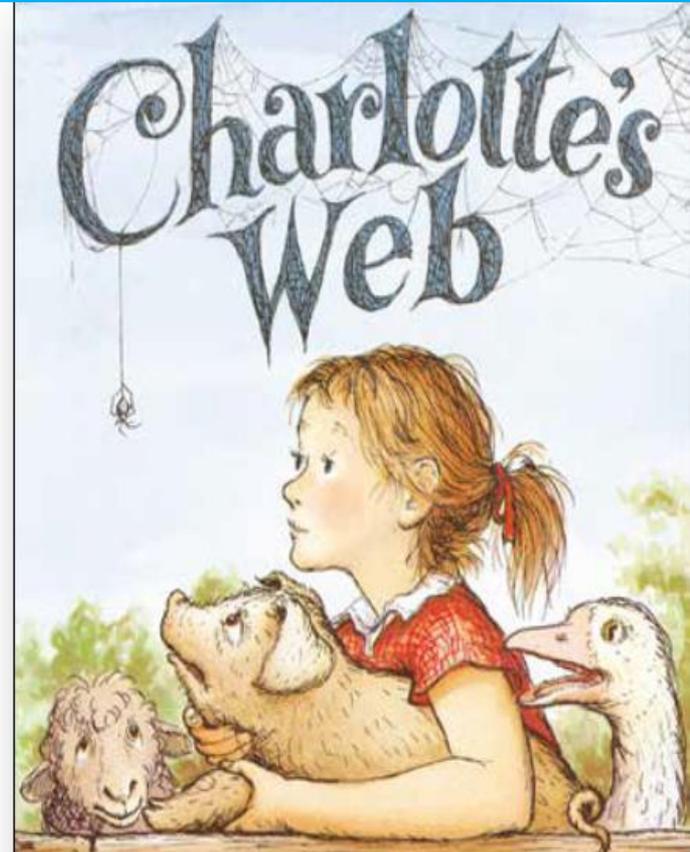


Charlotte's Web

From TheatreWorks USA

Charlotte's Web is a wonderful story about an unusual friendship. The story takes place on a farm when an eight-year-old girl named Fern rescues a pig who is the runt of the litter. Fern takes care of the pig, whom she names Wilbur, until he grows bigger and stronger. Then, Wilbur is sent to her Uncle Zuckerman's farm where he meets a spider named Charlotte. Charlotte and Wilbur develop an amazing friendship on Zuckerman's farm as Charlotte schemes to save Wilbur's life. This amazing story of friendship will be brought to life on the Clowes stage!



Characters in the story

Wilbur - A pig who needs lots of love

Charlotte - A friend who comes to the farm

Fern Arable - A young girl growing up on the farm

John Arable - Fern's father

Avery Arable - Fern's mother

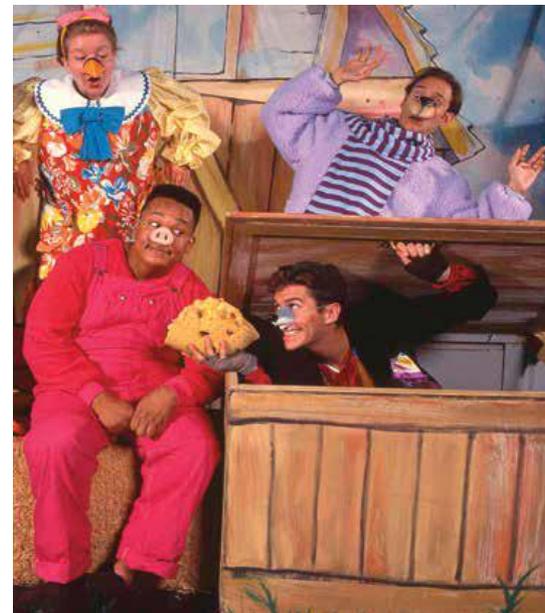
Homer Zuckerman - Fern's Uncle

Lurvy - Zuckerman's farm hand

Templeton - A rat who lives on the farm

Goose, Sheep, Gander - All animals that live on the Zuckerman's farm

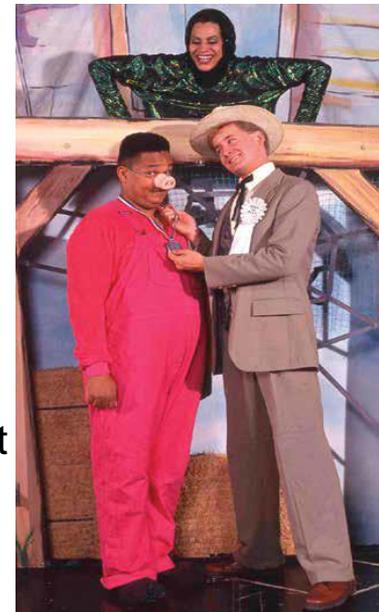
Narrator - A person who will give extra information about the play. He/she will not be part of the play but will talk to the audience about the story.



