



Interactive Game Teachers' Guide

My set Designer

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS



Program for the Enrichment of
French in Education (PEFE)



Centre du patrimoine



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Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that Théâtre Cercle Molière is situated on the ancestral lands of the Anishinabee, Ininewak and Dakota peoples, as well as the homeland of the Métis Nation. We recognize that Manitoba is also home to the ancestral lands of the Anishininiwak and Dene. Stories have been told on these lands for millennia, and we would like to thank our ancestors, our grandmothers and grandfathers, for proudly transmitting to us the English language and the Michif language.

Credits & Collaborations

Music

Have you heard ***L'Histoire est en écriture***? This song inspired the music for the games! A big thank-you to Franco-Manitoban artists Andrina Turenne and Daniel Pélouquin-Hopfner for creating the original soundtrack for the games.



Andrina Turenne is a singer and musician from Winnipeg. She writes and performs songs rooted in her experiences, her roots and the riches of the natural world.



Daniel Pélouquin-Hopfner is an artist from the Manitoba prairies. A multi-instrumentalist, he draws inspiration from wide open spaces and the stories they hold.

Voices

The audio descriptions were recorded by two Théâtre Cercle Molière employees, Charlotte Gacougnolle and Auréna Ré. Their voices guide students as they explore the photos and characters. For each creation, they describe the image, draw attention to certain details, and end with an open-ended question to encourage observation, imagination and reflection.



Passionate about theatre and the arts in general, Charlotte Gacougnolle enjoys exploring Winnipeg's arts scene and being surprised by the city's rich cultural offerings.



Auréna Ré is a Franco-Manitoban artist, actor, voice actor and storyteller whose work explores identity, oral traditions and cultural hybridity.

Education Advisory Committee

Thank you to the Education Advisory Committee, made up of members from the Bureau de l'éducation française, the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine and the Division scolaire Louis-Riel, whose advice and reflections guided the development of the games.

Archival photos

Several images used in the games come from the Cercle Molière fonds, preserved at the Centre du patrimoine of the Société historique de Saint-Boniface. Explore the fonds at shsb.mb.ca

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Design your own Set

This game invites students from Kindergarten to Grade 3 to build a theatre set using elements inspired by plays produced or presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière since 1925. It is a simple tool for introducing the concepts of place, context and visual composition in a story.

By assembling different elements, students develop their understanding of how stage space is organized, experiment with composition, and learn to create a coherent environment. Students are encouraged to connect their choices to a situation or story, while exploring the links between set, time period, and atmosphere.

In the classroom, the game can support oral communication, writing, or drama activities. Once a creation is complete, students are invited to save an image that can be printed, then used to describe the set, imagine a story, or present the context they created.

Using images from the archives of Théâtre Cercle Molière, this game also introduces theatre as an expression of francophone culture and as a way to share ideas and messages. Students discover visual elements connected to different eras and productions, including major works such as *Les Belles-Sœurs* by Michel Tremblay, as well as Manitoba creations such as *L'Article 23*. Students are also introduced to the history of a leading French-language theatre institution in Canada and to the contributions of important figures such as Pauline Boutal.

Theatre becomes a starting point for exploring themes, asking questions, and opening classroom discussions. In the context of TCM's centennial, this activity connects creation, heritage, and living culture. Look closely, and you might even spot the faces of recent executive directors Geneviève Pelletier and Marie-Ève Fontaine!

Have fun!

Learning Outcomes

In addition to being fun and creative, teachers can use the game to support skill development and learning related to the world of theatre and the storytelling elements of a story, such as place and context:

- Identify and name the different elements provided, such as floors, walls and accessories.
- Arrange elements coherently to compose a scene or environment.
- Connect selected elements to create or illustrate a story or situation.
- Use creativity and experiment with different arrangements and compositions to create varied scenes.
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the spatial relationship between elements within the limits of a theatre stage.
- Make contextual connections by linking selected elements to specific events or historical periods, while understanding how they were used and what they meant at the time.
- Identify and discuss the importance of set pieces and props in communicating a time period, place or atmosphere on stage.
- Reflect on the importance of lighting and sound effects as complements to visual elements in creating atmosphere.

Free creation mode

Free creation mode allows students to use all the objects in the library to imagine an original set. Let your imagination lead the way!

