

# ACTIVITY GUIDE



## Balloonacy

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Presented by  
  
**imagination**  
stage

Recommended for  
Ages 1 to 5

*Activity guide prepared by Imagination stage*

## CURRICULUM TIES

### Common Core Standards for Maryland Pre-K Readiness:

#### Personal & Social Development

- Follow simple classroom rules and routines with guidance
- Demonstrate healthy self-confidence
- Participate cooperatively in group activities

#### Mathematics & Science

- Construct knowledge by raising questions and seeking answers through reasoning
- Seek information through observation, exploration, and descriptive investigations with simple science tools

#### Fine Arts

- Create images and forms from observation, memory, imagination, and feelings
- Use a variety of theatrical elements to communicate ideas and feelings

### Fine Arts/Personal & Social Development

## Activities:

### My Birthday Story

#### Key Concepts Addressed:

Fine Motor Skills, Memory Recall, Family Awareness.

#### What You'll Need:

Birthday Story Coloring Page\*

Crayons, markers, and/or various craft supplies



In *Balloonacy*, our main character is celebrating a very important day when we meet him –it’s his birthday! A birthday is the special day that comes once a year that celebrates when you were born, and birthdays are for every person of every age. Did you know that your parents have a birthday? Or that you grandparents have a birthday too? Even your teachers, friends, and neighbors have a birthday, but everyone celebrates their birthday a little bit differently.

Encourage your students to think about their birthday. Ask students to pick a specific, special birthday they experienced, and to think about the details of how they celebrated it. Were there balloons at their birthday like there were in *Balloonacy*? Was there a special food or dessert that they ate? Did they have a big party with extended family and friends, or a small gathering at home? Then, ask students to draw a specific moment they remember about that day on their own copy of the Birthday Story Coloring Page\*. If a student does not celebrate birthdays, ask them draw a moment that they believe is worthy of celebration instead.

When completed, ask students to share their artwork with others, describe their picture, then act out the moment they illustrated. By sharing this artwork, students not only get to share a special moment in their lives with you, but also get to learn about each other’s traditions and family cultures.

\*A template is available on the final page of the study guide.

# Activities:

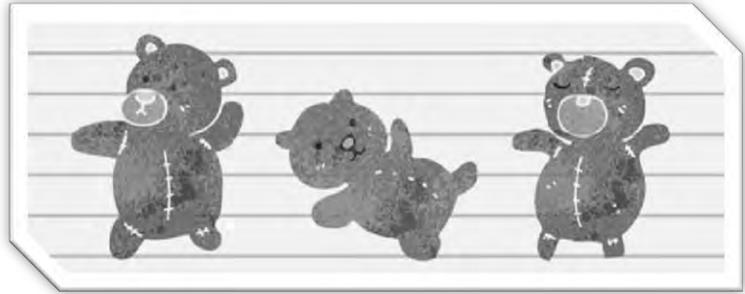
## Pop Alive with Puppets

### Key Concepts Addressed:

Observation, Body Awareness,  
Emotional Awareness, Object Manipulation

### What You'll Need:

A stuffed animal toy



Our balloon in this show says so much, even without actually speaking!

The balloon in *Balloonacy* starts as an object onstage used to help tell the story, also known as a **prop**. This balloon is no ordinary prop though, as our actor playing the main character helps the balloon come alive through a technique called **puppetry**! He does this by moving the balloon prop in a specific way with specific movements and sounds. He may help the balloon zoom across the room to show it wants something, shake the balloon with silly sounds to show the balloon is laughing, or even deflate the balloon to show it is sad. These movements and sounds help us see how the balloon is thinking and feeling, making it come alive as a character in the story. The main character also shows us how the balloon is feeling through his reactions, such as when he slows down his body movements and shows a worried look on his face to show his concern for the sad balloon. The main character's reactions and the balloon's movements then work together to show us what is happening, and they each need one another to tell their story.

Introduce puppetry and prop use to your students by first talking about emotions with your students. Ask your students to use their face to show you an emotion, such as happy. Then ask them to use their whole body in addition to their face to show that emotion, and to look around the room at their fellow friends practicing. Ask them next to use their face and body to show a very different emotion, such as sad or tired. Have students look around the room again, and ask them what differences they see in their friends between the two emotions.

Once students have identified and showed a few emotions, introduce a stuffed animal such as a teddy bear. Ask them how they could move the stuffed animal's body to show it is feeling sad. Could you make his arms hang low and his head droop? How can we make him look happy? What movements or sounds would he make to show how he feels?

