

Based on the book by E.B. White.

Charlotte's Web

Adapted by
Joseph Robinette

Charlotte's Web
Educational Packet
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Summary of the Play:

This play, *Charlotte's Web*, is an adaptation written by Joseph Robinette, and is based on E.B. White's 1952 novel of the same name. Adaptation in the arts refers to when an author uses an original work as the basis to create something new. In this case, Joseph Robinette took E.B. White's original story and created a version that could be put on the stage.

The story follows Wilbur, a pig who was born smaller than all the other pigs on the farm. Because he is smaller than the rest, Mr. Arable knows he won't be worth much money, so he decides he is going to kill Wilbur. Fern, Mr. Arable's young daughter, saves Wilbur's life. But Wilbur eats too much, so Mr. Arable decides to send Wilbur to Fern's Uncle, Homer Zuckerman. Arriving at the Zuckermans' Barn, Wilbur meets many animals like the Goose, the Gander, Templeton the Rat, and the Old Sheep. Wilbur also befriends Charlotte the Spider. Soon Wilbur learns that Uncle Homer is planning to either sell him or kill him. Charlotte decides to help Wilbur by writing words in her web. Uncle Homer and the other humans, except for Fern, believe the words in the web to be a miracle that shows how valuable Wilbur's life is.

Because Uncle Homer sees how special Wilbur is, he enters him in a competition at the County Fair. While the competition does not go as planned, Wilbur learns from Charlotte what it means to help out a friend and makes sure to save her egg sac when Charlotte is too weak to make the trip back to the barn. He also wins a special prize for being some pig! All the animals back at the barn remember Charlotte as a true friend and a good writer, and are happy that when her children hatch, three of them decide to stay and live at the barn with Wilbur.

Characters:

Wilbur: A pig

Charlotte: A spider

Fern: A young girl

Homer Zuckerman: Fern's uncle

Mr. Arable: Fern's father

Mrs. Arable: Fern's mother

Aunt Edith: Fern's aunt (not seen on stage)

Lurvy: A hired farm hand

Avery: Fern's brother

Templeton: A rat

Goose: A farm animal

Gander: An adult male goose

The Old Sheep: A farm animal

Uncle the Pig: Prize-winning spring pig

Mr. Carter: A photographer

The President of the Fair: Head of the County Fair

The Baby Spiders: Charlotte's children

The Spectators: People attending the fair

Setting:

The play takes place at three locations, The Arable Farm, The Zuckerman Barn, and the County Fair. Draw what you think these locations look like:

The Arable Farm:

The Zuckerman Barn:

The County Fair:

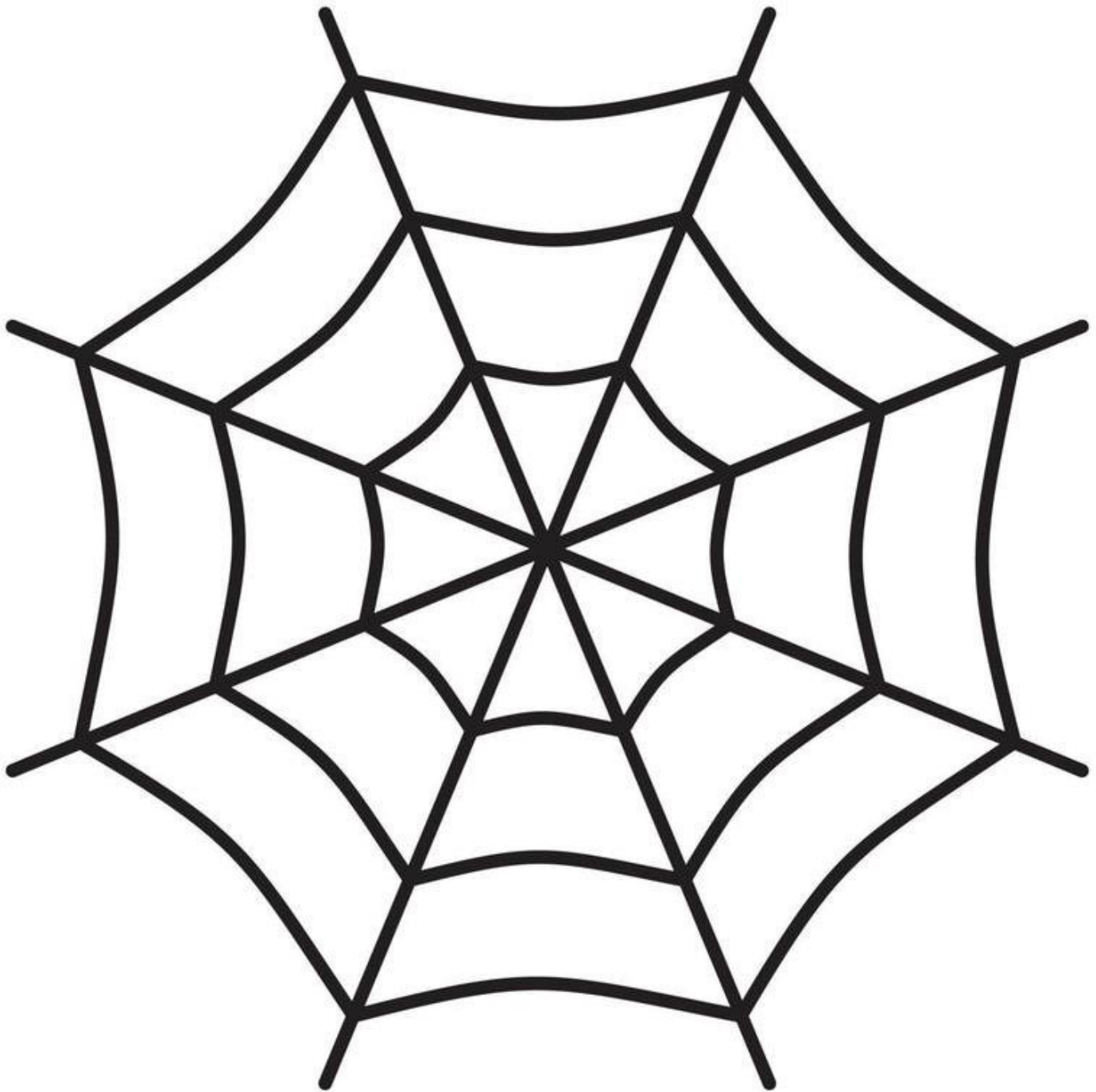
Vocabulary:

