



Study guide ✨

PINOCCHIO

A Word from The Director

If the story of this little puppet seems timeless, that is because it is about much more than just his nose that grows longer whenever he tells a lie. Pinocchio is one of the most beautiful representations of mankind, with all its faults and shortcomings but also its most touching and noble aspects.

Collodi did not want to relate the feats of princes and princesses, rather he decided to tell the life of someone who was born at the very bottom of the social ladder, at the lowest rung imaginable: that of a “common block of firewood, one of those thick, solid logs that are put on the fire in winter”. Pinocchio is a story about the growth of a tiny being who has the misfortune of being born into a difficult environment and who will learn, through the many hardships of life, to become what he has always dreamt of becoming: a real boy, a good son, a righteous man.

And this is a much-needed story in this dark and cynical time when descendants of the Fox and the Cat are making headlines on a daily basis. We still need Pinocchio because life, with all the hardships and hurdles it still throws at us, nonetheless remains a magnificent adventure. We still need Pinocchio because telling the story of a small block of wood dreaming to become human brings hope to a world that is losing its humanity and becoming increasingly dependent on machines.

And because a child that grows up and carves out his place in the world is still a miracle of life. With or without the help of the Blue Fairy.

Bon spectacle!

Hugo Bélanger

*Tout à
Trac* ✧

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Guidebook compiled and written by
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Excerpts from Tout à Trac
website and program content.
Production Photos by Jérémie
Battaglia.

PINOCCHIO

About the Show

Pinocchio is one of those stories that has been told for years, in many different ways. There are books, graphic novels, short stories, plays, operas, and paintings based on the mischeivous wooden puppet, just to name a few! Tout à Trac's version mixes ideas from the original Carlo Collodi tale with ideas from more modern popular versions, and then added in a few new ideas just from the mind of the director! Here is a little bit about this version of Pinocchio.

Summary

This adaptation of Carlo Collodi's book tells the story of the puppet, Pinocchio, and his quest to be a real boy. Geppetto is a poor, elderly man whose job as a wooden toy maker is falling by the wayside, as technology and machines have taken over the toy industry. Planning to use his last log in the fire to warm himself, Geppetto is surprised when the log talks to him, and even more surprised when he finds himself carving it into a boy.

"Pinocchio" means "little pine" or "pine nut" in the Italian language.

As with all versions of this classic tale, we follow Pinocchio on his journey to becoming a real boy. However, one key difference in this version is the idea that Pinocchio becomes a "real boy" by working hard and learning to care for others, not by magic. During the course of the play, Pinocchio will experience all forms of temptation, and will have to face the consequences of his actions. He will battle with the lure of money, fame, false religion, easy success, and more, and eventually learns that none of these things really matter. When the Blue Fairy finally appears at the end of the play, she tells Pinocchio that he is already a real boy. There is no magic wand changing him from wood, but instead a gradual growing up of the character.

During this production of Pinocchio, only 4 actors become 10 characters and/or puppets!

How does one actor play several characters, and make each one distinct?

Characters

Pinocchio – a puppet

Geppetto – an old man who makes wooden toys

The Talking Cricket – a talking cricket!

The Fox – a thief

The Cat – his sidekick

Mangiafuoco – director of the puppet theatre

Candlewick – a disobedient boy

The Jolly Man – the host of Toyland

The Blue Fairy – a fairy who protects children and grants their wishes

Misbehaving children...



Above: Costume Design for Pinocchio.
Designed by Patrice Charbonneau-Brunelle.

Theatre Conventions

Tout à Trac brings the classic story of Pinocchio to life while incorporating creative, sophisticated elements of theatre. Explore the theatre conventions used in this show to prepare your students for the play.

Puppetry

Tout à Trac uses imaginative puppetry, not only to create many characters with only a few actors, but also to solve the challenges presented by the unique and fantastical stories they present.