Explore together how to move the stuffed animal to reflect a few different emotions, then ask students to sit in a circle. Pass the stuffed animal to a student, and ask the class for a suggestion of what emotion that student can show with the toy. As the toy is passed, each student in the circle shows the class how the toy is feeling by making the toy do certain actions, movements, or sounds to convey the emotion. Encourage students to think about body positioning with each new emotion as they work with the toy. While students await their turn, have them react to the emotion the stuffed animal is showing, engaging every student in each turn.

For added fun, switch the stuffed animal prop for another malleable prop. Can you make a beanbag look scared, or a coat or hat look excited? See what your movements, actions, and sounds can do to bring these props to life!

# Activities:

## Moving, Grooving, and Ballooning

### Key Concepts Addressed:

Number Use, Gross Motor Coordination, Teamwork

### What You'll Need:

A Balloon

A Timer

Yourselves!

Get up, get moving, and get counting with this group game:

- **Keep It Up, Up, Up:** Volley the balloon between 2 or more people, and see how long you can keep the balloon in the air without it touching the ground. Count the volleys each time, and see if you can beat your own score!



Time these activities to work on prediction and number comparisons as a group:

- **Balloon Belly Relay Race:** With one pair of students at a time, place the balloon between two bellies and see how fast they can bring it from one side of the room to the other. Race against each other's times.
- **Crabby Balance:** Crab walk with the balloon on your stomach, trying not to let it fall, as you travel from one side of the room to another. How fast or slow do you have to go to keep the balloon with you?

**Caution:** Balloon play should always have adult supervision to ensure all play is safe.

## SUGGESTED READING

Curtis, Jamie Lee. *Where Do Balloons Go? An Uplifting Mystery*, Harper Collins, 2000

Fenske, Jonathan. *Love is In the Air*, Penguin Young Readers, 2012

Lamorisse, Albert. *The Red Balloon*, Doubleday Books for Young Readers, 1967

Papageorge, Tiffany. *My Yellow Balloon*, Minoan Moon Publishing, 2014

Underwood, Debra. *A Balloon for Isabel*, Greenwillow Books, 2010



# Activities:

## Airborne Experiments

The balloon in *Balloonacy* does all kinds of magical things for the old man in the story. Some of these magical moments are created by stage magic, but some of these moments aren't magic at all – they are based on science! Bring the balloon fun home or into your classroom by conducting these simple science experiment.

**Caution: Balloon play should always have adult supervision to ensure all play is safe.**

### It's Electric!

#### Key Concepts Addressed:

Scientific Inquiry, Object Manipulation

#### What You'll Need:

- A Balloon
- Hole Punch Clippings
- A Wool Scarf or Sweater
- A collection of fabrics and small objects



With adult supervision, give a student an inflated and tied balloon and have them rub it on their heads for a few seconds. Then, have them slowly raise the balloon from their head. What happens to their hair?

Explain the hair rose from **static electricity**. When the balloon rubs against a head, energy moves to the part of the balloon closest to the head. The extra energy, called a charge, moves from the balloon to the head when the balloon is pulled away, causing the hair to "stick" to the balloon.

Give each student a small pile of clippings left over from a hole punch, or have students work together carefully to make these clippings themselves using a hole punch and several pieces of scrap paper. Then pass around the balloon and the wool scarf or sweater. Have your students explore rubbing the balloon on the wool, then bringing the balloon over the clippings.

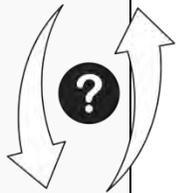
What happens to the paper clippings? Do they stay where they were or get picked up by the balloon?

Explore what other fabrics produce enough static electricity to pick up the clippings. Does rubbing the balloon on cotton cloth or jeans produce the same effect? Would a penny stick to a balloon with static electricity? Would a cotton ball?

### Up or Down?

#### Key Concepts Addressed:

Scientific Inquiry, Prediction-making



#### What You'll Need:

- Several Empty Balloons
- One Transparent Tub with 6+ Inches of Water
- Packing Peanuts
- Coins

While with your students, blow up a balloon and tie it securely. Then place it in the tub of water. Talk with students about what they see. Is the balloon sinking or floating? Why might that be?

Assign students to groups, and give each group a balloon. Have each group fill their balloon with coins, packing peanuts, or both. Tie each balloon when it is full and before it begins significantly stretching from its deflated size.

Show students the balloon full of coins and ask them whether they think it will sink or float. Ask them to explain their thinking, then place the coin-filled balloon in the water tub to see what it does. Does it float? Does it sink? Half-sink? Was your prediction correct?

Repeat these steps with each balloon, making a prediction of what might happen each time and talking about the results.



**Birthday Story Coloring Page**