Print your creation

Once a creation is complete, students can save their image by clicking the "I'm done!" button and you can print it. The student's creation can then be used as a visual support for an oral presentation, writing activity, drama game or classroom display.

Activity ideas

Theatre transports audiences to different places through sets, objects and the atmosphere of the stage. By imagining theatrical spaces, students develop their creativity, sense of organization, descriptive language and understanding of stories.

My Set Creator invites students to explore photos and archival images of productions presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière, founded in 1925. By discovering scenes inspired by major productions, they learn how sets help tell stories, create emotion and transport audiences, while creating their own worlds.

The following activities can be adapted to students' grade level and your classroom goals.

Play as a group on an interactive whiteboard or during guided discussion

- Listen to the description and answer the open-ended question.
- Observe the photo from the play and identify the elements of the set.
- Discuss the context of the set: where, when and more.
- Compare an older set and a modern set.
- Recreate the scene as a group.
- Guess where the story takes place: house, castle, city, village and more.
- Imagine who enters the scene and why.

In free creation mode:

- Discuss: How does the set help us understand a story?
- Change one object and discuss: What happens if we add a different piece of furniture?
- Invent a scene inspired by a familiar story.

Play individually, on tablets or computers

- Recreate the set shown in the photo.
- Write reflections connected to the open-ended question.
- Describe the set using precise words.

In free creation mode:

- Invent a new set.
- Create the setting for a story written in class.
- Print the image and write what happens there.
- Create three sets for the beginning, middle and end of a story.

Incorporate drama

Use existing or new sets to:

- Enter the set as if you were really there.
- Describe what you see, hear and smell.
- Act out a surprise arrival in this place.
- Improvise a short scene in this set.
- Invent a problem to solve in this place.
- Create a mini play with a set and characters.

Reading, writing and oral communication

Use existing or new sets to:

- Name the objects and elements of the set.
- Write a complete sentence about the scene created.
- Describe the place with many details.
- Write what happens in this place.
- Invent a dialogue between characters in this set.
- Write the beginning of a play that takes place in this set.

Explore cultures and heritage

- Place the founding of Théâtre Cercle Molière in 1925 on a timeline.
- Observe how sets change from one time period to another.
- Compare an older set and a modern set.
- Identify cultural clues in a scene.
- Discover sets inspired by major works such as *Les Belles-sœurs*.
- Explore Manitoba productions presented at TCM.
- Discover the work of Pauline Boutal.
- Explore worlds connected to Gabrielle Roy and other authors.
- Discuss the role of theatre in the francophone community.
- Imagine the set of a future TCM play.

Create artistic projects

- Create a wall of sets in the hallway.
- Make a collective book of imagined places.
- Present short theatre scenes inspired by the sets.
- Match each set with a text written by students.
- Exchange creations with another class for inspiration to create a story.

Archive photos included



À toi pour toujours, ta Marie-Lou

PRESENTED AT THE TCM IN 1972

À toi, pour toujours, ta Marie-Lou, written by Michel Tremblay and directed by Roland Mahé, was presented at the Théâtre Cercle Molière in 1972.

In this powerful drama, Manon lives withdrawn in her home, haunted by the tragic death of her parents. Her sister Carmen tries to pull her out of this state, but Manon remains deeply attached to the past, to religion and to the voices that disturb her. Family memories and generational pain intertwine in an intimate and heavy atmosphere, as the two women struggle to make sense of what binds them together and what keeps them apart.

In *À toi, pour toujours, ta Marie-Lou*, the kitchen is more than a simple setting: it is the centre of family life. Manon and Carmen meet there to talk, remember and confront their parents' past. Realistically represented, the kitchen becomes a symbol of the home's memory, daily routines and the family tensions that linger long after a tragedy.



Au cœur de l'histoire

PRESENTED AT THE TCM FROM APRIL 4 TO 9, 2016

Presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière from April 4–9, 2016 and written by France Adams, *Au cœur de l'histoire* tells the story of two children, Joëlle and Gloire, who come from different backgrounds and discover invisible threads linking them to the tragic histories of their families. Through their childlike perspective, filled with wisdom and curiosity, they learn to communicate in their own way, taking small steps toward peace.