- Tout à Trac often blurs the lines between fantasy and reality in their work. In *Pinocchio*, this idea is woven throughout the play, even with the idea of 'puppet' versus 'real person'. For example, Pinocchio and the Talking Cricket are represented by a puppet **and** by the actor manipulating the puppet at the same time. Sometimes actors and audience members will interact with the puppet, and sometimes with the actor. Using partial puppets allows the actors to perform to the audience and interact with other actors onstage, but still create an imaginary character easily.
- During one of the scenes, some characters will be seen as shadow puppets. The director uses this effect to show the sea monster and the action surrounding it. What do students think might be a reason to use this type of puppetry? How would the effect be different if we never saw the whale? Which way do you think is more effective?

Masks

Tout à Trac often uses Commedia dell'arte style half-masks for their performances. In this play, the Fox and the Cat both wear half-masks like this. What do you think is the benefit of using a half-mask as opposed to a full mask?

Property and Set Design

This performance has a stationary set that does not change. However, the set itself is filled with moving pieces, puppets, and props that create different scenes throughout the show. Toys in Geppetto's workshop will become props or puppets in other scenes while the wheels on the wall become gears, etc.

The ingenious set design ensures that every piece of the set is used during the performance.



Photo credit: Jérémie Battaglia.

Following the internationally acclaimed *Alice in Wonderland*, Tout à Trac now revisits Collodi's tale about the world's most famous puppet: Pinocchio. Born from a talking piece of wood carved by the old Geppetto, the rebellious, cheeky and careless Pinocchio discovers the meaning of growing up through a thousand trials. To become a real boy, he will have to face Mangiafuoco, the terrible Puppet Master, suffer the malice of Mr. Fox and his sidekick, the Cat, escapes from Toyland and save his father from the belly of the giant fish! *Pinocchio* from Tout à Trac is another amazing journey into the heart of childhood and imagination...

PINOCCHIO

Based on Carlo Collodi's classic
Written and Directed by Hugo Bélanger
Translated by Bobby Theodore
A production of Tout à Trac

in co-production with the Tennessee Performing Arts Center and Place des Arts

Actors: Krystel Descary or Milva Ménard, Claude Tremblay or Joachim Tanguay, Christian Perrault or Isabeau Proulx Lemire, Milva Ménard or Émilie St-Germain

Designers:

Patrice Charbonneau-Brunelle (set and costumes design) Luc Prairie (lighting design)
Patrice d'Aragon (music composer and sound design)
Marie-Pierre Simard (puppet design) Marie-Pier Fortier (masks design) Joannie d'Amours (props design)
Josianne Dicaire (assistant stage director)

Tout à Trac website: www.toutatrac.com



Tout à trac (pronounced too-ta-trak): French expression. "without stopping" 1493;
Aged - while expressing itself in an abrupt manner, suddenly and without preparation.

Since 1998, Tout à Trac has been **exploring theatre** through various mediums such as **masks, tales and puppetry**, never limiting itself, but rather always following its imagination wherever the creative process leads.

Pursuers of **imaginary lands**, digging in invisible worlds and exploring a universe where the impossible is possible, Tout à Trac has been constantly searching for a theatre that **embraces magic and dreams**.

By entering fantastic worlds, and by being archaeologists of the invisible, the company strives to **dust off the classics of children's literature** and to help audiences discover or re-discover them from a different angle.



Before the Show

A few ideas to get you started...

Read the Book! You may choose to use any number of versions of *Pinocchio*, but we suggest you consider reading the original version. (A complete copy of the original text is available online at <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/500>.)

Attending the Theater - How many in the class have attended a live performance? What performance did they attend? Was it a play? Use a K-W-L (what I know, what I want to know, what I learned) chart to help identify what the students already know about live theater. Guide students to think about what kinds of things might be involved in live theater—what might they expect to see when attending a theater production (real actors, sets, costumes, music, etc.), how will this differ from a movie theater?

Onstage Ideas – How do students think the story of *Pinocchio* might be acted out on stage. How might an actor “be” Pinocchio? What might make it difficult to act out the story (Pinocchio is a wooden puppet, animals talk, etc)? As a class, create a list of some of the ‘problems’ actors might have with this story. Tell students that when they attend the performance they should think about the ways the actors deal with some of these problems.

