

Magic Carpet Journey

A Play
by
Marie Chestnutt



*An Imaginative Trip
Through New Jersey*



New Jersey's The Place For Me

Music by Marie Chesnutt

Arrangement by Joy Chesnutt

Words by Marie Chesnutt & Peter S. Massardo

Verse 1

F B^b C

A ma - gic car - pet jour - ney we'll pro - vide, To

F C F

see New Jer - sey near and far. So soar from Cape May to our

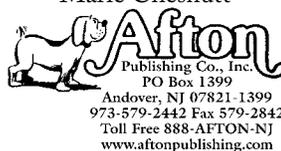
B^b G⁷ C C⁷ F

high - est point And see the sour - ces of our pride.

Verse 2

From prehistoric times our state began
With dinosaurs and glaciers here
The Indians traveled to this land of sun
And so our state would soon appear.

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Marie Chesnutt



Verse 3

Bold travelers came to Jersey's distant shore,
To start anew as free men here.
They tilled the land and built the towns
we love,
Pushed back frontiers and showed no fear.

Magic Carpet Journey Teacher's Guide

Magic Carpet Journey is based on the text, *You, New Jersey, And The World*, by John T. Cunningham. *You, New Jersey, And The World* urges children to soar through New Jersey on the “Magic Carpets” of their minds — powered by their imaginations and knowledge.

In **Magic Carpet Journey**, Dorothy, of *The Wizard of Oz*, lands on your school playground during her second “tornado” experience. Dorothy is both doubtful and condescending when she hears she is in New Jersey. The children hasten to educate her on “the great State of New Jersey” by taking her on a series of Magic Carpet Journeys. They travel far back in time to see dinosaurs, Native Americans, colonists, and even “dodge bullets” in a Revolutionary War scene. Then they move into modern time with aid from New Jersey’s own “Wizard,” the “Good Witch of New Jersey,” and many spirited “Munchkins” who now are pleased to call New Jersey home.

This will be a richly-rewarding experience for you, your students, your parents, and your community.

Full Student Involvement

Magic Carpet Journey adapts easily to any number of students. Every child in a grade level can be involved in this fun-filled learning experience. You can use the play as written, divide lines, and add many more students with nonspeaking parts to each scene. Munchkins, for example, can be unlimited!

Since the names of the characters (except Dorothy and historical persons) are not in any way significant, any character’s lines can be spread, added to, or shortened. If there are children who might profit from being on stage with or without speaking, they can be costumed and added to the group. Often, shy boys and girls find themselves performing and speaking freely when disguised as Munchkins.

You might seat children who are not in the play itself on classroom chairs or risers in front of or on the side of the stage to perform as a chorus. The song, *New Jersey’s The Place for Me*, threads through the play, and another song, *New Jersey’s Wonderful Wiz*, takes the children to meet Thomas Edison.

If a small production is better for your school, select one “journey” and enlarge upon it, with children presenting further information. This is an excellent research project for gifted classes or students.

The flexibility of the individual “journeys” allows you to eliminate or add your own journeys to personalize the play. If your community has a special place or significant event of its own, have Dorothy visit there.

This activity is an excellent opportunity for community education. Most New Jerseyans do not know what a great state they live in! Try to get as many parents as possible involved with costumes and scenery.

Rehearsal time need not be extensive once children learn the parts. Rehearse each scene (or parts of scenes) individually during a recess or activity period, for instance. The entire cast need not rehearse at one time until shortly before the presentation. The play is relatively simple to draw together, but it is advisable to have a dress rehearsal (perhaps for children in other grades in a school assembly).

Five children have extensive parts interwoven throughout the play. These parts can be partially read with scripts on a table or music stand, if memorization is difficult. (Children, however, often surprise us in their ability to memorize not only their own parts but everyone else’s.)

Scenery and Special Effects

Make the scenery as simple or elaborate as you like. Parents may help. Ask your art teacher to plan decoration-making lessons. Paint backdrops, or fasten construction paper to backdrops or curtains. Draw New Jersey’s symbols. Recreate scenes from *You, New Jersey, And The World*. Project traced scenes through an overhead projector and retrace enlarged versions. Use an opaque projector or create your own digital images.

Project the **Magic Carpet Journey Images on CD*** onto a screen or whiteboard placed in front of the audience, high enough for even the back rows to see. The script indicates when to project each frame. Add your own images. You might include photographs of children.

