

Alliance Theatre

institute

Study Guide

The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd

Created as part of the Alliance Theatre's Dramaturgy by Students program

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with: Dorothy Bell, Drama Teacher, DeKalb Elementary School of the Arts
and: 7th and 8th Grade Drama Students at DeKalb Elementary School of the Arts



Directed by Tinashe Kajese-Bolden
By Stephen Brown

March 1 – April 1, 2023
The Alliance Theatre
Hertz Stage

Winner of the 2022/23 Alliance/Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting Competition
Recommended for Audiences Ages 11+

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*The Many Wondrous
Realities of Jasmine
Starr-Kidd*

Georgia Standards of Excellence

English Language Arts – Grade 7:

- ELAGSE7RI1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- ELAGSE7RI2 Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
- ELAGSE7RI3 Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).
- ELAGSE7RI4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- ELAGSE7RI8 Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.
- ELAGSE7RL10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- ELAGSE7W1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- ELAGSE7W2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- ELAGSE7W4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- ELAGSE7W7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.
- ELAGSE7W8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- ELAGSE7W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- ELAGSE7W6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.
- ELAGSE7W7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.
- ELAGSE7W8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- ELAGSE7W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- ELAGSE7W10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- ELAGSE7SL1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

English Language Arts – Grade 8:

- ELAGSE8RL1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- ELAGSE8RL2 Determine a theme and/or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- ELAGSE8RL3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
- ELAGSE8RL4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- ELAGSE8RI8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
- ELAGSE8RI10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- ELAGSE8W1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- ELAGSE8W2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- ELAGSE8W4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- ELAGSE8W5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- ELAGSE8W6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
- ELAGSE8W7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
- ELAGSE8W8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- ELAGSE8W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- ELAGSE8W10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- ELAGSE8SL1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Fine Arts – Grade 7:

- TA7.CR.1 Organize, design, and refine theatrical work.
 - a. Identify and rehearse effective communication skills.
 - b. Compare and contrast character types and relationships by analyzing character motivations, objectives, and goals.
 - g. Compare, contrast, and design elements of technical theatre.
- TA7.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments.
 - a. Execute effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills in performance (e.g. rate, pitch, volume, inflection, posture, facial expression, physical movement).
- TA7.RE.1 Engage actively and appropriately as an audience member.
 - a. Assess the role and responsibility of the audience as an integral part of theatre performances.
 - c. Predict how audience relationships will differ with venue and performance type.
 - d. Demonstrate appropriate audience behaviors.
- TA7.CN.1 Explore how theatre connects to life experience, careers, and other content.
 - b. Articulate relationships between theatre and life.
 - d. Describe the careers and professional responsibilities associated with theatre production (e.g. director, stage manager, designer, technician, playwright, actor).
- TA7.CN.2 Examine the role of theatre in a societal, cultural, and historical context.
 - b. Identify and analyze cultural influences on theatre.
 - c. Utilize multi-disciplinary research skills to obtain cultural and historical information to justify artistic choices (e.g. costuming, make-up, setting of a time period in relation to the play).

Fine Arts – Grade 8:

- TA8.CR.1 Organize, design, and refine theatrical work.
 - a. Differentiate the physical, emotional, vocal, and social dimensions of a variety of characters.
 - b. Compare the relationships and interactions between characters by analyzing character motivation (objectives, obstacles, strategy, action, stakes, outcome).
 - f. Evaluate the effectiveness of artistic and technical elements used in a theatre production.
- TA8.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments.
 - a. Demonstrate the physical, emotional, vocal, and social dimensions of a character in different types of theatre performances (e.g. rate, pitch, volume, inflection, posture, facial expression, motivation, physical movement).
 - b. Demonstrate appropriate ensemble skills throughout a performance.
 - c. Use appropriate listening and response skills during performances.
- TA8.RE.1 Engage actively and appropriately as an audience member.
 - a. Evaluate the role and responsibility of the audience as an integral part of media productions.
 - d. Demonstrate appropriate audience behaviors.
- TA8.CN.1 Explore how theatre connects to life experience, careers, and other content.
 - b. Defend how theatre reflects life.
 - d. Identify and analyze professions associated with different forms of production (e.g. director, stage manager, designer, technician, playwright, actor).
- TA8.CN.2 Examine the role of theatre in a societal, cultural, and historical context.
 - c. Apply advanced research skills to obtain appropriate cultural and historical information to rationalize artistic choices (e.g. costuming, make-up, setting of a time period in relation to the play).
 - d. Discuss theatre's role in reflecting the culture of a society.

