the play, Meg thinks that everything will be solved when they find her father, but the story doesn’t end there. She later finds out that she, not her father, has to save Charles Wallace. Meg states, “it has to be me. It can’t be anyone else.” Why must Meg be the one to go alone to Camazotz? How does she free Charles Wallace?

# Worksheet: Create Your Own *Wrinkle in Time* Character

In *A Wrinkle in Time*, Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which are all former stars in space with interesting powers and abilities. After seeing the show, create your own character, maybe a Mrs., Mr., or Dr. Where, When, or Why.



**What are some words you would use to describe your character?**

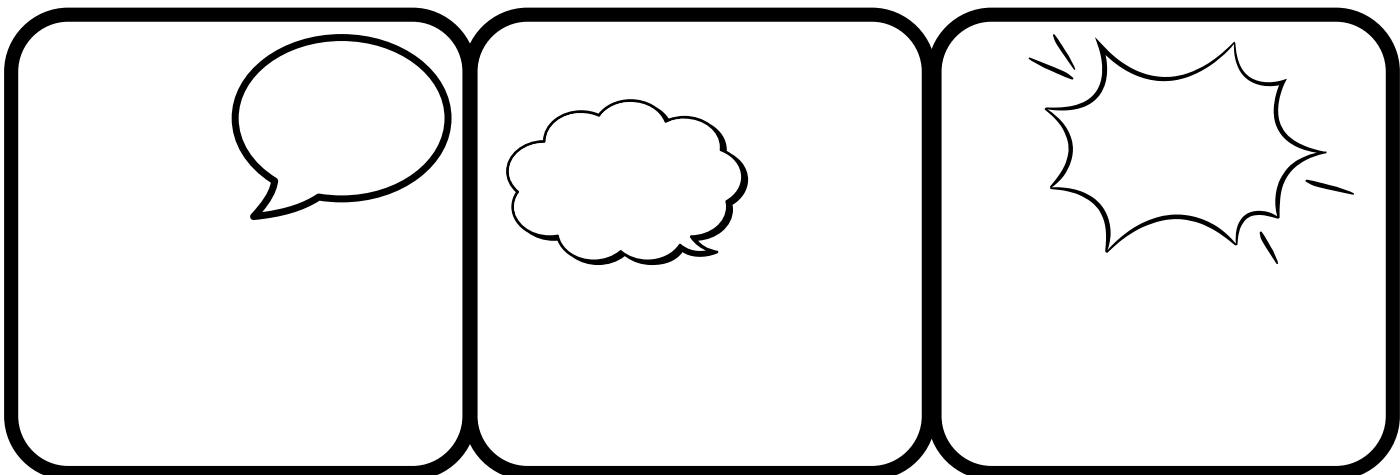
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# Worksheet: Continue the Story

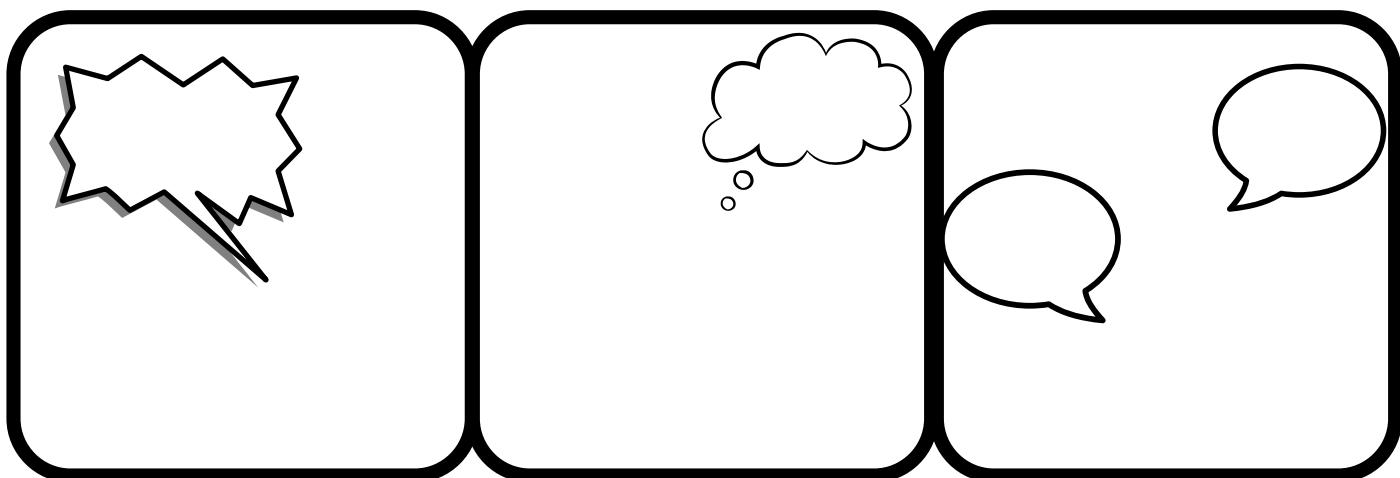
What happens after the story ends? Pick a character from *A Wrinkle in Time*, a place for them to tesser, and a problem for them to solve. Then, use the comic strip below to create your new adventure with a clear beginning, middle, and end.