This moving play speaks to both young and older audiences. It invites reflection on identity, roots and our place in the world today. *Au cœur de l'histoire* reminds us that being human means having the courage to listen, to remain curious and to reach out to others without judgment.

The set highlights a shared fence between Joëlle and Gloire, suggesting both their closeness and the boundaries that separate them.



Blanchette

PRESENTED AT THE TCM IN 1934

Blanchette, by Eugène Brieux, tells the story of a well-educated young woman who returns to her modest farming family. After earning her diploma, she looks for work and dreams of a better future, but her modern ideas clash with the traditional expectations of her family and community. Her future and education are debated by her family and the villagers in a context where jobs are scarce. *Blanchette* proposes bold projects to improve her family's life, creating tensions, arguments and misunderstandings, as everyone sees things differently.

The set represents a lively tavern where villagers gather around tables and chairs. This space serves as a social hub in the play: *Blanchette* returns there after her studies, searches for work and shares her modern ideas. Around her, patrons talk, question and debate the projects she proposes, bringing to life everyday encounters where dreams of a better future meet the community's traditional expectations.



Cet été qui chantait

PRESENTED AT TCM FROM MAY 31 TO JUNE 3, 2023 AND FROM JANUARY 14 TO 24, 2026

A crow, carried by the breeze, soars over the mountains, the valley and finally, the river. It leads the way to a small house with green shutters, tucked at the end of the road in Petite-Rivière-Saint-François. There, Gabrielle takes in the world with bright, wondering eyes: hay swaying in the wind, wildflowers blooming atop a pile of compost, shorebirds calling along the mudflats, fireflies whispering at dusk.

Loosely inspired by Gabrielle Roy's beloved book of the same name, *Cet été qui chantait* is a tender performance rich in imagery, steeped in music and anchored in stillness. Marie-Ève Fontaine and her team gently bring the poetic world of the renowned Franco-Manitoban author to life, inviting audiences of all ages, especially little ones and the young at heart, on a deeply sensory journey.

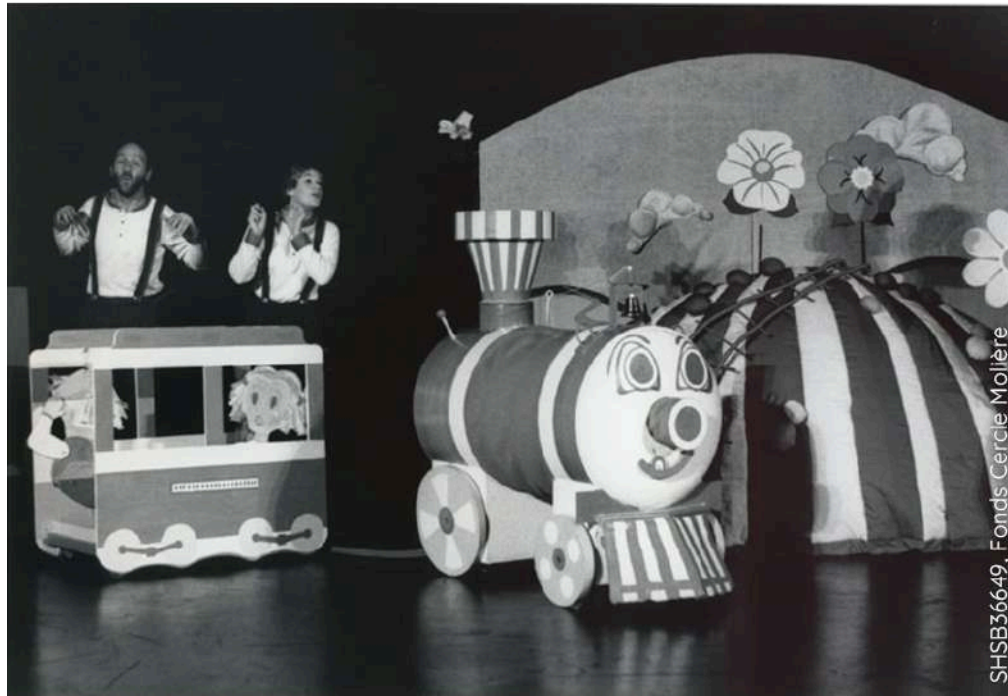


L'Avare

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1950

First presented at Théâtre Cercle Molière in 1950 and directed by Pauline Boutal, *L'Avare* is a classic comedy by Molière, written in 1668. It tells the story of Harpagon, a man obsessed with money. He hides his gold, refuses to share it and seeks to control everything, even his children's marriages. The play is filled with obsessions, outbursts and comic misunderstandings.