Flashing lights will dramatize many scenes, e.g., the tornado and the dinosaur battle. Strobe lights can create a dramatic effect to the appearance of the Good Witch of New Jersey and enhance the Munchkins’ dance.

Do not underestimate the special, important assignments that children can assume in connection with projecting images, sound effects, and lighting. They should practice — and time — their work with the play cast as often as possible. This will not be easy; boys and girls can gain great pride for their timing with projecting images, sound effects, and lighting. Be sure to give them credit and praise with introductions to the audience after the show.

Sound Effects and Music

Magic Carpet Journey Sound Effects on CD* includes the sound effects specified in the script. Try varying effects such as fade-ins and fade-outs. You can also use sound effects you find on the Internet or with various software products and any appropriate background music for the various scenes. Children in the chorus might produce some appropriate noises “live” by shouting, humming, etc. You’ll need tom-toms or drums for the Lenape scene.

The script prompts singing the appropriate verse along with the chorus of the song, *New Jersey’s The Place For Me*, throughout the play. Encourage enthusiastic singing, especially in the chorus.

Sing *New Jersey’s Wonderful Wiz*, an original song, before the Edison scene.

Sing *America The Beautiful* as you project the New Jersey frames in the last scene.

Note carefully the “General Note” at the beginning of the play. This points out a way to swell the chorus throughout. Children can leave the stage, go out a side exit, and proceed to the area reserved for the chorus. At play’s end, the entire cast will join in the song.

End the evening with parents and guests joining in a rousing singing of the chorus. (By play’s end, they will know the words.)

Sound Effects and Music

Magic Carpet Journey cassette includes the sounds effects specified in the script. Note that each effect runs long, permitting fade-outs at the end. Practice this. These must be amplified, of course, for a large room.

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Prop Ideas

Props can be as simple or elaborate as the time and your helpers permit. A good stage crew can make scene changes with ease. Reminder: Give the crew some time for applause, too, by introducing them.

Risers (or a lift of some kind) are needed to the side of the stage for the children who remain there throughout the play. These children are not on the stage itself at all during the play, to minimize confusion and stage direction. It is important that they be high enough to be seen and heard.

Use microphones, if available. In rehearsals, emphasize the word natural. Children must not obviously rush up to a microphone and speak.

Lenape Scene (See Afton’s Indian Portfolio)

- A small Lenape house.
- A campfire: nail logs to a base and place a light bulb underneath red cellophane.
- Totem poles: stack cardboard boxes of different sizes on top of each other in an interesting array with a pole (or broom) in the center to keep them together. Several rocks placed as weights in the bottom box help to provide stability. Gym dollies or scooters facilitate movement.
- Masks: use 18" x 36" construction paper or oak tag. Hang in the background or have nonspeaking Lenapes hold them. Yardsticks make excellent “poles” for the masks.

Colonial Scene

Children carry baskets and gather berries from small children-made cardboard bushes or trees.

Revolutionary War Scene

Rearrange bushes or trees from colonial scene. Add tavern signs or “industry” signs (miller, smith, sawyer, etc.).

Edison Scene

- Edison center stage with curtain partially closed — no props. Or:
- Edison rises from a desk or table containing stacks of papers, test tubes, beakers, etc. (Your local high school physics and chemistry departments might help you set up a simple “laboratory.”)

School Scene

Put your school name on a door made from a cardboard refrigerator box. Add a small, light piece of playground equipment.

Costumes

School children: school clothes or play clothes

Dorothy: a dress or pinafore reminiscent of her counterpart in the *Wizard of Oz*.

Lenape Scene

- brown or black pants, fringed vests, child-made headbands
- child-decorated brown vests or vests made out of paper bags
- inexpensive jewelry

Colonial and Revolutionary War Scenes

Boys: white shirts, dark pants, knee socks pulled over pants to the knee, tucking the pants inside, child-made tri-cornered hats

Girls: long skirts and blouses or long dresses

Edison Scene

Edison: hair whitened with talcum powder, white lab jacket, carry a large note pad and pencil to write with at the end of the scene.

