

# GIRAFFES CAN'T DANCE



Audience Guide

# ABOUT THE SHOW

## GERALD WAS A TALL GIRAFFE...

All the animals in the jungle know their own special dance, but Gerald the Giraffe can't seem to move without a clumsy step. But with the help of a wise cricket, he finds his own song and dances to the beat of his own drum! In this stage adaptation of the beloved children's book, filled with African rhythm and lots of dancing, Gerald learns that his differences are what make him special.

The performance runs 60 minutes.

Recommended for all ages.



Book and Lyrics by  
GLORIA BOND CLUNIE

Music by  
ELTON BRADMAN  
LILA OLESZKIEWICZ

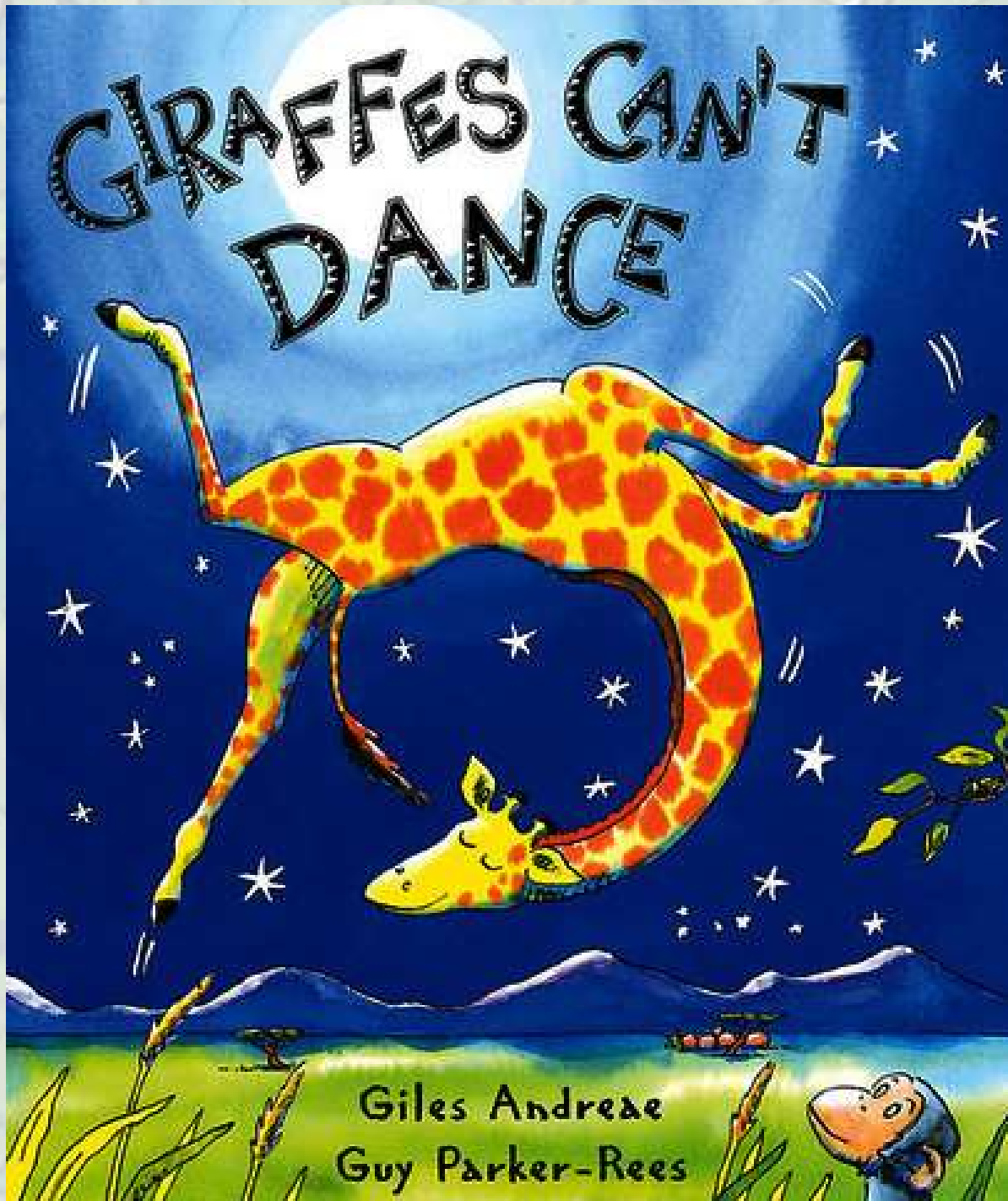
Illustrations by  
GUY PARKER-REES  
Based on the book by  
GILES ANDREAE