Synopsis & Summary

Synopsis:

CAN AN ALTERED PAST LEAD TO A BETTER FUTURE? A TOUCHING STORY OF FATE, SECOND CHANCES, AND ACCEPTING WHAT WE CAN'T CHANGE.

Jasmine Starr-Kidd is a 12-year-old computer genius who can hack into the AT&T mainframe, build an artificially-intelligent friend named Grace, and convince the Department of Defense to send her high-powered lasers. But when she realizes that time travel is a lot easier to figure out than trying to convince her parents to get back together (no matter how many statistics she shows them), she decides to take matters into her own hands. Winner of the 2022/23 Alliance/Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting Competition, *The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd* is a heartwarming story of second chances and learning that sometimes the things you can't change are the things that should have happened all along.

Learn more: <https://www.alliancetheatre.org/production/2022-23/the-many-wondrous-realities-of-jasmine-starr-kidd>

Summary – in our own words:

The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd is the story of Jasmine, a 12-year-old genius computer programmer that excels in many categories. She has two loving parents, Kendra and Doug, who unfortunately split up. Jasmine feels as though her parents should be together, and when trying to convince them doesn't work, she takes matters into her hands. Will she get what she wants? Will it be as great as she thinks? *The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd* is a story filled with comedy and warmth about trying, second chances, and finding happiness.

The Alliance/Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting Competition

About:

THE ALLIANCE/KENDEDA NATIONAL GRADUATE PLAYWRITING COMPETITION IS A ONE-OF-A-KIND NATIONAL COMPETITION THAT TRANSITIONS STUDENT PLAYWRIGHTS TO THE WORLD OF PROFESSIONAL THEATRE.

The Alliance/Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting Competition solicits plays from the leading MFA graduate programs in the United States and then conducts a rigorous selection process to find four finalists and one winning play. The winner receives a full production as part of the Alliance Theatre regular season. The winner and four finalists also receive development opportunities for their works including staged readings with industry professionals in Washington, D.C. and Atlanta. A one-of-a-kind opportunity for emerging playwrights, the Competition transitions student playwrights to the world of professional theatre.

Learn more: <https://www.alliancetheatre.org/content/alliancekendeda-national-graduate-playwriting-competition>


Meet the Playwright:
Stephen Brown



About the Playwright – *in our own words*:

Stephen Brown is an author born January 18, 1961, in Los Angeles, California. He is an American producer, media executive and entrepreneur, and is the author of the script called "The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr- Kidd" and many other productions. His play The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd won an award called the Keneda National Graduate Playwriting Competition. He's been a Finalist for many projects. He's currently working on a new play commission for the Ensemble Studio Theatre / Sloan Project.

Learn more: <https://www.stephenbrownplaywright.com/>

Meeting with Stephen Brown on February 10, 2023	Key Takeaways & Fun Facts!
 <p>Image: clipartlibrary.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Brown has been in theatre since he was a child but didn't discover playwriting until college. He loved the feeling of being able to create a world and hearing actors bring his words to life. He has been hooked ever since.• Mr. Brown is in his final semester of graduate school at his dream school, Juilliard. Juilliard is one the best arts schools in the nation. He applied more than 5 times before he was accepted!• Many of the characters are inspired by Mr. Brown's family or people in his life.• The play originally ended very differently. Under deadline, Mr. Brown wrote the best ending he could think of, sent it off to competition, and won! When he went to back to re-read it, he didn't like it and made major changes.

