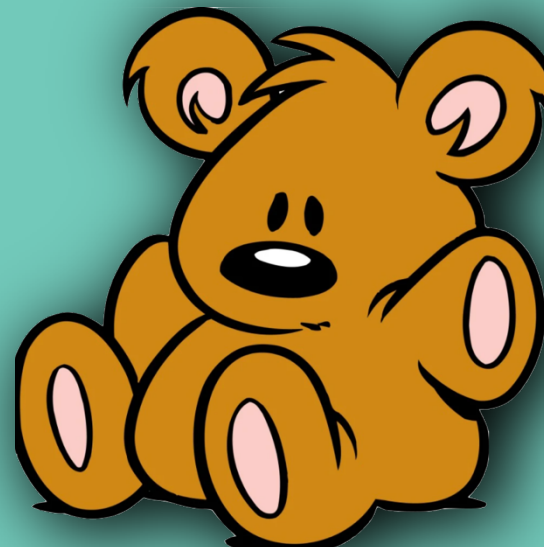


The Children's Theatre  
OF CINCINNATI



Show Companion Activity Guide





## ABOUT THE SHOW

In this musical adaptation of everyone's favorite sarcastic tubby tabby, Garfield awakens to find his birthday – the most important day of the year – has fallen on a Monday. *The horror!* To make matters worse, all his friends – Jon, Odie, Arlene, and even his nemesis, Nermal – have completely forgotten it's his big day. Only his beloved teddy bear, Pooky, understands his disappointment. Feeling rejected, Garfield leaves the comforts of home but soon realizes in the outside there's no T.V., the food is garbage (literally), and animal control is always just around the corner. In the end, Garfield learns little things like, you know, the value of friendship and that "*home is where the heart – and the food – is.*"

## ORIGINS

***Garfield: a Musical with Cattitude*** is based on an American comic strip created by Jim Davis. Originally published locally as *Jon* in 1976, then in nationwide **syndication** from 1978 as *Garfield*, it chronicles the life of the title character, Garfield the cat; Jon Arbuckle, his human owner; and Odie, the dog. As of 2013, it was syndicated in roughly 2,580 newspapers and journals, and held the Guinness World Record for being the world's most widely syndicated comic strip.

Though this is rarely mentioned in print, *Garfield* is set in Jim Davis' hometown of Muncie, Indiana, according to the television special *Happy Birthday, Garfield*. Common themes in the strip include Garfield's laziness, obsessive eating, love of coffee and lasagna, hatred of Mondays, and diets.

Garfield is also shown to manipulate people to get whatever he wants. The strip's focus is mostly on the interactions among Garfield, Jon, and Odie, but other recurring minor characters appearing as well. Originally created with the intentions to "come up with a good, marketable character", *Garfield* has spawned merchandise earning \$750 million to \$1 billion annually. In addition to the various merchandise and commercial tie-ins, the strip has spawned several animated television specials, two animated television series, two theatrical feature-length live-action/CGI animated films, and three fully CGI animated direct-to-video films.

## THE CHARACTERS

**GARFIELD** is an orange, fuzzy tabby cat born in the kitchen of an Italian restaurant, who immediately ate all the pasta and lasagna in sight, thus developing his love and obsession for lasagna and pizza. Though Garfield hates Mondays, and can be very **cynical**, he does have a soft side for his teddy bear, Pooky, food and sleep, and in one Christmas he says: "They say I have to get up early, be nice to people, skip breakfast ... I wish it would never end." However, in the feature film *Garfield Gets Real* and its sequels, Garfield is better behaved, friendlier towards Jon and Odie, less self-centered, and more sympathetic. June 19 is celebrated within the strip as Garfield's birthday.