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# Classroom Activity: Creating Camazotz

In the play, the Camazotz citizens all move together, following the beat of IT. Use these activities in your classroom to simulate what life on Camazotz is like.

## **Who Is the Leader?**

One student leaves the room. The others form a circle and secretly choose one leader who slowly leads body movements. The first student returns to the room has 3 guesses or 5 minutes to try to guess who the leader is.

**Challenge option:** Once students have played a couple rounds of the game, throw a curve ball by assigning no leader at all. Rather, the group must try to regulate itself as a whole...but sometimes the guesser still thinks there is a leader! Or choose all students as the leader and see what happens in the chaos.

**Discuss:** How can the people in the circle keep the identity of the leader secret? What kinds of movements are most successful in this game? What makes a good leader? How can the group stay together with no leader—or can it?

## **Group Mirror**

Form a circle. One person goes into the middle and makes a simple, repeatable movement and sound. All others imitate, trying to be exactly the same as the leader. Then, while still making the movement and sound, the leader makes eye contact with another person in the circle, inviting them to take the leader's spot. As they change places, the others must slowly change movements until they are imitating the new leader.

**Discuss:** What are the challenges of trying to imitate the leader exactly? Is it easier to be the leader or the follower?

# Video and Online Resources

## Classroom-Friendly Resources

### Adaptations:

- **An Audiobook Playlist of *A Wrinkle in Time***
  - The full text of the novel, organized chapter by chapter on YouTube
  - [LINK HERE](#)
- ***A Wrinkle in Time* Movie (2003)**
  - Rated TV-PG
  - Duration: 2hrs, 8 mins
  - Streamable on Disney+, Netflix, and Hoopla
- ***A Wrinkle in Time* Movie (2018)**
  - Rated PG
  - Duration: 2hrs
  - Available on Disney+

### Science Behind the Story:

- **What is Science Fiction?**
  - A short video that describes what we can expect from the genre
  - Duration: 2 mins, 37 sec
  - [LINK HERE](#)
- ***A Wrinkle In Time* is Probably Right about Multiple Dimensions**
  - A short video summarizing string theory, appropriate for grades 4+
  - Duration: 3 mins, 30 sec
  - [LINK HERE](#)
- **What is a Tesseract?**
  - A short video describing what a tesseract is
  - Duration: 3 mins, 30 sec
  - [LINK HERE](#)
- **Tesseract Facts for Kids**
  - A great online resource with multiple explanations and activities
  - [LINK HERE](#)

### More About the Author:

- **Meet Madeleine L'Engle, available on the Kennedy Center Website**
  - Some great information about the author of *A Wrinkle in Time*, including some video clips!
  - [LINK HERE](#)

# Craft Ideas



## Drops of 'IT'



Rave & Review

### Items Needed

- Paper (preferably cardstock or watercolor paper)
- Watercolor paints
- Paintbrushes
- Water

[\*\*Link Here\*\*](#)

### Directions

Grab some watercolor paints, some nice thick paper, and a glass of water. Start by letting the creative juices flow and paint the whole sheet of paper with scenery. Let it dry. Then, add a layer of water, and let it saturate the top of the sheet. Next, use a paintbrush to drop a darker watercolor shade on the paper. You will see that, when the drops hit the paper, the paint spreads much like "The Dark Thing" did in *A Wrinkle In Time*.

# Craft Ideas



## Anti-Gravity Galaxy in a Bottle



[Link Here](#)

### Items Needed

- Plastic Bottle
- Baby Oil
- Silver Glitter
- Purple and Blue Liquid Food Coloring
- Water
- A small container or bowl
- Tape or glue

### Directions

Put a few drops of food coloring in the bottom of a small container or bowl and fill it with water. Grab a clean, clear, empty water bottle. Add enough baby oil to fill half the water bottle then add some glitter. Pour in your colorful water close to the top of the bottle, leaving some room at the top so it doesn't overflow. Twist the cap back on the water bottle and tape or glue it shut. You now have your own galaxy in a bottle!

# Thank You for Joining Us!



## Enjoy the Show!