Characters

CHARACTERS (only needs 6 actors)

Jasmine

Female. Bi-racial. 12-years-old. And a genius computer programmer specializing in data analytics and artificial intelligence. Yes, she's 12. Just go with it.

Doug

Male. White. Mid-40s. Jasmine's sweet, middle school science teacher dad. He is the living embodiment of a dad-joke. In a good way.

Kendra

Female. Black. Mid-40s. Jasmine's theoretical physicist mother. Warm and loving, but also more ambitious and driven than Jasmine's dad.

Todd

Male. White. 12. So so so naïve and optimistic.

Grace

Female. Black. 30s. The Artificial-Intelligence that runs Jasmine and Doug's home. Calm. Unemotional.

Corporal Delmar

Male. White. 20s. Real real southern dude. Has an accent. Laid back.

Uncle Craig

Male. Black. Late-30s. Jasmine's uncle. But acts like a petulant older brother.

Future Jasmine

Female. Bi-racial. 30s. An older, wiser Jasmine. Has a nose piercing.

*** NOTE ON CASTING ***

Todd / Corporal Delmar should be played by the same actor.

Grace / Future Jasmine should be played by the same actress.

Imagine...

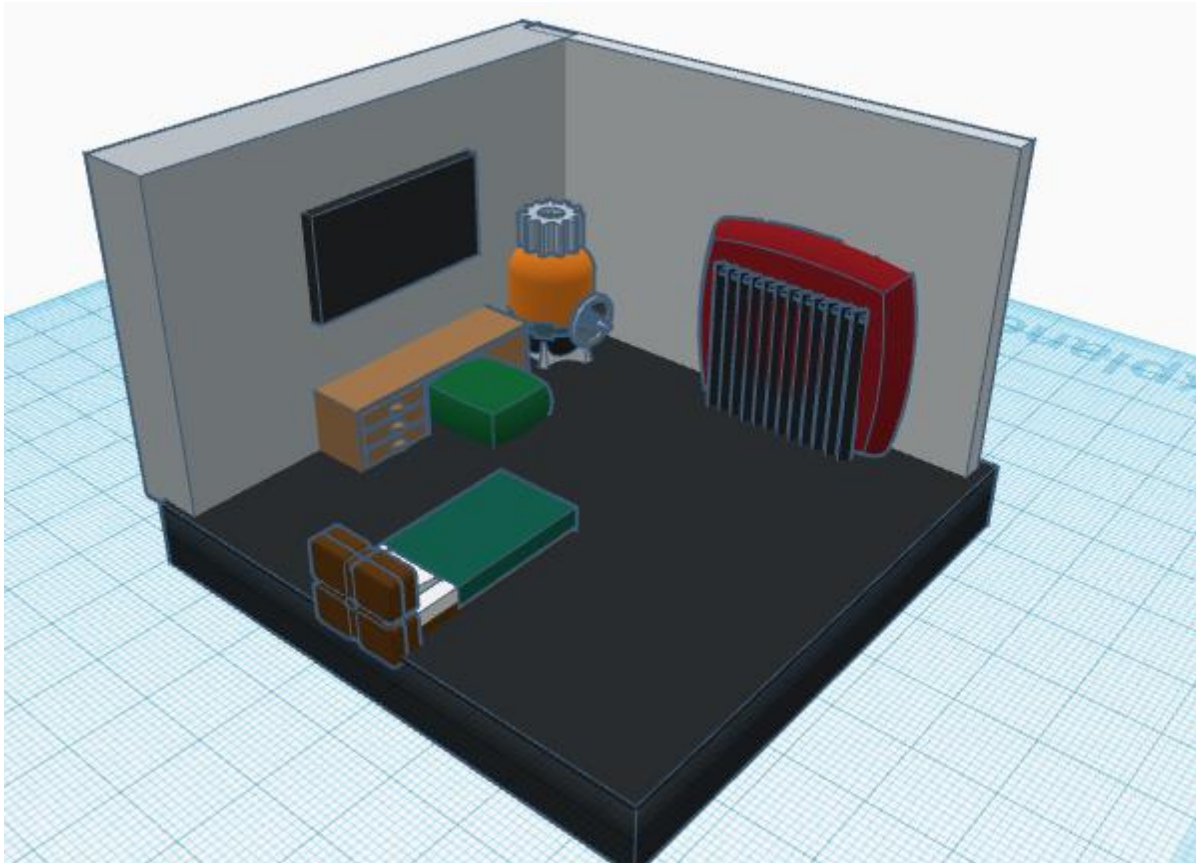
You have been cast as the actor who will play either Todd/Corporal Delmar OR Grace/Future Jasmine.