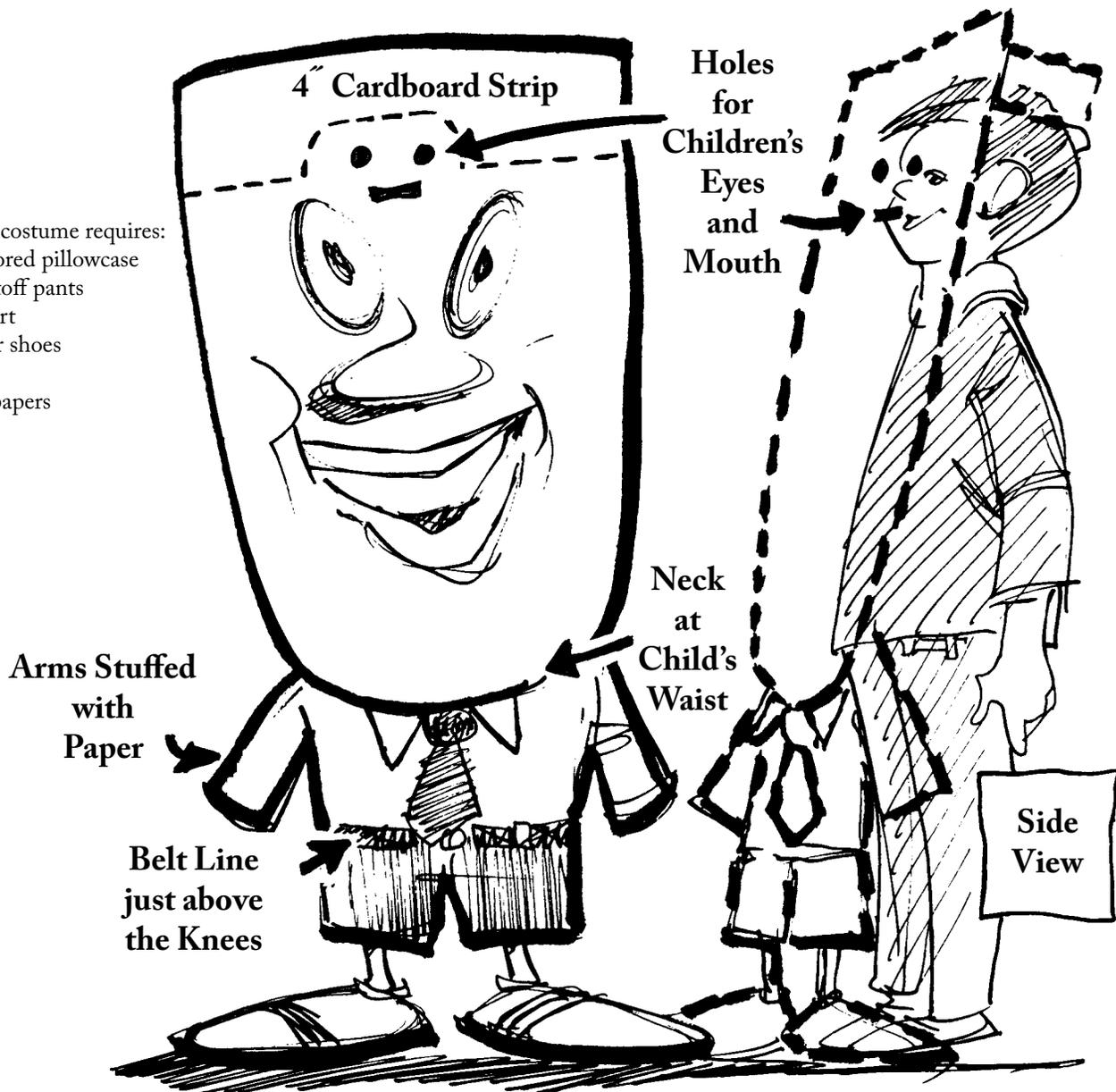
Munchkin Scene

(Explanatory sketch follows.)

The Munchkins can be the hit of the show — loved by children and adults alike. The costumes might appear complicated (see illustration) but are relatively simple to put together.

Since Munchkin costumes are difficult to walk in, costumes must be put on close to the stage and assistance provided for the children so they get on and off the stage safely.

- Each Munchkin costume requires:
- an old solid-colored pillowcase
 - shorts or old cutoff pants
 - a large man's shirt
 - large sneakers or shoes
 - a tie
 - crumpled newspapers



Place the pillowcase over the child's head so the top of the case rests on top of the child's head. The opening of the pillowcase will probably be down past the child's waist. Mark openings to coincide with the child's own mouth and eyes; cut these out after removing pillowcase from child. (Remember that the child must be able to see and be heard with this covering on.) Design a face on about two-thirds of the pillowcase to make a very large head. (Eyes and mouth of the Munchkin will not be at the same place as the child's eyes and mouth.) Felt-tipped markers work well. Make each one different depicting all kinds of expressions. This is a fine chance for artistic flair! Let parents or your art teacher help each Munchkin design his or her own "face." Hold the pillowcase open, when it is on the child's head, with a piece of heavy cardboard about 4" x 20." Insert it along the end of the pillowcase so the cardboard rests on the child's head. This will hold the "face" in shape.