Think about all the scenes in *Pinocchio*. How you would represent the setting on stage? Draw a picture of your set design.

Puppet Pantomime - In an open space in the classroom, have students stand shoulder width apart. Instruct students to imagine that they are “wooden”. Starting with their arms, explain that they now have hinges in their elbows and can move their arm joints, but they are still made of wood. Next they have hinges in their shoulders. Next they have hinges in their back, which allow them to bend forward or stand up-right, or rotate left to right.

Mask Making - This version of *Pinocchio* uses masks on two of the characters. What are the pros of using masks? How can they help create a character? What are the cons? Create a mask of a character from *Pinocchio*.

No Schools! No Rules! No Parents! Pinocchio chose not to follow rules, and throughout the story he tries to find the easy way, whether to success, fame, or fortune. In breaking the rules, he found himself in a lot of rough situations. Why are rules important? Review class rules and talk about why each one is necessary. Then, talk about Theater Etiquette, and the importance of following the rules in the theater during the show.

Writing Prompts

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>Narrative</i> | Tell the story of an inanimate object that suddenly comes to life. |
| <i>Descriptive</i> | Describe a friend or family member you would like to build. What characteristics would you want them to have? |
| <i>Expository</i> | The puppet Pinocchio is coming to your school to speak about his experiences. Explain what preparations you and your teacher will need to make before his arrival. |
| <i>Persuasive</i> | The puppet Pinocchio is new at your school. Your friends make fun of him because he is made of wood. Persuade them why they should get to know him and become friends. |



Photo by Jérémie Battaglia.

Lesson 1 – Human

Puppet

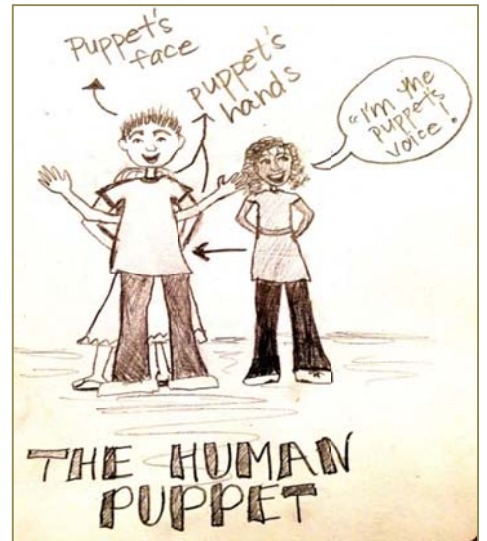
Written by: Mia Rose Ernst

Through exploring and playing with the idea of “good and bad conscience” students develop a greater awareness of what “conscience” is and how it can *guide* us in our decision making, especially in tough situations.

Instructional Procedures:

Warm-Up:

- Ask for two volunteers and demonstrate working together to create a human “puppet” by having one person place his arms behind his back, another student directly behind him with her arms coming through to act as his hands, and the third person directly behind her, acting as the voice (as seen in the drawing to the right). As the voice speaks, the hands will gesture accordingly and the first person will move his mouth along with the words. All three must cooperate to act as one.
- Split into groups of three and give students several minutes to try this for themselves. Let them know it is okay to feel silly and have fun but that they also have to work together to make the puppet function! Encourage them to quickly take turns playing the various parts of the “puppet” so that everyone gets a turn to do each; in the “puppet show” they are about to create they will only get to play one part.



Discuss:

- Define “conscience” (*an inner voice acting as a guide to one's behavior, good or bad*)
- Define “temptation” (*a desire to do something that may be wrong or unwise*)
- Define “consequence” (*a result or effect of an action*)
- Explain that, in *Pinocchio*, the main character often finds himself in situations in which he is tempted to not listen to his good conscience and follows poor advice, leading to bad consequences.
- Can the students think of times they were tempted to not listen to their good conscience?
Examples: finding a lost wallet, lying about brushing your teeth before bed, being in a candy store when the owner has stepped into the back room, pretending your homework is finished so you can go hang out with your friends, etc.