- As an actor, would you prefer to play 1 role, or would you welcome the opportunity to play double or multiple roles?
- Compare the character descriptions for the two characters you will play – what do they have in common, and how are they different?
- What techniques or strategies would you use to play double or multiple roles?

Fun with Design: Set

The set is the space in which the play takes place. In this play, almost everything happens in one space: Jasmine's room.

Our set rendering: This image (pictured below) is our idea for what the set may look like. The script describes "an absolute mess of clothes and other unidentifiable items on the floor. Her walls are a mix of Beyoncé, Taylor Swift, Sci-fi posters, shelves and shelves of books on coding, and a workstation with three computer monitors. And sitting above her workstation is a massive TV screen built into the wall. Everything should center around this screen.



Jasmine's Room: Brown desk with a generator, screen and green bed, and Time Machine!

Source: www.tinkercad.com, and all the wonderful people who made the script and contributed to this!

What would you add?

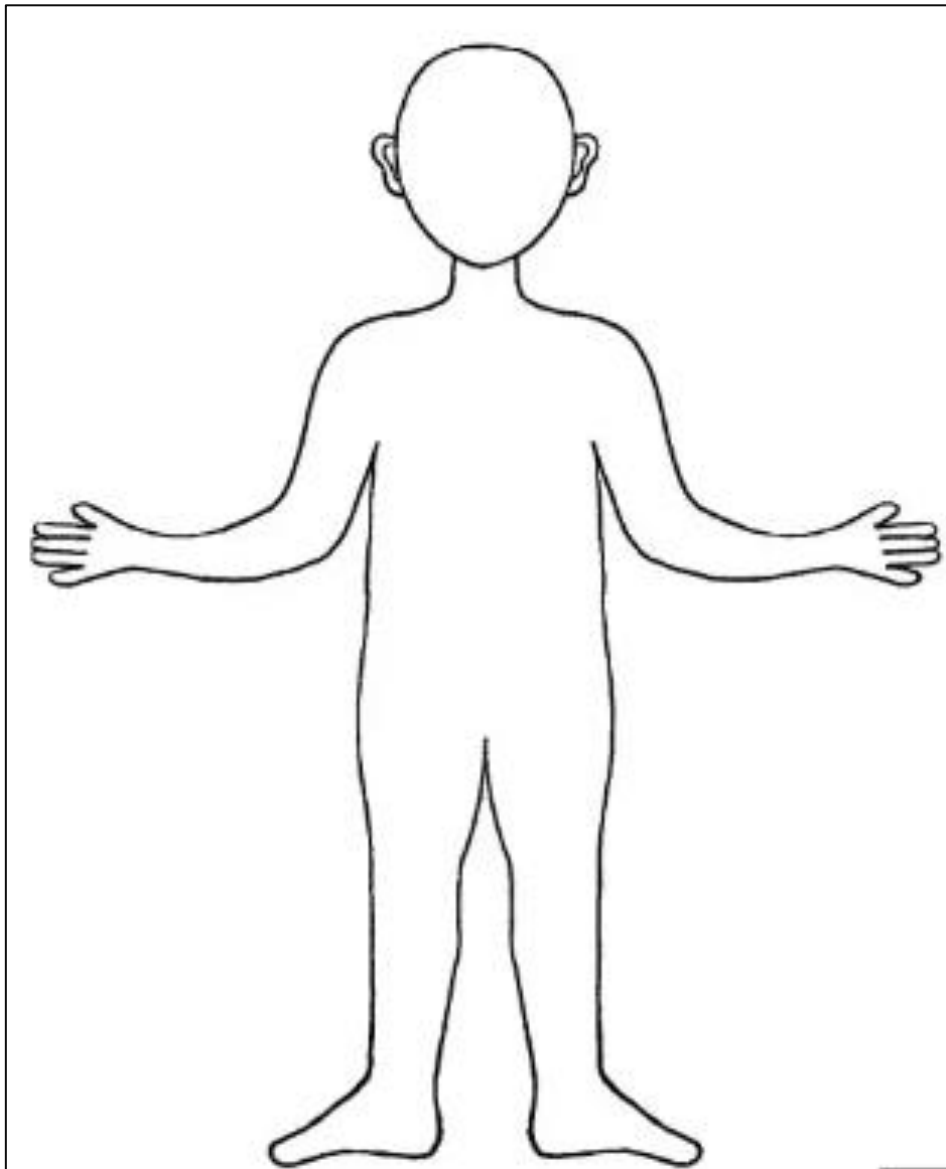
Draw your own design, or add onto this one!