Match the vocabulary word with the correct definition.

1. Acute indigestion		A. Not Proud, or low to the ground
2. Spinnerets		B. Baby Geese
3. Radiant		C. A group of baby animals
4. Humble		D. Lack of fairness
5. Tremenjus		E. Uncomfortable burning feeling in chest/stomach
6. Injustice		F. Greetings, saying hello
7. Trifle		G. Medicine taken to clean the system and thicken blood
8. Conspiracy		H. Leftover scraps of food fed to animals
9. Miracle		I. Beams in the roof of a building/barn
10. Supernatural		J. Seating where spectators to view a game/ performance
11. Runt		K. Not stopping, unceasing
12. Hoghouse		L. Unexplainable by science, exceeds the natural
13. Litter		M. Feeling sad and lonely
14. Sulphur & Molasses		N. An extraordinary event only explained by divine power
15. Commotion		O. Pigs born in early Spring, often compete in fairs
16. Salutations		P. Organ where spider's threads are produced
17. Unremitting		Q. Shining or glowing brightly
18. Goslings		R. Not a real word, both tremendous and humongous
19. Dud		S. Faulty, not meeting standards
20. Slops		T. A secret plan, sometimes harmful or unlawful
21. Egg sac		U. A little bit, also a desert or something of little value
22. Spring pig		V. Animal that is smaller than usual
23. Distinguished		W. Structure where pigs are kept
24. Grandstand		X. Protective silk pouch where spiders lay their eggs
25. Forlorn		Y. Successful, commanding respect
26. Rafters		Z. Noisy disturbance

What's In Your Web?

Our Stage Manager Tricia wants to know, If Charlotte was writing adjectives to describe YOU in her web, what would she write? Write adjectives that describe you in the web below.



Comprehension Questions:

Throughout the story, Charlotte writes words in her web to help Wilbur, even when she is tired. Can you think of a time you helped a friend?

In her web, Charlotte writes the words “HUMBLE,” “SOME PIG,” “TERRIFIC,” and “RADIANT” to describe Wilbur. What are some other adjectives that describe Wilbur?

In the play Templeton and the Old Sheep are sometimes mean to Wilbur even though they barely know him. If you met a new friend, how would you make them feel welcome?

At the County Fair, Uncle wins the blue ribbon. At first Wilbur is upset he lost the competition, but then he changes his mind. Why isn't Wilbur upset that he lost?

In your opinion, what makes a true friend?

What was your favorite part of the play, and why?

What are the main themes and messages you think the author is trying to communicate in the play?

Have you read E.B White's book *Charlotte's Web*? Have you seen the movie? If so, did you notice any differences between these versions of the story of the stage version?

Weave Your Own Friendship Bracelet!

Charlotte weaves her web to help Wilbur because she is a true friend. Show somebody that they are your true friend by weaving a friendship bracelet!

Follow this video for visual instructions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=yYU9mSua8zc>

Materials: Cardboard, scissors, pencil, ruler, yarn (7 strands)

To Create Your Cardboard Loom:

1. Cut out a circle using cardboard.
2. Draw 4 lines through the center of the circle to divide it into 8 pie pieces
3. Cut a hole in the center of the circle
4. Cut about 2 centimeters from the edge of the circle at all 8 pencil marks to create 8 slots
5. Take your 7 strands of yarn and thread them through the center of the circle just enough so you can tie a knot at the top

To Weave Your Bracelet:

1. Weave your one strand of yarn each into 7 of the two-inch slots at the edge of your cardboard loom. There should be one slot left open
2. Rotate your cardboard loom so the open slot is always at the bottom of the circle
3. Count three slots clockwise and move the piece of yarn in the third slot to the open slot
4. Rotate your cardboard loom so the new open slot is at the bottom
5. Count three slots clockwise and move the piece of yarn in the third slot to the open slot
6. Repeat this process until your bracelet is as long as you would like
7. Pull the yarn through the center slot to remove it from the cardboard loom and use scissors to cut off the excess yarn- leave enough to tie the loose end
8. Untie the original knot at the top of the bracelet so you can knot both ends together