When a Book Becomes a Performance

The book *Charlotte's Web* has been made into a live stage performance and you are going to go see it at Clowes Hall! **What is a live performance?**

- A **live theatre performance** is a production where actors share with you through speaking and moving what takes place in a story. They pretend that they are characters of the story, and they act out what happens.
- At Clowes Hall, the **actors** will be performing on a large stage. They will wear **costumes** to help you know which character role they are playing. The stage will have special lighting and the lighting will change for different parts of the story to match the mood of the story or to transition to another scene in the story.
- The stage will also have **sets and scenery** in the background. Sets and scenery are made to look like certain places or objects in the story. Seeing the actors on a set with set and scenery in the background helps you understand the play.

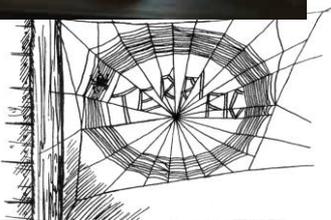


*When you see *Charlotte's Web* at Clowes Memorial Hall, the actors will want you to pretend and use your imagination right along with them. They want you to make believe that they are really the characters in the story. They will be able to see and hear you just as much as you see and hear them, and it will be a one of a kind experience! It's live learning!*

Questions to think about before the show...



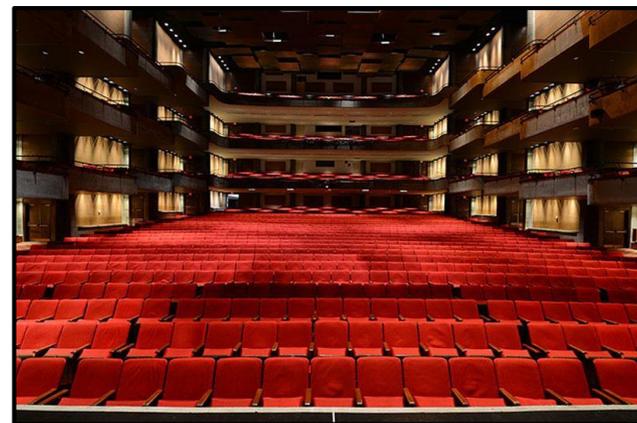
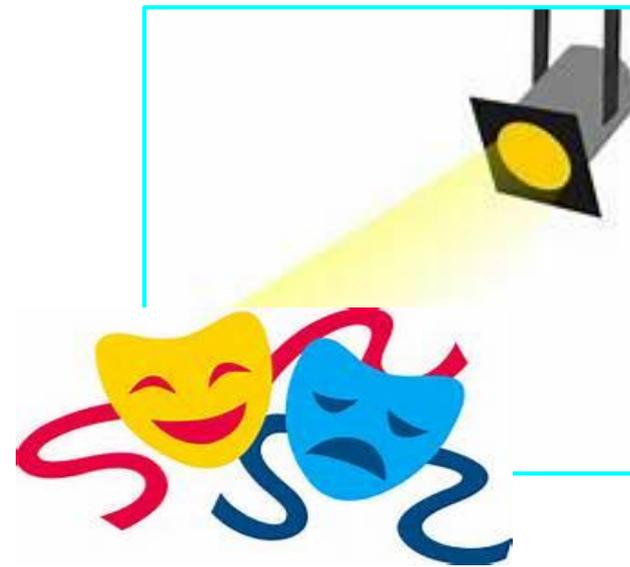
- How do you think the costumes will be designed for each of the animal characters?
- What do you think the set or scenery will look like for each setting or place in the story? Think about some of the places in the story *Charlotte's Web*.
- What props do you think will be used on stage in the performance?
- What sounds or kind of music might be used?
- Do you think that you will be able to pretend that the actors are animals?
- What do you think will be different between the book and the stage version?