Creating the “Puppet Show”:

- Combine the groups of threes into **groups of six** (it is okay if there are more than six, so long as everyone has a role to play in the show).
- Give students time to decide on the **dilemma** for their story (i.e. puppet finds a stolen wallet) and to **cast** their puppet show, explaining that casting means deciding who plays what part. Each group will need the following characters: The Puppet's Face, The Puppet's Hands, The Puppet's Voice, The Good Conscience, The Bad Conscience, and Ensemble Member(s) (*various roles that help set up the story, i.e. man that loses his wallet*).
- Outline the general **plot** of the human puppet show, such as:

- The puppet enters into a dilemma (*i.e. man drops wallet, puppet finds it*)
 - The bad conscience appears and tries to tempt the puppet to listen to him/her (*“keep the wallet!”*)
 - The good conscience appears and tries to tempt the puppet to listen to him/her (*“return it!”*)
 - The puppet decides whose advice to follow and acts accordingly (*the puppet returns the wallet*)
 - The consequence occurs (*the grateful man rewards him!*)
- Give students time to collaborate and **rehearse** their show, emphasizing that all roles must work together to tell a clear story to the class using the plot outline provided.
 - Finally, groups take turns **performing** their human puppet shows for each other!

Reflection:

How did it make you feel to have the “bad conscience” tell you to do the wrong thing? How did it make you feel to have the “good conscience” tell you to do the right thing? Why is it important to listen to the “good conscience?” Discuss how each choice has consequences and how people are responsible for the consequences of their choices. What consequences did Pinocchio face?

Variation – Have students act out BOTH options, following the good and the bad conscience and show both to the class. What are the consequences of each action?



The Talking Cricket. Photo by Jérémie Battaglia

Lesson 2 – Pinocchio Part II

Students will write a sequel to Pinocchio.

Note: Students will need prior knowledge of the story *Pinocchio*.

Warm-up:

- For hundreds of years *Pinocchio* has been re-written, adapted and used as inspiration for other stories and works of art. This version is a mixture of several *Pinocchio* ideas combined with new elements into one play. What versions are students familiar with?
- Select two versions of the story to look at, one being the version you have already studied. The second version you use could be the opera version, a movie, a children's storybook, or any other version you find. Many short stories and short videos can also be found with a simple search online.
- What are the differences in these versions? How does each ending vary? Use a Venn Diagram to compare the 2 versions.
- Do students think all versions will tell the same story, or will some tell only part of the story? Or will some perhaps tell a different story altogether, like what would take place before or after the traditional story (like a prequel or sequel)?

Instructional Procedures:

- The original version of *Pinocchio* was written as a serial, and published in a weekly magazine. What is a 'serial'? Can students give you an example of one? (Have any of them read a comic strip or graphic novel? These are often modern versions of a serial story.)
- Ask students to think of *Pinocchio* as episodes, and split the story up into scenes – what do they think would happen in each 'episode' or week of the serial?
- Collodi originally ended the story after what became Chapter 15 of the book with *Pinocchio* being hung. This was his ending. He was then talked into continuing the story, so he wrote the second half of what we now consider the full story.
- What is the next part of the story? Imagine you are Collodi and have now been asked to write more to your story. What would happen next? Will *Pinocchio* stay out of trouble? Stop lying? Or will he still sometimes forget to follow the rules? What new lessons will *Pinocchio* learn as he grows up as a real boy?
- Ask students to write a short story "*Pinocchio*, Part II" telling what happens next in the story.

Closure: Discuss the choices students made for their sequels. How do their choices differ from their classmates? What ideas from the original story prompted them to take the story in the direction they did?

Extension – Turn the stories into scripts and act them out as Reader's Theater pieces!

What is a Serial?

In literature, a **serial** is a publishing format by which a single large work, most often a work of narrative fiction, is presented in (typically chronological) installments, either issued as separate publications or appearing in sequential issues of a single periodical publication.