# BEFORE THE SHOW

## READ THE BOOK!



# BEFORE THE SHOW

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT!



Gloria Bond Clunie is a founding member of the Playwriting Ensemble at Chicago's Regional Tony Award winning Victory Gardens Theater where her plays *North Star*, *Living Green* and *Shoes* premiered. She is also the founding Artistic Director of Evanston's Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre where she directed scores of productions including *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men*, *Home* and *Raisin*.

Ms. Clunie has been recognized for her work in theater and education by the NAACP, AKA and DST Sororities, American Alliance for Theatre and Education and the Vision Keepers. Awards include a Chicago Jeff, a Children's Theater Foundation of America Orlin Corey Medallion, a Scott McPherson, a Dramatists Guild Fellowship, Theodore Ward African-American Playwriting Prizes, New York's New Professional Theater Award, Chicago Black Theatre Alliance Awards, NEA and Illinois Arts Council Fellowships, the Evanston Mayor's Award for the Arts and most recently the 2018 YWCA YWomen Leadership Award.

Clunie adapted *Giraffes Can't Dance* the Musical from the book, *Giraffes Can't Dance*, by the British writer Giles Andreae and illustrator Guy Parker-Rees.

# BEFORE THE SHOW

## QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- What is the book about?
- Have you ever felt different? Why?
- How did you feel when the book ended?
- When the other animals make fun of Gerald, how does he feel? How do you know?
- What inspires you to dance? Your favorite song? Yummy food? Exciting news?
- What can you say if you see someone being teased for being different? How can you help?
- Do you think it's true that "everything makes music if you really want it to"? What can you see right now that you could make music? Can you show us?
- What kind of music do you love?
- What do you think is the message of the book?



# BEFORE THE SHOW

## WORDS TO KNOW!

Listen for these words while watching the show!

**djembe:** a West African drum played with bare hands

**savanna:** an area of grassland with scattered bushes and trees, with both rainy and dry seasons, common in parts of Africa

**clumsy:** lacking skill or grace in movement

**wondrous:** extraordinarily good or great

**hooves:** hard coverings that protect the feet of many animals and allow them to walk for long distances on hard surfaces without damaging their toes

