

# THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF DR. WONDERFUL (AND HER DOG!)

**BOOK AND LYRICS BY LAUREN GUNDERSON**  
**MUSIC BY BREE LOWDERMILK**

## A STUDY GUIDE



Compiled by Liv Fassanella and Jill Zarcone.  
For use of Playhouse Theatre Academy,  
April 2022.

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-And look out for me  
throughout the guide!

-Newton



# SYNOPSIS

Dr. Wonderful and her dog, Newton, want to know why the moon changes shape in the sky every night. But how can they study the moon when it's so far away?

By blasting off into space, of course!

On their amazing journey, this detective duo gathers clues to solve their lunar mystery using the powers of science, curiosity, and teamwork.

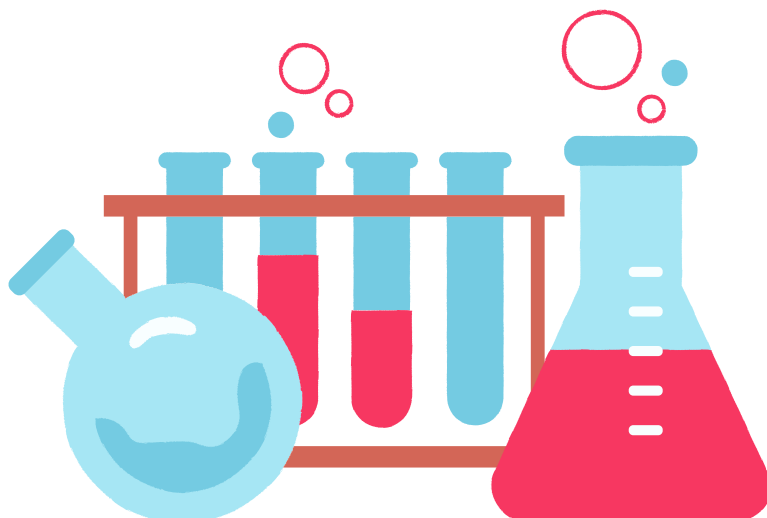
# CHARACTERS

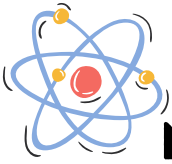
Dr. Wonderful – a young girl with glasses and lab coat

Newton – a dog dressed like her, a loving but hyper friend

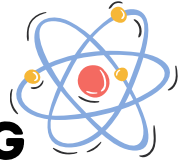
Ben – her best human friend, also loving and hyper

Mom – so kind, cool, and clever





# WHO'S IN THE CAST?



**MEET THE ACTORS WHO WILL BE PUTTING  
ON THE SHOW!**



**TRINITY POSEY  
DR. WONDERFUL**



**ROBERT DENZEL EDWARDS  
NEWTON**



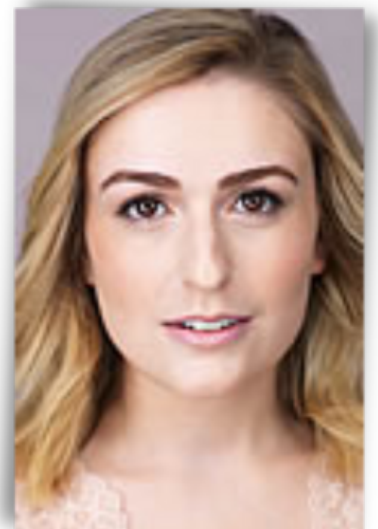
**MARISA BUDNICK  
MOM**



**KENNETH GALM  
BEN**



**ALEXANDRA VAN DER HULST  
SWING**



**MOIRA O'SULLIVAN  
DIRECTOR**

## LAUREN GUNDERSON



Lauren has been one of the most produced playwrights in America since 2015 topping the list twice including 2019/20. She is a two-time winner of the Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award for *I and You* and *The Book of Will*, the winner of the Lanford Wilson Award and the Otis Guernsey New Voices Award, a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and John Gassner Award for Playwriting, and a recipient of the Mellon Foundation's Residency with Marin Theatre Company. She studied Southern Literature and Drama at Emory University, and Dramatic Writing at NYU's Tisch School where she was a Reynolds Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship.

## BREE LOWDERMILK



BREE LOWDERMILK (she/her or they/them) is a queer, gender non-conforming musical theater writer, YouTube creator, songwriter, and dramatist. In theater, they've gotten lots of awards for emerging and mid-career artists (whatever that means) including the Larson Award, Alan Menken Award, Richard Rodgers Award, and a Dramatists Guild Fellowship, and they have held residencies at MacDowell, Johnny Mercer, Theatreworks/Palo Alto and others. They are a founder of the start-up [NewMusicalTheatre.com](http://NewMusicalTheatre.com), and a member of the Dramatist Guild and ASCAP.