Pinocchio was originally a serial -

Written and published serially, the book we now think of as a unified tale was published in two distinct parts over a three-year period. The first part, "La storia di un burattino" (The story of a puppet), was published over several months in 1881 in a weekly Italian children's magazine. The first 15 chapters of the unified book are made up of these pieces, and in the last of them, *Pinocchio* is hanged. The editor pleaded with him to continue the story, and so in 1882 and 1883 Collodi published the second part, "Le avventure di Pinocchio," which became chapters 16 to 36 of the book.

Lesson 3 – Taking Responsibility

It's common for people to avoid taking responsibility for their actions, especially when the outcome is a negative one. Help your students focus on making positive choices and taking responsibility for their actions.

Note: Students will need prior knowledge of the story *Pinocchio*.

Discuss: In this story, Pinocchio finds himself in many difficult situations because of the decisions he makes, but he doesn't take responsibility for his actions until the end of the story. Have you ever used "excuses" to deny responsibility or project blame on others for your actions or what is happening in your lives?

Warm-Up: On the board, write the following examples of "excuses". Ask students to generate ideas for how these can be re-stated in a way that reflects taking responsibility for both the problem and the solution. Use the suggestions for changes listed below as a guide.

- **EXCUSE: It broke.** *TAKING RESPONSIBILITY: I broke it. How can I fix it?*
- **EXCUSE: He started it.** *TAKING RESPONSIBILITY: I chose to get involved in something I should have stayed out of.*
- **EXCUSE: She was doing it, so I did it, too. OR He made me do it.** *TAKING RESPONSIBILITY: I gave in to peer pressure, and I shouldn't have.*
- **EXCUSE: I can't do this.** *TAKING RESPONSIBILITY: I choose not to do this. I need help to do it.*

Instructional Procedures:

- Read the Responsibility Poem on this page aloud to students.
- What things are students responsible for? Why is taking responsibility a good thing? What benefits do you get?
- Ask students to write their own Responsibility Poem, using the following outline:

I am responsible for _____
From _____ to _____ too.
I choose _____.
I make the choice _____.
It is up to me _____.
I make the choice _____.
So now I will choose what is best for me.
I am responsible, I hold the key!

Closure: Ask volunteers to share their poems with the class.

Reflection: As a group, discuss: When you use a responsible statement, who is in control? Is it easier to make excuses or responsible statements? Why? Is it better to take responsibility and accept consequences or make an excuse to avoid consequences? Why? What are you responsible for?

Responsibility Poem

I am responsible
For all that I do,
From turning in work
To making friends too.

I choose if my room
Will be messy or clean,
I make the choice
To be kind or mean.

It is up to me
Just how much I will learn,
The grades that I get
Will be grades that I earn.

I make the choice
To be happy or sad,
To have a good day
Or have one that is bad.

So now I will choose
What is best for me.
I am responsible
I hold the key!

More Fun With



Fun with Science

- Pinocchio, Geppetto, and the Whale are seen as shadow puppets during this show. Discuss how light moves through space, and how this might affect shadow puppets. Use flashlights to practice making long shadows, short shadows, blurry shadows, etc. Then create your own shadow plays!
- What makes your nose grow? In *Pinocchio*, his nose grows when he tells a lie, but in real life our noses grow too. Learn about your body, and talk about your nose!
- Pinocchio is a puppet made of wood, but he wants to be a real boy. Discuss the concept of living vs. non-living. Use a Venn diagram to list the characteristics of a real boy and of the puppet Pinocchio, as presented in the story.
- Pinocchio is not really Geppetto's son, but he calls him 'Father' and Geppetto calls Pinocchio 'Son'. Does family only mean blood-related? What else can make up a family? Who is part of your family that may not be blood-related?



Photo by Jérémie Battaglia.