**blue moon:** an extra full moon in a calendar month or season, which only occurs every two to three years

**acacia:** a type of flat-topped tree common in the African savanna with leaves that giraffes like to eat!

**drenched:** thoroughly wet; soaked

**garland:** a rope of leaves or flowers or of other material

**frazzled:** extremely tired, nervous, or confused

**rhythm:** the pattern of long and short sounds as you move through the song

**ancestors:** the people (or animals) from whom you are descended; people who were in someone's family in past times

# BEFORE THE SHOW

## FIND THE WORDS!

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

ancestors

elephant

cricket

hooves

rhythm

frazzled

savanna

djembe

acacia

zebra

wondrous

giraffe

clumsy

monkey

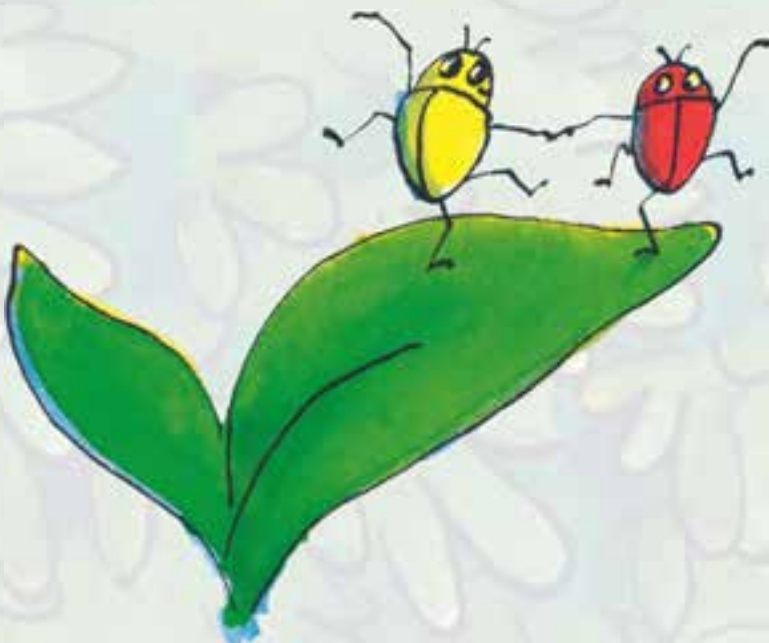
lion

# DURING THE SHOW

## WATCH!



The audience is an important part of the show. Your imagination is what helps bring the story to life. When you see something funny, you can laugh. When you see something you like, you can smile. The audience might even get to sing and dance along with the characters in the show!





# AFTER THE SHOW

## QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- What was your favorite part of the story? Why?
- Who was your favorite character? Why?
- How was the book different than the play?
- Why does Gerald get teased for being clumsy?  
Have you ever wanted to tease someone?
- Why do you think Elephant realized it wasn't kind to tease Gerald?
- Have you ever had trouble trying to learn a new skill?  
What did you do?
- What do you think makes Cricket a good friend?
- If your friend was trying to learn something new, what advice would you give them?
- Did you learn any new dance moves during the play?  
Which one was your favorite?

# AFTER THE SHOW

## Fun Facts!



### DID YOU KNOW?

There are so many types of dance that look completely different from each other! Here are just a few special dances from around the world:

#### UYGHUR PLATE DANCE:

This impressive traditional dance from the Uyghur people in Northwest China includes balancing a stack of bowls on your head! *Watch it [here](#) and [here](#).*



#### HEDAREB DANCES:

The Hedareb people of Eritrea have many impressive dance moves: one requiring incredible leg strength to make it look like they're sitting down when they're actually standing, and another involving holding a sword in your mouth! *Watch it [here](#) and [here](#).*

#### HAKA:

A traditional Māori dance or challenge, Haka are often performed in groups and can demonstrate a tribe's power, pride, and solidarity. Actions include stomping, tongue protrusions, and rhythmic body slapping to accompany a loud chant! *Watch it [here](#) and [here](#).*

#### DABKE:

An iconic folk dance from Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, the dabke (or dabkeh or dabka), involves stomping, jumping, and spinning in celebration! *Watch it [here](#) and [here](#).*

#### DANZA DE TIJERAS:

The *Scissors Dance*, performed by the Quechua people indigenous to the Andes in South America, includes beautiful, brightly colored clothing and extremely difficult footwork! *Watch it [here](#) and [here](#).*



# AFTER THE SHOW

## Fun Facts!



### DID YOU KNOW?

- **Giraffes** have the same number of bones (vertebrae) in their necks as humans! A human neck is likely to be just 4 inches long, while a giraffe's neck is 6 feet!
- **Giraffes** are called herbivores. That means they're vegetarians!
- **Giraffes** can be friends with other animals! At the Oakland, Zoo a giraffe and an antelope would spend time playing and lounging around together...instead of with members of their own species!
- **Crickets** are considered a delicious snack in many cultures across the world. (Do you think a cricket sounds yummy?)
- **Elephants** can communicate using sounds invisible to the human ear. They also have incredible hearing, and can hear other elephants from up to six miles away!
- Just like a house cat, **lions** can leap really high—sometimes as high as 36 feet in the air!
- One type of **monkey**, the White-faced Capuchin Monkey from Central America, says hello by sticking its finger up its friend's nose!
- **Zebras** are, in fact, black with white stripes. If you shaved a zebra, it would be almost completely black!