In this watercolour illustration by Pauline Boutal, the setting of *L'Avare* takes the form of a space that is both interior and exterior. A stone wall extends to create, at the centre, an enclosed office, a place where Harpagon can count his money, write and... control. The many doors suggest constant movement, secrets and overheard conversations that fuel the play's misunderstandings. To the right, the wall appears to crack... Did you notice the character slipping away through the wall?



Le voyage du train

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1986

Le voyage du train was created for young audiences and presented by the Théâtre du Grand Cercle (TCM) in 1986. It was directed by Irène Mahé and written by Claudine Dailly in French and Claude Dorge in English. The production toured widely across Western Canada and featured about ten songs, along with playful moments where the train, animals and characters experience amusing surprises.

In *Le voyage du train*, three performers invite children to embark on a colourful adventure filled with songs and laughter. On stage, audiences meet amusing characters such as a cow, a singing and dancing duck who keeps repeating that he has “had enough!”, a goldfish, children and of course... a train! The play shows how everyone can pursue their dreams, even when the journey is long or difficult. The actors tell their stories as if children could play along themselves, copying the gestures and songs.

The set changes with the seasons and the music invites audiences to smile, dance and imagine setting off on a great journey, a journey toward self-confidence, friendship and the joy of creating together.



Les Tremblay

PRESENTED AT THE TCM FROM FEBRUARY 7 TO 15, 2016

Presented at the Théâtre Cercle Molière from February 7 to 15, 1986, *Les Tremblay*, written by Claude Dorge and Irène Mahé and directed by Roland Mahé, portrays a Franco-Manitoban family facing serious tensions. The father, at odds with the mother and their two sons, has withdrawn his parental affection, leading to difficult exchanges and family conflict. Through discussions and confrontations, the play explores themes such as money, happiness, education and family values, showing how differing viewpoints can lead to misunderstandings and ruptures.

The action of this Manitoba production takes place inside the family home. This space frames the exchanges between the characters, the discussions and the conflicts that run through the family.



Que faire d'Albert

PRESENTED AT THE TCM FROM MARCH 7 TO 23, 2019

My mother is dead. What will I do with dad? *Que faire d'Albert?*

Albert has become a widower. This new reality is very hard on him. His daughter proposes a new lifestyle: a seniors' residence. For Albert, this is absolutely out of the question! After the resounding success of *Et que ça saute !*, Danielle Séguin-Tétreault is back with her latest creation, a new comedy loosely inspired by her own experiences.

Que faire d'Albert? presented at the Théâtre Cercle Molière from March 7 to 23, 2019, in collaboration with Prairie Theatre Exchange (PTE), was written by Danielle Séguin-Tétreault and directed by Laura Lussier. The set represents Albert's living room, simple and colourful, leaving space for the characters and their emotions. At certain moments, television screens light up while the rest of the stage falls into darkness.



Un chapeau de paille d'Italie

PRESENTED AT TCM IN 1952

This light comedy by Eugène Labiche, published in 1851, was presented at the TCM nearly 100 years later, in 1952. On his wedding day, Fadinard discovers that his horse has eaten a young woman's straw hat. The woman, accompanied by her lover, insists on finding an identical hat to avoid a scandal with her husband. Fadinard sets off in search of a replacement, but each attempt leads to increasingly absurd situations as the wedding party follows him everywhere.

In *Un chapeau de paille d'Italie*, the action unfolds within a bourgeois setting: a world governed by appearances, social conventions and proper manners. This environment drives the comedy: the characters try to protect their reputations, avoid scandal and maintain respectability, even as everything slips out of control. The contrast between bourgeois seriousness and absurd situations creates the pace and comic effect of the play.

Thank you!

Want to further explore theatre with your students?
Browse the resources for teachers
and Grade 7-12 students (in French only):
Le A à Z d'une création et d'une production théâtrale
<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/m12/progetu/arts/a-z/index.html>



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