



# NEW SQUID ON THE BLOCK

*Footnotes Learning Guide*

## ABOUT THE SHOW

It can be hard to make friends...especially if you have tentacles! Journey to Antarctica in NEW SQUID ON THE BLOCK as a curious squid seeks connection and friendship in the most unlikely of places. Penguins, orcas, and jellyfish abound in this heartwarming tale of friendship and conflict resolution.

This 45-minute performance features beautifully handcrafted puppets, an original musical score by Ned Haskins, and a set that transforms from simple wooden shipping crates into an icy landscape surrounded by ocean. NEW SQUID ON THE BLOCK is wordless performance; the story is shared visually through pantomime, movements, and body language with musical instrumentation that reinforces the mood. The performance celebrates our ability to create connections, despite our differences.



Photo Credit: Randy Davidson

## Dear Educator,

We are thrilled to be sharing our work with you and your learners. This guide is just for you and your students, so you will know what to expect during our performance. Inside you will find FUN FACTS about the show, ART JARGON about puppetry, VOCABULARY related to the performance, THEATRE ETIQUETTE, and a MEET THE ARTISTS section, too. The excitement of a live performance can spark curiosity and ignite the imagination. We know you are busy, so none of these are necessary to do in advance, but some might be helpful to young learners.

Your feedback is always welcome and deeply appreciated. If you or your class have questions, please visit [www.barefootpuppets.com](http://www.barefootpuppets.com) and click CONTACT US. Those emails reach us quickly! We love to “talk shop” and share!

See you soon!  
Heidi Rugg & Co.



## THEATRE ETIQUETTE

A live **performance** is different from watching a movie or TV. The **performers** will be in the same room as you. They can see and hear you! As a member of the **audience**, you are an important part of the show. Below are **FOUR** ways to be a great audience member:

1. Stay quiet and seated during the performance so everyone around you may also see and hear.
2. Eyes and ears open wide! Watch the performers; listen to the music as it helps to tell the story.
3. Remember what you see and talk to your friends and family about it **AFTER** the show.
4. At the end of the show, **applaud** to show your thanks!

### *Questions to Explore:*

*Have you seen a live show before?*

*Can you think of any other ways to be a great audience member?*

## FUN FACTS:

There are **TWENTY TWO** different puppets in the show.

The puppets in this show are about 95% biodegradable!

All of the puppets were made by the **puppeteers**, Heidi and Nicole.

Heidi started building puppets when she was **TEN** years old after checking out a book from the library about making puppets.

The Penguin Puppets have **SLINKIES** inside their necks to keep them flexible.

It takes about six months to build a puppet show, but you cannot begin building until after you have a script.





### TYPES OF PUPPETS

There are three types of puppets in this show. Watch carefully and maybe you can figure out what kind of puppet you are seeing on stage!

**Hand Puppets** work by putting your hand inside the puppet. When you move your hand, you move the puppet, too.

**Rod Puppets** have a rod or a stick attached to the puppet. The rod can be attached to the top of the puppet, below the puppet, or behind the puppet. When you move the rod, you move the puppet. Sometimes a puppet can have more than one rod.

**Shadow Puppets** use light. When you place an image between a light and a surface, a shadow is cast onto the surface. If you move the object, the shadow moves in the same way.

### MEET THE ARTIST: HEIDI RUGG



Photo Credit: Randy Davidson

### PUPPETRY MATERIALS

The puppets in the show are made using a variety of materials that include boiled wool fabric, slinkies, glue, thread, papier-mâché, repurposed (recycled) cardboard, wool fibers, wood, springs, dowel rods, fishing line, springs, and handmade papers.

Heidi began building puppets at the age of ten. Her fifth grade teacher assigned book reports that were required to have (gasp!) visual aids. After a trip to the library, she built her very first puppet: a marionette of Anne Frank. For the rest of that year, she made puppets for all of her book reports.

Years later, she attended *Virginia Commonwealth University* (VCU) and studied both Art and Art History. Feeling the pull of “something more,” she took off “a semester” to follow her curiosity about puppetry. The semester turned into a two year apprenticeship with Master Puppet Builder, Barry Gordemer.

In 1997, she founded her own company, *Barefoot Puppet Theatre*, with a mission to create shows that spark curiosity and ignite imaginations. She has now been touring for 25-years. Heidi loves working with her hands, experimenting with new materials, designing puppet mechanisms, and doing the deep research needed to develop new works.

In 2020, she returned to VCU to finally finish up her degree during lockdown. She graduated *magna cum laude* in 2021 with a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies in Arts Integration and a minor in Art History. She is thrilled to be back on stage with YOU!



## RECOMMENDED READING

*Ten Animals in Antarctica: A Counting Book* by Moira Court, 2021: Beautifully illustrated using paper collage; perfect for read-alouds for young children.

*Giant Squid (Smithsonian)* by Mary Cerullo, 2012. Ages 8-11. A fascinating look at the mysterious deep-sea creature, the giant squid. Illustrated with a mix of actual photographs, charts, diagrams and illustrations this narrative provides factual information flavored with a dash of sea lore.

*Worlds of Shadow* by David and Donna Wisniewski. Englewood: Teacher Ideas Press, 1997. This is THE BEST BOOK on shadow puppetry in the classroom with information for all grade levels.

## WRITER'S BLOCK

1. What happens the next day? Have children pick a character (or two) and write the continuing story of what happens next.

2. Imagine the squid throws a birthday party for the baby penguin. What would happen? Who would come?

## CONTACT US!

**Barefoot Puppet Theatre**  
PO Box 26366  
Richmond, VA 23260

**Mobile: 804-334-4338**

E-mail us from [www.barefootpuppets.com](http://www.barefootpuppets.com) if you or your students have questions. Just click CONTACT US on the menu. Thanks!

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

*Celebrating 25 years of touring excellence!*

Barefoot Puppet Theatre is on a mission to spark curiosity and ignite imaginations. The company has toured award-winning programs to theatres, schools, libraries, children's museums and more since 1997. Children, families, educators, librarians, and theatre directors give enthusiastic reviews of our programs and invite us back again and again. Audiences appreciate their imaginative storytelling, the hand-crafted puppets, and beautifully built staging and scenery.

The company has performed throughout the country (and a bit beyond!). Notable venues include *The Smithsonian Discovery Theater*, *The Puppet Showplace Theatre* in Boston, *The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts*, and *The Center for Puppetry Arts* in Atlanta. We have also performed at numerous puppetry festivals throughout the country.

## SHOW CREDITS

**Heidi Rugg:** Puppeteer, Playwright, Puppet Design & Construction, Set Design

**Nicole Moran:** Puppeteer, Puppet Design & Construction

**Sam Rugg:** Set Construction, Troubleshooting, and Technical Support

**Ned Haskins:** Composer

**Randy Davidson:** Photography