Fun with Math

- A big part of the story is the Fox and the Cat trying to get gold coins from Pinocchio. The price of gold is constantly changing. Look at the price of gold, and discuss why the prices vary, what they are based on, and what the gold coins in *Pinocchio* would be worth today.
- Sequence is always a great part of reading comprehension, but also connects into math concepts. Consider asking students to create a storyboard of *Pinocchio*, or give them part of the story outline and ask them to fill in the parts of the story that are missing.

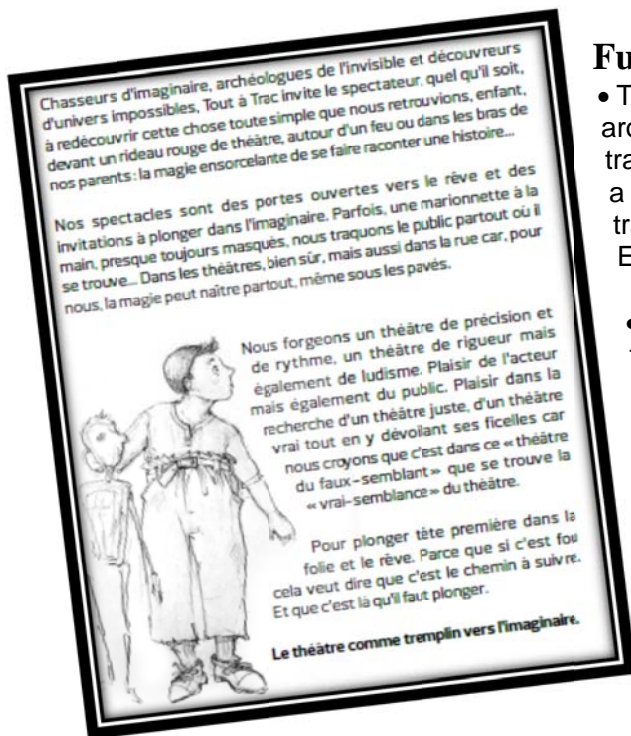
Fun with Language Arts

- Write a review of the play. Who is your favorite character? What did you like the most in the play? What did you dislike? What was the funniest part?
- The story of *Pinocchio* has hundreds of different versions, in many different styles - books, plays, operas, symphonies, visual art, and more! Find a few different versions of the story and compare/contrast them.
- Have students choose a character from *Pinocchio* and create a puppet of the character. Then, put on a puppet show telling the story of Pinocchio's adventures.
- The moral of the story is what the author wants you to learn from the story. It is often the central theme of the story and the lesson the character learned in the story. What did the character learn in this story? What do you think the moral of the story is for *Pinocchio*?

- Critical Thinking - Have older students rewrite the episodes to be more realistic for daily life. For example, the equivalent of being lured away to “Toyland” might be being drawn into drug use. Is it possible to see the story of *Pinocchio* as being symbolic of real things?

Fun with Social Studies

- The design of this play included a lot of elements which allude to Industrialism, including some of the set and costume pieces, as well as some of the directing concepts. You may see gears on the set, or hear the rhythms of machine sounds during Toyland, or even notice the wooden toy maker becoming obsolete because of the rising machine world. Use this play as a springboard into your Industrial Era lessons!
- To contribute to the ‘rise of the machine’ idea, you may notice some elements that resemble “steampunk” in design. Research the elements of “steampunk”, and design a costume or set for *Pinocchio* in this style.
- An important element of Social Studies is civic efficacy. *Pinocchio* is a perfect story to connect into concepts of being a good citizen, responsibility, ethics, and more.
- Study the different cultures represented in this performance. The original story was written in Italian, but this version was created in Quebec, Canada. Study both of these countries with your students.



Fun with Foreign Language

- The original script for this play was written in French to tour around French-speaking areas of Quebec, Canada. It was then translated by Bobby Theodore into English. Ask us for copies of a scene from the script in French and have your students translate the text. Then look at the same scene from the English version and compare.
- Translating from one language to another is not an easy task! Consider all the slang and sayings that are unique to each area. Some concepts get lost in translation. Make a list of slang statements or colloquial sayings and try to find a translation for those sayings. Which ones work in other languages? Which ones don't?