The Role of the Audience

*No play is complete without the audience – which is YOU!
Here are directions for playing your part in the performance:*

- Watch closely.
- Think about how actors change their voices, body movements, and costumes when they double, or change characters.
- Listen carefully to the dialogue, lyrics, and music.
- Laugh or applaud if you enjoy the play.
- Remember that you and the actors are in the same room. This is LIVE theatre.
- Talking, whispering, or making noise during the performance is impolite and makes it hard for actors to do their best.
- Help other audience members with your quiet attention.



WHO Makes a Performance Happen?

Playwright - Writes the words or dialogue for a play or adaptation

Director - Makes the decisions about how a play will look and sound on stage

Designer - Creates the sets, props, and costumes for actors

Actor - Creates the character by speaking on stage for the audience

Stage Manager - Makes sure lighting and sound works, and that props, sets, and costumes are in the right place

Theater Manager - Makes the arrangements for you and your teacher to attend a play at Clowes Hall



How Many Actors for How Many Characters?

In the book there are about 17 essential **characters** that need to be shown on stage, but in reality there are only 6 actors that play all of the roles!

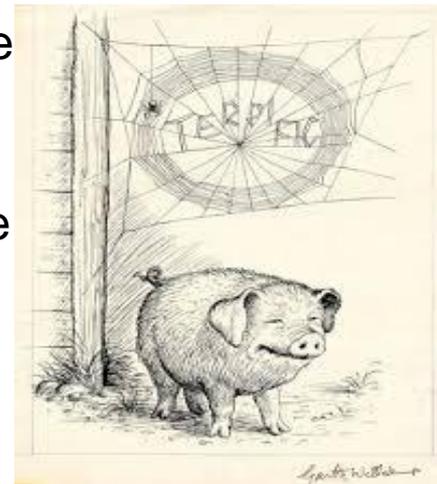
Many times this happens when a director has fewer actors so some actors have to play more than one part, this is called **doubling**.

For example, there is one male **actor** that plays Homer, Sheep, Spectator #1, Judge, and Avery Arable.

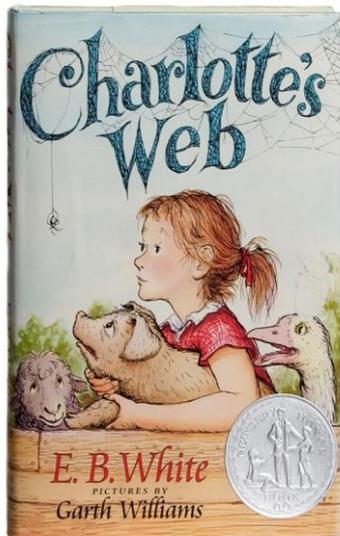
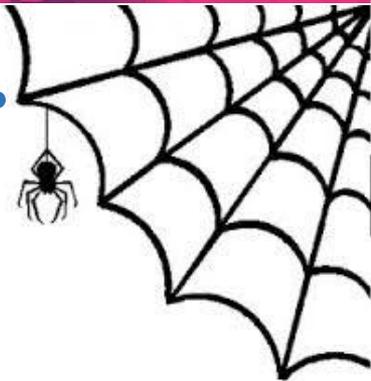
When you are in the **audience** the actors want you to know when they are one character and not another.

To help you, an actor will change clothes or **costume**, change the **voice**, and change how he/she **acts** when on stage.

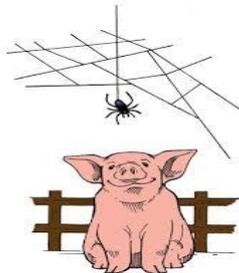
Watch and **listen** to see if you can tell which actors play many different characters.



Now you've seen *Charlotte's Web*...



- ❖ What was your favorite part or scene of the play?
- ❖ What character did you like best and why?
- ❖ Did the costumes worn by the characters make sense in the play? Were they believable?
- ❖ Did the set and props work well with the play?
- ❖ Did the actors do a good job in their specific roles?
 - ❖ Was the script written well by the playwright?
 - ❖ Was it similar to the book or was it different? If so how was it different?
 - ❖ Was there anything that surprised you about the way the performance was done?
 - ❖ What did you enjoy about the performance?
 - ❖ On a scale of 1 – 10 (with 10 as the best) how much did you enjoy the performance?



Thank you for coming to see a performance at the Butler Arts Center, Clowes Memorial Hall. We hope you'll come back to see another wonderful and engaging performance! Visit our website at www.butlerartscenter.org for upcoming events!