Place a man's shirt around the child, tucking the bottom of the pillowcase in the neck of the shirt. The Munchkin "neck" will probably be around the child's waist or just above it, depending upon each individual's size.

Loosely knot a necktie around the collar of the shirt to hold it in place and give a necktie effect.

Shorts or cutoff pants are then put on below the shirt. Remember: since the shorts will be on the child from about the knees to the ankles, the child's movements will be much curtailed. Be sure to provide the assistance they'll need in walking.

Each Munchkin wears large shoes tied on with long laces so they stay on.

Finally, fill the arms of the man's shirt with crumpled newspaper and let hang to dangle about.

The completed Munchkin will have a head that is as large as the other half of its body. The movements of the large heads and the tiny steps that must be taken make the Munchkins most unusual!

Munchkins should speak in a somewhat exaggerated high pitch. Emphasize that they must speak forcefully enough to be heard through the pillowcase. Even the shyest children, given anonymity by the pillowcase, love these roles.

At the end of the show, give the Munchkins a chance for personal applause by having them lift off their pillowcases, or at least lift them enough to show their faces.

The Wax Museum

In Scene VI, the Good Witch of New Jersey brings to life a “wax museum” of famous New Jersey personalities. The wax museum also can be an attraction in a hallway or classroom to entertain visitors before the play begins.

Assign students to research New Jersey “greats,” such as Thomas Edison, Clara Barton, Charles Lindbergh, Albert Einstein. (A list of suggestions follows.) A slight glaze of petroleum jelly, along with makeup on the faces, gives a fine illusion of a “wax” face.

In a hallway or classroom situation, the figures stand as “statues” in dim light. Beside each figure, another child takes a turn giving a brief account of the New Jersey personality next to him or her. Project a spotlight from the center of the room or hallway on each child and statue as the speaking takes place.

On stage, each personality and speaker walk to center stage together, and the speaker gives the name and a one-sentence summary about the statue. Each pair files right off stage again. This procession should be kept moving so there is no lull in the scene, but do not rush so fast that lines are lost. Mark two “Xs” on the stage at the spots where each pair is to pause.

If the wax museum sequence is eliminated, the Munchkins and the children can simply ask the Good Witch of New Jersey to use her “powers” to take them around New Jersey (through **Magic Carpet Journey Images on CD**) shown to *America The Beautiful*.

Wax Museum Ideas

- Patience Lovell Wright: Long dress, Revolutionary War sculpture or portrait **Y**
John Fitch: Sea captain’s hat, coat, turtleneck shirt, sea instruments **Y, B, S**
Aaron Burr: Black coat, top hat, ruffled blouse, dueling pistol, wire glasses **Y**
Richard Stockton: Suit, ruffled blouse, Declaration of Independence, quill pen **Y**
Tempe Wick: Long skirt, blouse, red cape **Y**
Seth Boyden: Chemist coat, chemistry set, patent leather shoes, silver-green wig **Y**
Dorothea Dix: Long dress, quill pen, sheets of paper with black writing **Y, B, S**
Sam Patch: Old-time bathing suit — long and striped **S**
Dr. Solomon Andrews: Suit, doctor’s bag, picture of airship
Samuel Colt: Western clothes and pistol, short beard and mustache **Y, B, S**
Zebulon Pike: Mountain climber clothes and equipment, rope, pick, backpack **Y**
James Marshall: Miner’s clothes, pan, gold nuggets **Y, S**
John P. Holland: Seaworthy clothes, ropes, picture of submarine, old glasses **Y, B**
Mary M. Dodge: long skirt, blouse, copy of *Hans Brinker* **Y**
Molly Pitcher: Long skirt, blouse, apron, pitcher; kerchief over head **Y, B**
Clara Barton: Nurse uniform, cap, Red Cross, long hair parted in middle and pulled back **Y**
Clara L. Maass: Long nurse’s uniform, notebook **Y, B, S**
Woodrow Wilson: Formal dark suit, top hat, wire glasses **Y, B**
Elizabeth White: Early 1900s-type dress, spade, blueberry branches **Y, B**
Charles A. Lindbergh: 1920s air pilot jacket, hat and goggles, scarf
Albert Einstein: Lab coat, white-haired wig, card with $E=mc^2$ **Y, B**
Dick Button: Skating outfit, skates tied together & over shoulder, Olympic Gold Medal **B**
Yogi Berra: Yankee uniform, bat, ball, pennant
Edwin Aldrin: Astronaut suit, boots, helmet, model of space ship **B**
Judy Blume: Contemporary dress, pad, pen, a few of her books **B**
Christopher Reeve: Superman outfit **B**
Bruce Springsteen: Guitar; play one of his songs **B**
Paul Robeson: 1930s-type clothing; play *Ol’ Man River* from *Show Boat* **Y, B**
H. Norman Schwarzkopf: General’s outfit, map of Persian Gulf **B**
Alice Paul: Dark hair piled on top of head, early 1900s-type dress **Y, B**
Peter Mott: Boots, old suit jacket, riding crop **Y, B**