**JON** (Jonathan Q. Arbuckle) is Garfield's owner, usually depicted as an awkward clumsy geek who has trouble finding a date. Jon had a crush on Liz (Garfield's veterinarian) and is now dating her. Jon disapproves of Garfield's "don't care, not interested", attitude, and often encourages his pet to take an interest in the world around him, sometimes stating an interesting fact, or asking a philosophical question in an attempt to prompt Garfield into thought, Garfield tends to brush this off with a simple, yet logical remark, and despite the trouble Garfield causes, Jon has a heart of gold and is very tolerant of Garfield's shortcomings, a fact which Garfield often takes advantage of.

**ODIE** is a yellow, long-eared beagle with a large, slobbering tongue, who walks on all four legs, though occasionally he will walk on two like Garfield. Odie is younger than Garfield and usually portrayed as naïve, happy, affectionate and blissfully unaware of the hatred Garfield exhibits toward him, including regularly kicking him off the kitchen table or tricking him into going over the edge himself. On some occasions, however, he is depicted more intelligently, as in one strip when Garfield and Jon are out of the house, Odie is seen reading *War and Peace* and watching *An Evening With Mozart* on television. In another strip, he is seen solving Jon's sudoku puzzle. Odie has only talked once.



**ARLENE** is a Garfield's girlfriend who is always making jokes at Garfield. She is a slim, elegant, long-tailed, pink-furred cat with big red lips. Although she makes a lot of jokes, she is a sweet-natured loving cat. She always tries to help Garfield choose the correct and proper decisions. Even though she gets aggravated by Garfield's teasing, she still holds great affection for him.

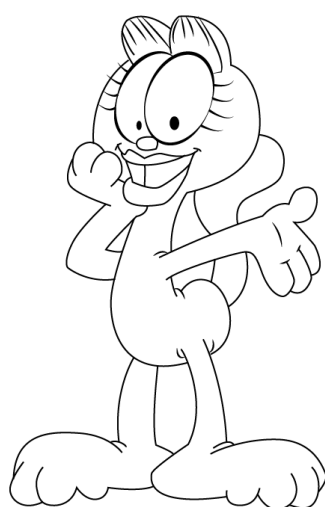
**LIZ** (Dr. Liz Wilson) is Garfield and Odie's veterinarian and a long-time crush of Jon Arbuckle. She almost always reacts sarcastically to Jon's goofball behavior but can find it endearing on occasion. Jon often attempted to ask her out on a date, but rarely succeeded; however, in an extended story arc from June 19 to July 29, 2006, Liz and Jon kiss, and have been a couple ever since.

**NERMAL** is a small grey tabby cat whom Garfield is jealous of. Despite being an adult cat, he proclaims himself as "the world's cutest kitten". He frequently makes unannounced visits into Garfield's home, where he flaunts his cuteness and steals the focus. Nermal especially did this on Garfield's birthdays to remind him of his advancing age. In frustration, Garfield frequently expressed his desire to send Nermal to Abu Dhabi.

*(Using the character descriptions from above, accurately color each character picture below)*



Nermal



Arlene



Odie



Garfield

**A Comic Strip** is a sequence of drawings, often cartoon, arranged in interrelated panels to display brief humor or form a story, with text in balloons and captions. Traditionally, throughout the 20th and into the 21st century, these have been published in newspapers and magazines, with daily horizontal strips printed in black-and-white in newspapers, while Sunday papers offered longer sequences in special color comics sections. With the advent of the internet, online comic strips began to appear as webcomics. Strips are written and drawn by a comics artist, known as a cartoonist. As the word "comic" implies, strips are frequently humorous. Examples of these gag-a-day strips are *Blondie*, *Bringing Up Father*, *Marmaduke*, and *Pearls Before Swine*. In the late 1920s, comic strips expanded from their lighthearted beginnings to feature adventure stories, as seen in *Buck Rogers*, *Tarzan*, and *Terry and the Pirates*. In the 1940s, soap-opera-continuity strips such as *Judge Parker* and *Mary Worth* gained popularity. Because "comic" strips are not always funny, cartoonist Will Eisner has suggested that **sequential art** would be a better name.