# AFTER THE SHOW

## SAY HELLO!



The characters in Giraffes Can't Dance learn to greet each other in many languages! Learn some new ways to say **"hello"** below!

### ARABIC

Marhaba (مرحبًا)  
MAR-hha-bah

### BURMESE

Maingalarpar (မင်္ဂလာပါ)  
ming-gah-lar-BAR

### CANTONESE

Nǐ hǎo (你好)  
nie HAOW

### CHOCHENYO

Horše Tuuxi  
hor-sheh TOOH-hhee

### HAITIAN CREOLE

Bonjou  
bon-joo

### ICELANDIC

Halló  
HAL-oo

### IGBO

Ndewo  
n-DEH-woh

### KURDISH

Slav  
slawv

### NAHUATL

Niltze Tialli Piali  
nilts-tialee-pialee

### SWAHILI

Jambo  
jam-BOH

### TAGALOG

Kamusta  
kuh-moos-TAH

### TIBETAN

Tashi delek (བཏུ་ཤིས་བདེ་ལེགས་)  
tah-shee del-ek

### UKRAINIAN

Privit (привіт)  
pree-VEET

### VIETNAMESE

Xin chào  
sin CHOW

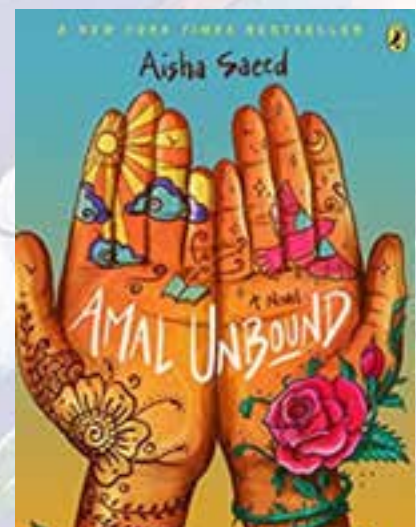
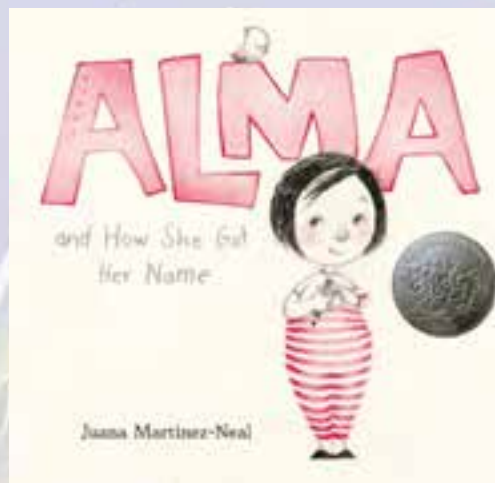
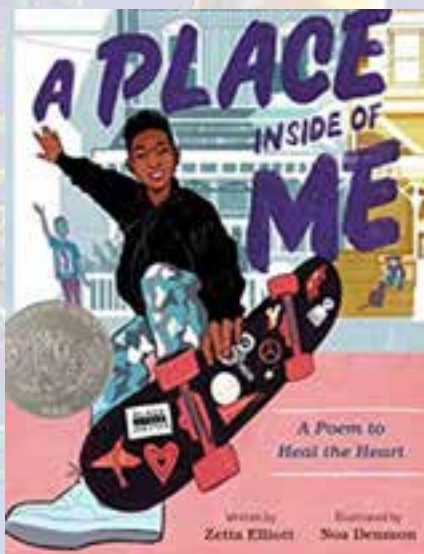
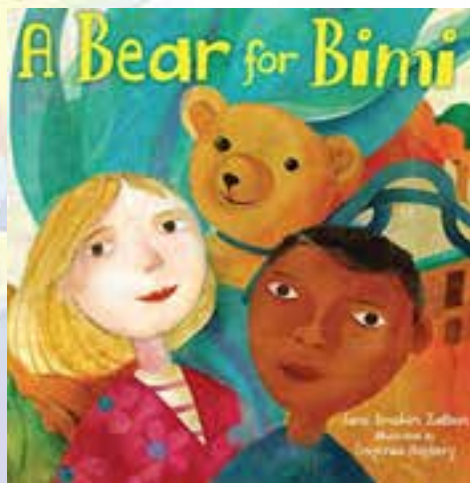
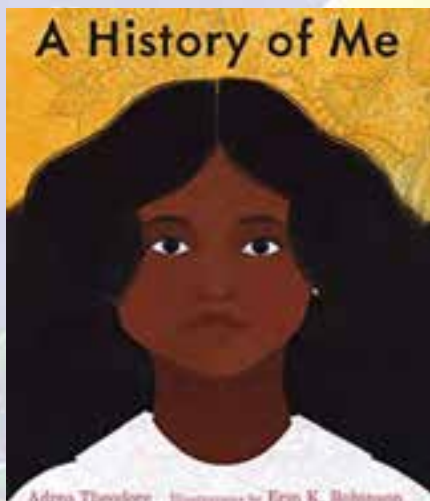
# AFTER THE SHOW

## SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES!



Just like animals, dance moves, and languages, everyone is unique! We all come from different races, cultures, religions, beliefs, and points of view, and we all have different abilities and appearances. No two people are exactly alike, and yet everyone deserves our respect and acceptance. How do we differ from each other? How are we the same? Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance and promotes a sense of belonging for all people!

Explore some books below to learn more about inclusion, bias, and social justice. Visit your local library or check out a local bookstore, like [Marcus Books](#) or [Mr. Mopps Children's Books](#)! Click the book below to learn more about each story!



# AFTER THE SHOW

## CELEBRATE!



People (and animals) dance for all kinds of reasons. Very often, we dance to celebrate! Draw a picture of a celebration (a birthday, holiday, or another special day) that makes you do a happy dance!



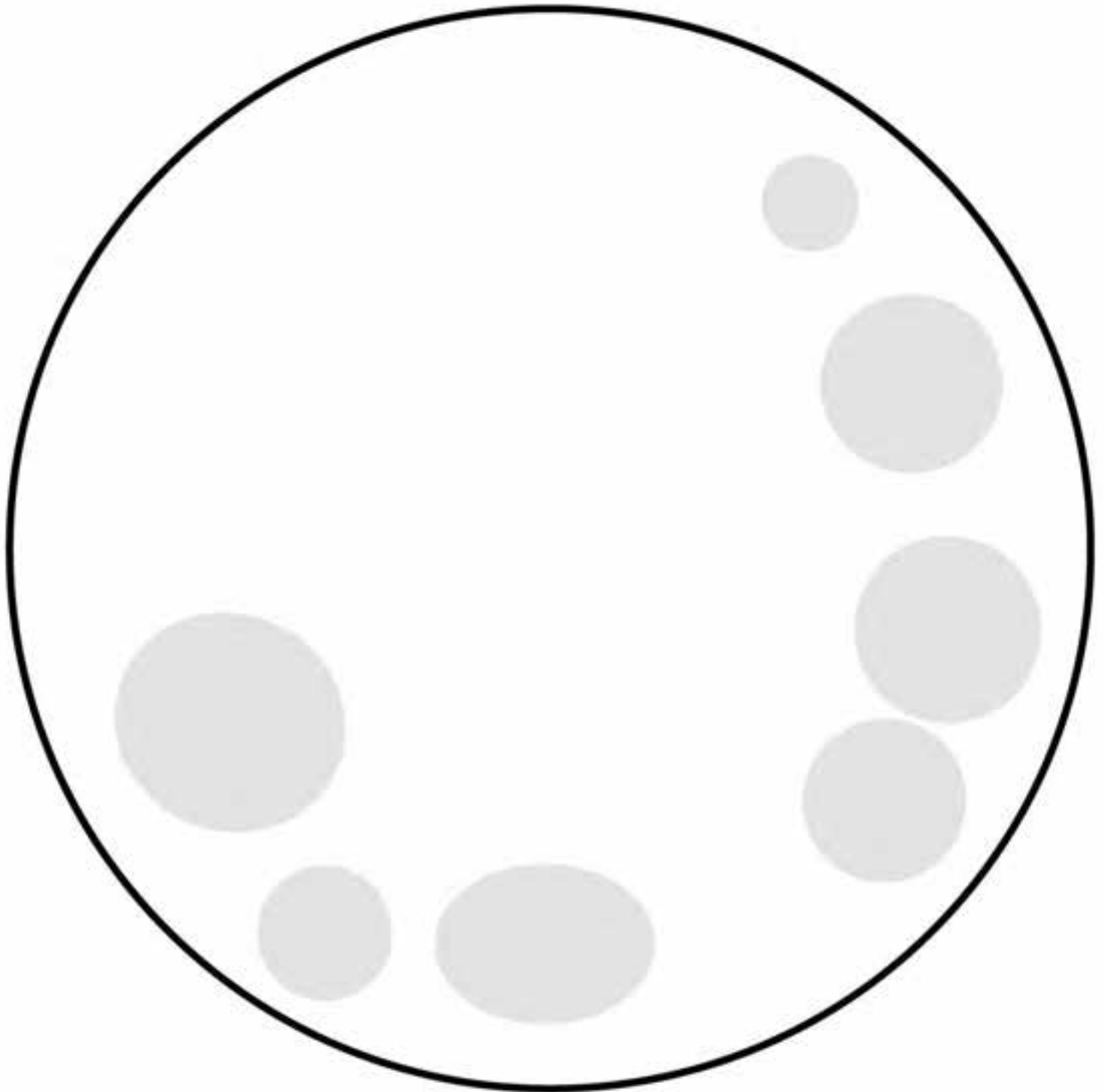


# AFTER THE SHOW

## COLOR!



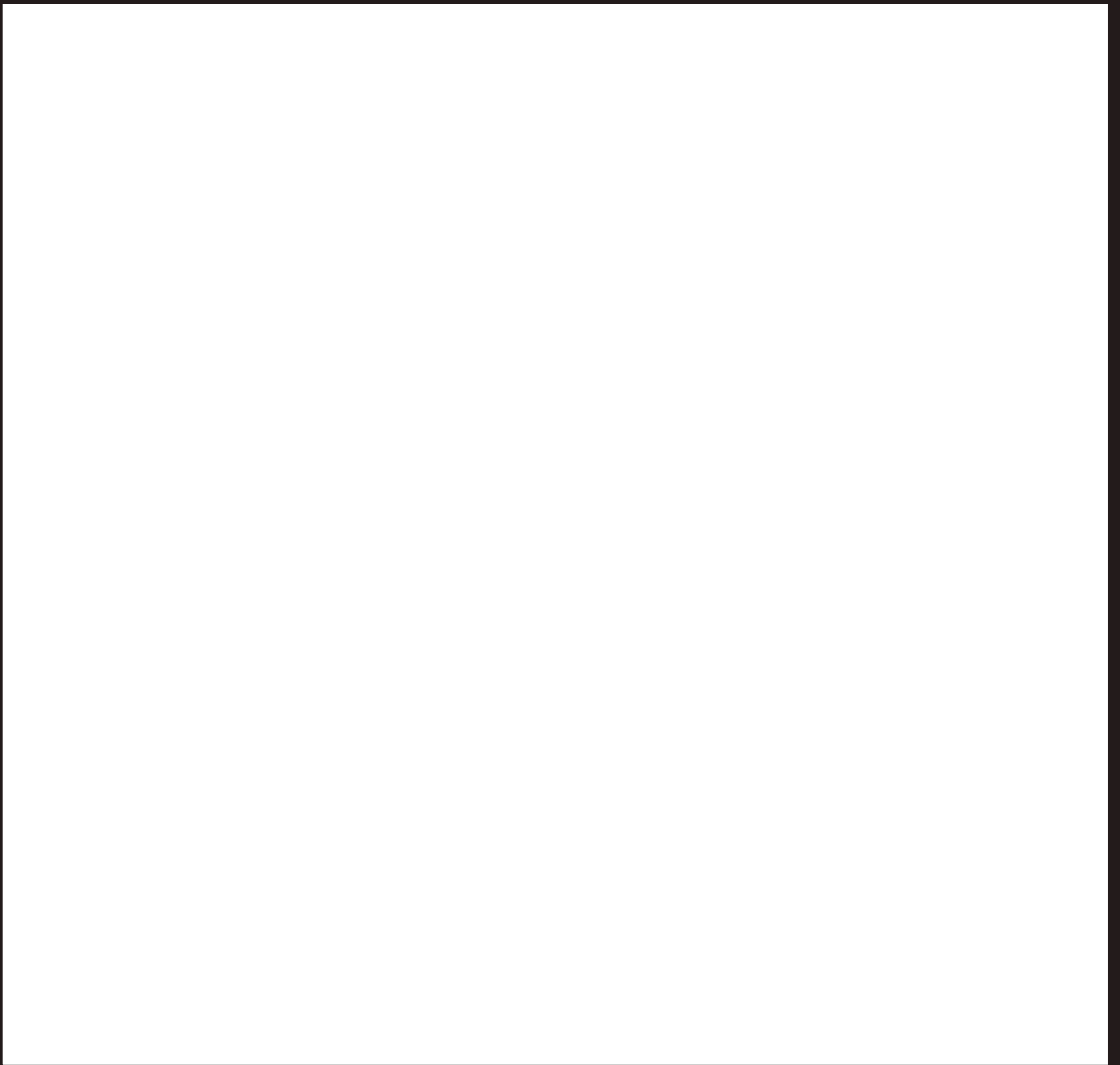
Use your favorite color to create a fantastical moon for the Blue Moon Ball!



# AFTER THE SHOW

## EMOTIONS!

As we read and watch the show, we imagine what the characters feel. Pick an event in the story.  
Draw a picture to show how it made you feel.



# AFTER THE SHOW

## GET CREATIVE!

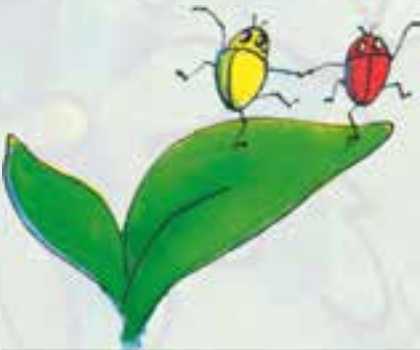
### ACT!

Act out your favorite scenes from the play or book! What is a problem that the characters have in this play? How do they solve the problem? Could you recreate one of the scenes and act it out?



### DANCE!

The characters LOVE to dance in the play. Put on your favorite song from the show and move and groove as your favorite character!



### SING!

All of the characters in this show sing songs, but each one has a unique voice and style. Write a song about one of these characters in your own style and perform it for your friends!





# AFTER THE SHOW

Write a letter to the cast of Giraffes Can't Dance!

Dear Giraffes Can't Dance Cast,

My favorite part of the show was \_\_\_\_\_

This is a picture of my favorite part of the show:

When I watched the show I felt \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_

If I were in the show I would want to play the part of \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_