Y: See *You, New Jersey, And The World*

B: See *New Jerseyans Around the World Biography Cards*

S: See *The New Jersey Sampler*

Final Note: Your production can be as elaborate or as modest as you wish to make it, depending on the time and help you have available. Work carefully with your language arts and music teachers. Call on parents for help with costumes, scenery, etc. Tie in art and music classes for interdisciplinary cooperation. Make it a community project to share what the children have learned about our surprising state of New Jersey. Help your students feel pride in their great state as they learn to appreciate “their little corner of the world!” Give them, as well, an awareness of the power of their imagination.

One pleasant dividend, if the play is repeated annually or in alternate years, is that “alumni” (6th graders, 8th graders, etc.) will return on play night to see whether the current production is “as good as ours.” Memories remain pleasant.

Most of all, have fun and enjoy your own **Magic Carpet Journey!**

Magic Carpet Journey

General Note: Dorothy and her “guides” remain on side stage or riser throughout.
Singing of *New Jersey’s The Place For Me* begins with small chorus.
As each scene is played, that part of the cast leaves stage by side
entrance and joins chorus in front of stage.
At end, all boys and girls are in front of stage or on it.

TIME: The Present

SETTING: Playground at any New Jersey school

AT RISE: Loud “tornado” noises (SOUND EFFECT #1) begin as curtain rises on stage.
Continue sound briefly after curtain is up.
Then, SPOTLIGHT falls on Dorothy at center stage, holding her dog, Toto (can be stuffed).
Dorothy, seated as if she has fallen, looks dazed and frightened.

SCENE I

DOROTHY: (Bewildered) Oh dear! Oh dear! Toto, we’ve done it again! (Rises, brushes self off) Where have we landed this time! I really don’t know if I can take any more tornadoes! Getting home from the Land of Oz the last time was almost more than I could bear! (Toto barks — SOUND EFFECT #2)

Second SPOTLIGHT falls on several children nearby on side stage — either a small riser or large, sturdy table.

DOROTHY: Oh look, Toto, maybe those children over there can help us. (Starts walking over and calling.) Hello! Hello there! Can you help me? (Joins four other children on side stage — Mary, Bill, Jane, and Bob — or their own names)

CURTAIN FALLS ON MAIN STAGE

Children converse on side stage.

MARY: Hi! Who are you? Are you new around here?

DOROTHY: My name is Dorothy. (Pauses) I don’t know where I am.

BILL: What do you mean, you don’t know where you are?

JANE: You’re right here! Where else would you be?

DOROTHY: You don’t understand. You see, we were preparing for a tornado at home, and it came before we were ready. I don’t remember exactly what happened. I just know when I stopped zooming this way and that, I landed right over there. (Points toward center stage) Now I need to know where I am so I know how to get back to where I was. At least I know where I’m not!

BOB: I never heard such a wild story! She must be loony!

MARY: I dunno! That story sounds familiar to me. Seems I’ve heard it before. Did you ever land any place else during a tornado?

DOROTHY: Why, as a matter of fact, I did! I had a terrible time! (Speech picks up pace until she is talking very rapidly) I came down in the Land of Oz and no one could help me find my way home back to Kansas, I had to search and search for the Wizard. Then there was a Tin Man, and a Lion, and a Scarecrow, and the wicked, Wicked Witch, not to mention the Munchkins! Oh, but I was so scared!

DOROTHY: (Speech slows to normal) That’s why I must know where I am now! What dangers will I find? Will I need a wizard here, too, to get back home?

MARY: (Excitedly) I know! I know that story about Oz!

BILL: Not much danger around here! You’re in New Jersey.