Fun with Design: Costumes

“Costumes” refers to the clothes, accessories, and hairstyles, and makeup worn by the actors. In this play, we get to know Jasmine (age 12) and Future Jasmine, an older and wiser Jasmine in her 30s.

Imagine a Future You.

- What will you be like in 20 years?
- Sketch a costume rendering of Future You, below.
 - Illustrate clothes, accessories, hairstyles, and makeup that reveal who you are, and who you hope you will become.
- Use the template below to get started if it is helpful to you! (source: template.net)



Discussion Questions & Journal Prompts



source: clker.com

Pre-Show Discussion Questions

1. What do you consider to be the ideal family? Is there even such a thing?
2. What things or experiences make you most happy?
 - Imagine that thing that makes you most happy could make someone else unhappy. How would you handle that?
3. Do you think it's possible for adults and young people to fully understand one another, and their experiences and perspectives?

Pre-Show Journal Prompt

Describe a situation in which you later found yourself wishing you could go back and handle it differently.

- What was the situation?
- How did you handle it at the time?
- How did you (later) wish you had handled it?

Post-Show Discussion Questions

1. What's next?
 - Where did the play end?
 - What do you think will happen between Jasmine and Uncle Craig's last try and Future Jasmine's speech?
2. Consider a Past You.
 - If you could go back and stop yourself from making a "mistake," what would you tell your past self?
3. Imagine an alternate ending for the play.
 - Where do the characters end up in your version?
 - What lessons are learned?

Post-Show Journal Prompt

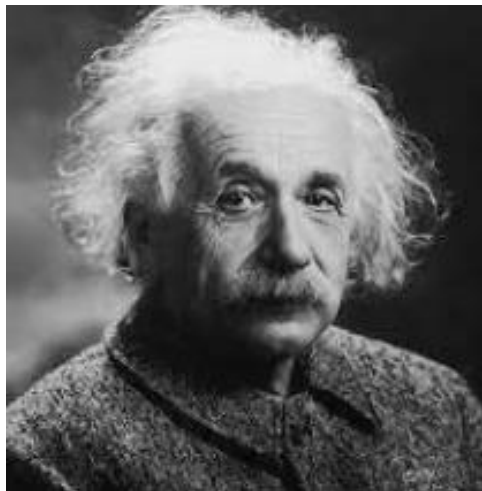
Imagine – and describe, in detail – a Future You.

- What do you look like?
- Which relationships are most present and important in your life?
- What traits do you possess now that simply will never change?
- What's different about you (today) and Future You?