Every day in American newspapers, for most of the 20th century, there were at least 200 different comic strips and cartoon panels, which makes 73,000 per year. Comic strips have appeared inside American magazines such as *Liberty* and *Boys' Life*, but also on the front covers, such as the *Flossy Frills* series on *The American Weekly* Sunday newspaper supplement. In the UK and the rest of Europe, comic strips are also **serialized** in *comic book magazines*, with a strip's story sometimes continuing over three pages or more.

#### VOCABULARY

**SYNDICATION:** the sale or licensing of material for publication or broadcasting by a number of television stations, newspapers, etc.

**CYNICAL:** concerned only with one's own interests and typically disregarding accepted or appropriate standards in order to achieve them.

**SUDOKU:** a puzzle in which players insert the numbers one to nine into a grid consisting of nine squares subdivided into a further nine smaller squares in such a way that every number appears once in each horizontal line, vertical line, and square.

**SEQUENTIAL:** forming or following in a logical order or sequence.  
"a series of sequential steps"

**SERIALIZED:** publish or broadcast (a story or play) in regular installments.

## READING QUESTIONS

Circle the correct answer



1. What kind of cat is Garfield?

- A. Cheshire
- B. Tabby
- C. Siamese
- D. Persian

2. In what city is the Garfield comic strip set?

- A. New York City
- B. Gary, Indiana
- C. Muncie, Indiana
- D. Cincinnati, Ohio

3. What is Garfield's favorite food?

- A. Lasagna
- B. Pizza
- C. Spaghetti and Meatballs
- D. Baked Ziti

4. What is the name of Garfield's teddy bear?

- A. Pinky
- B. Perky
- C. Petey
- D. Pooky

5. What kind of dog is Odie?

- A. Bassett Hound
- B. Beagle
- C. Bulldog
- D. Poodle

6. What is Liz's job?

- A. Nurse
- B. Veterinarian
- C. Dietician
- D. Psychologist



## WORD SEARCH

Find the following words or phrases (forwards, backwards, vertical, horizontal or diagonal) in the grid below.

*Garfield - Jon - Liz - Odie - Nermal - Lasagna - Lazy - Cat - Dog - Birthday  
- Beagle - Comic Strip*

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

*BONUS: Jim \_\_\_\_\_ is the creator of the Garfield comic strip.  
(fill in the blank and then find the word in the word search above)*

  
**JUMBLE** 

Unscramble the letters to reveal the hidden words from the reading.

1. GAASNAL \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ 

2. ZELNISAS \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ 

3. NUMICE \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ 

4. TREVEIRANINA \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

**ACTIVITY (All Grades)**  
**CREATE YOUR OWN COMIC STRIP**

"Garfield: a Musical with Cattitude" is based on one of the most popular comic strips of all time, "Garfield" by Jim Davis. In order to help students better understand the form and function of sequential art, have them create their own simple comic strips to share with the class. Compile the strips into a booklet to give students as a souvenir of the lesson.

Materials: Art Supplies (Pen, Paper, Markers, Colored Pencils, etc)

1. Either individually, or in small groups assign students to create their own 3-5 box comic strips using a simple template:



**COMIC STRIP STORY TEMPLATE**  
**CHARACTER A (Title Character of the Strip)**  
Goes to: **LOCATION**  
And Meets: **CHARACTER B**  
While trying to: **COMPLETE TASK/ENJOY ACTIVITY**

2. Students must be able to fit their stories into 3-5 boxes in the strip, and the story must make sense in sequence. Once students have outlined their stories, pass out art supplies to draw their strips.



3. Have students share their strips with the class. Compile strips into a souvenir booklet for students to keep.

### Example

**Title of Comic Strip:** The Adventures of Jojo and Matty Matt.

**CHARACTER A (Title Character of the Strip):** Jojo

**Goes to: LOCATION:** Ice Cream Parlor because it's hot out

**And Meets: CHARACTER B:** Matty Matt

**While trying to: COMPLETE TASK/ENJOY ACTIVITY:** Tries to eat Ice cream but it melts and falls off cone.

Fill in the blanks to create your Comic Strip!

**Title of Comic Strip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHARACTER A Name (Main Character of the Strip):** \_\_\_\_\_

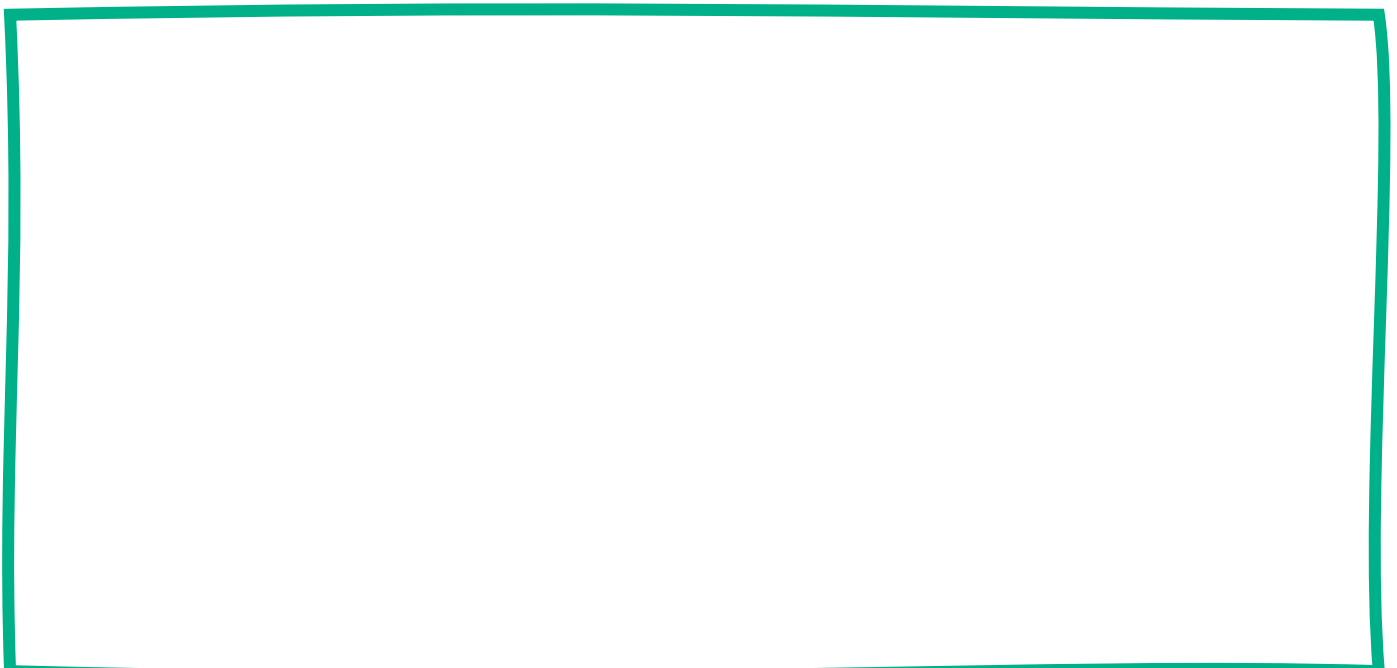
**Goes to: LOCATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**And Meets: CHARACTER B Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**While trying to: COMPLETE TASK/ENJOY**

**ACTIVITY:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Use the space below to sketch out your designs and then use a separate blank paper to finalize your comic strip.*



# Answer Key

## Reading Questions

- 1:B
- 2:C
- 3:A
- 4:D
- 5:B
- 6:B

## Word Search

*Bonus Question Answer: Davis*

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

## Word Jumble

- 1. Lasagna
- 2. Laziness
- 3. Muncie
- 4. Veterinarian

## Grade Level Standards

**RI.1.1** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

**RL.2.2** Analyze literary text development.

- a. Determine the lesson or moral.
- b. Retell stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures.

**RL.3.1** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

**RL.2.7** Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.