Vocabulary

Word or Phrase (Part of Speech)	Definition
Amicable (adjective)	Having a spirit of friendliness without serious disagreement or rancor
Command History (noun)	A feature in many operating system shells, computer algebra programs, and other software that allows the user to recall, edit and rerun previous commands
Computer Log (noun)	A record of events that occur in a computer system, such as problems, errors or just information on current action
Interloper (noun)	A person who is not where they are supposed to be
Mainframe (noun)	Often called a mainframe or big iron, a computer used primarily by large organizations for critical applications like bulk data
Perusal (noun)	The action of reading or examining something
Recon (noun)	Short for reconnaissance which means an observation of a region to make sure of its strategic features
Structured Query Language or "SQL" (noun)	Regulated programming language that is used to administer related databases and perform various operations on the data in them
Sympathy (noun)	Feelings of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune/understanding between people; common feelings
Ted Talk (noun)	A recorded public-speaking presentation that was originally given at the main TED annual event or one of its many satellite events around the world

Historical Figure



source: Biography.com

Albert Einstein was a German-born theoretical physicist, widely acknowledged to be one of the greatest and smartest people in the world. Einstein's ***theory of relativity*** says that what we perceive as the force of gravity arises from the curvature of space and time.

Themes

The following themes are significant to this story --

1. Failure and Trying Again

Part of learning is trying something many different times and failing, or making many mistakes before finally getting it right. What's something you've worked very hard to learn?

2. Divorce and its Effect on Children

Coming to terms with her unique family unit is very important to Jasmine's journey. According to familymeans.org, children with family members going through divorce may have a hard time relating to others, tend to have less social contacts, and can have a hard time adjusting to changes in their new family situation.

3. Happiness

Jasmine believes she would be happier if she could "fix" her family.

- Do you agree with her?
- If you could change one thing in your life, what would that be?

4. Neurodiversity

People experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways. These varying experiences is connected to neurodiversity, as defined by health.harvard.

5. Social Emotional Learning

This term refers to the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring (source: drc.casei).

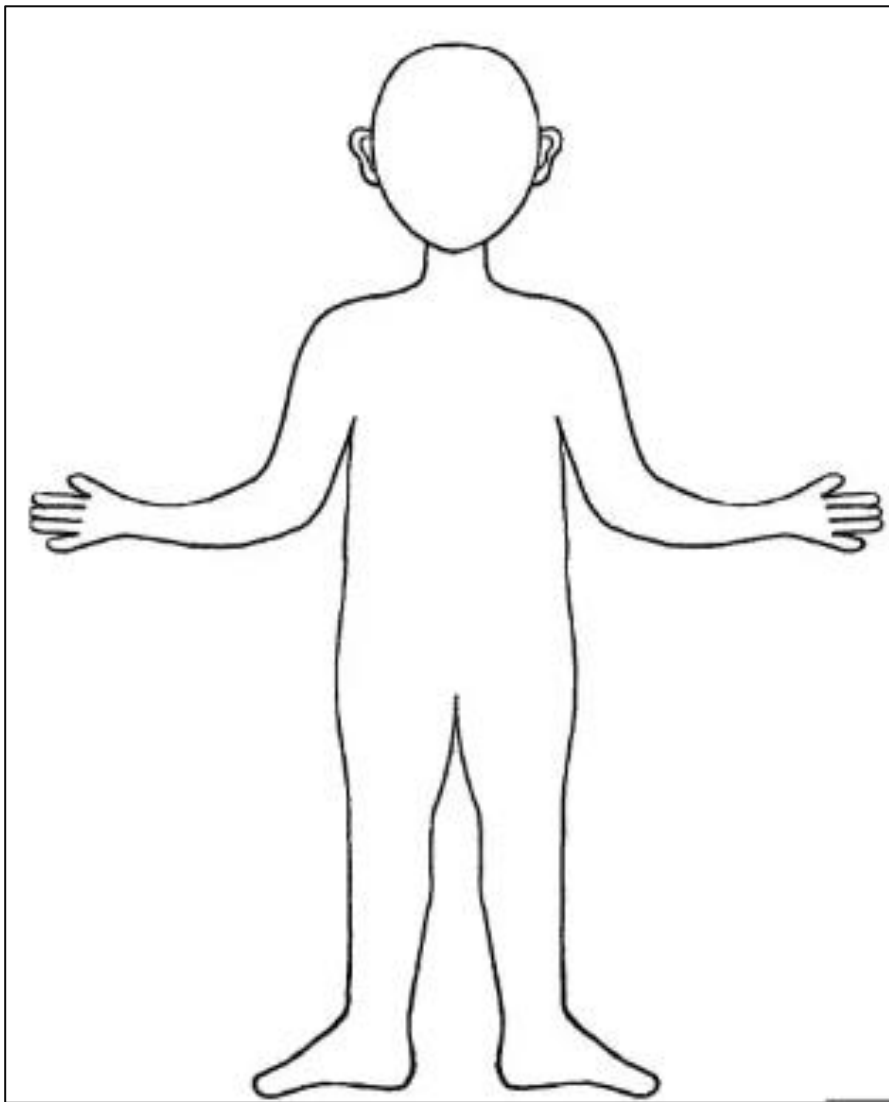
The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd

Post-Show
Fun with Design: Costumes

Before using the time machine, Jasmine needs a special “TS-83 Mark 1 suit that’s both heat and radiation resistant.”

Directions:




- Design this special time-travel suit!
- What will it look like?
- What materials will you use?
- Does it have any unique functions or functionality?
- Use the template below to get started if it is helpful to you! (source: template.net)



Post-Show Fun with Design: Lighting, Props, and Sound

When creating the on-stage world of the play, designers must work together to make everything look and feel like it's part of the same world. It's the ultimate group project – everyone has their own job that doesn't work without everyone doing their part.

Lighting, props, and sound are key technical elements in a theater production.

Lighting	Props	Sound
 <p>Image: iconfinder.com</p>	 <p>Image: istockphoto.com</p>	 <p>Image: 123rf.com</p>
<p>Lighting is used to draw the audience's focus to the character or element it is highlighting.</p>	<p>A prop is an object used on stage (or on screen) by actors during a performance and the props master is the person who gathers or creates them.</p>	<p>Sound design defines the play or musical's overall atmosphere to aid in telling the story.</p>

Imagine you are a member of the technical team responsible for building the time machine in *The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd*.

How would you use lighting, props, and sound to create this essential technical element in the show?

Time Machine rendering:

Jasmine Starr-Kidd Word Search

G K V G C I E R E C D C Y U D U B V P X
R P E C D U L C A Z J A S M I N E T Z L
T N K N M D N D A B T M B W P V H K T X
N M E M D E D R Q R J F Z G L T O U D K
H J J H I R B A Q A G S D D O T D J I S
Z W H D A X A M T I M E T R A V E L V X
L H U W C A M A M J W B M C S M T F O R
C A B U H S F T X G T W O J D K R U R B
O Z S M L C C U T Y T R U E C L I N C T
J X S E T B O R U T P X T N U A S T E P
A A W O R Y U G Z O G O Q N N T A V H Z
V J T K N B D Y R C I G C N Y D O V B V
H P W Y D P E A C O D L U R J E O W J K
M Y G Y K Z L A O Q E H G O B T P X V C
B K S K S D E B M C V R S P D A A F P I
Z A E Q E J U W R S Q S S I W S V C V R
X M S L E J A A L Z E Q R Y D E A A J M
E Z M U E N I M S A J E R U T U F Y T W
M A G U W G O F C C S G I X J D P J A D
R Z E M R T J C Y A L I R G Z R P K T J

Audience
Doug
Grace
Laserbeams
TimeTravel

CorporalDelmar
Dramaturgy
Jasmine
Rick
Todd

Divorce
FutureJasmine
Kendra
TedTalk
UncleCraig

Find the word in the puzzle.

Words can go in any direction.

Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

Works Cited

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