# NEWTON'S NOTE

## for students

teachers – please read  
this to students and  
discuss appropriate  
theatre behavior



In a few days you will be attending a production of *The Amazing Adventures of Dr. Wonderful and her Dog*, at Playhouse on Park. Some of you may have attended performances of live theatre before, and for others, this may be a new experience.

When you arrive at the theatre, you will walk through the lobby and into the theatre, where you will each be assigned a seat in the audience. Soon after that, the lights will get dark, and the show will begin!

This show is a musical, so you will see live actors singing, acting, and dancing. Please be quiet and focused throughout the production so you do not disturb others in the audience or the performers onstage. Please only ask to go to the bathroom if it is an emergency, and try to leave between songs or scenes if possible. You may quietly return when an usher or a teacher says that it is a good time. We do not allow photography, texting, ringing cell phones, or any noisy distractions, so students, please remind your teachers to please make sure that all electronic devices are silenced and put away before entering the theatre at the start of the show!

Now that we've gotten what you can't do out of the way, there are many things that we hope you will do! We would love to hear applause at the end of the show, and after a song. We hope to hear you laugh if something is funny, and participate when the actors ask for your help. At the end of the show the actors will bow. Just as you thank the actors by clapping, bows are the actors' way of thanking you for watching. If you really love the show, feel free to stand up while you are clapping during the bows to give the actors an extra special thank you! This is called a standing ovation.

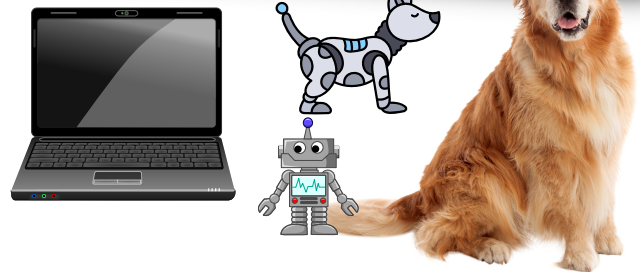
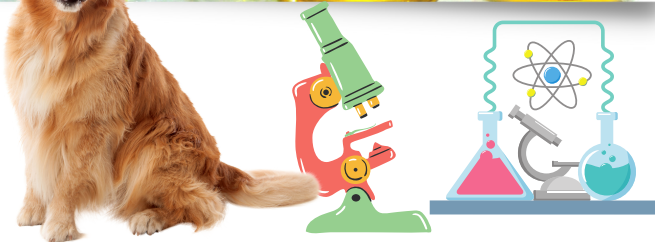


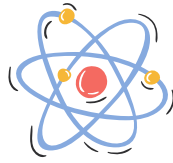
### **DISCUSSION QUESTION:**

**HAS ANYONE BEEN TO PLAYHOUSE ON PARK BEFORE? WHAT DID YOU SEE? HAS ANYONE SEEN A LIVE SHOW ON STAGE BEFORE? WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PLAY AND A MUSICAL?**

# WHAT IS S.T.E.M?

S.T.E.M stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. S.T.E.M for short. See the next page for some women in S.T.E.M who paved the way for scientists like Dr. Wonderful! -And don't forget Newton! 🐾





### **TEMPLE GRANDIN**

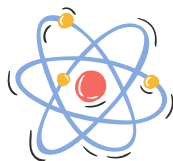
"I am different, not less."

Temple Grandin is an American inventor, scientist and educator and is one of the first autistic people to document the insights she gained from her personal experience of autism. At the age of 18, Grandin invented a device known as a "hug box" for calming down hypersensitive people, usually those with autistic disorders. She is also known for her work with animals and ways to treat them kindly!

### **MARIE MAYNARD DALY**

"You become courageous by doing courageous acts... Courage is a habit"

Marie Maynard Daly was an American biochemist. She was the first African American woman in the United States to earn a Ph.D. in chemistry! She is known for researching proteins and how they work inside our bodies!



### **KATHERINE JOHNSON**

"You lose your curiosity when you stop learning."

Katherine Johnson was an American mathematician who helped NASA send astronauts to the moon and return them safely home! She also overcame racial and gender hurdles that helped make giant leaps for humankind. They made a movie in 2016 about her called Hidden Figures!

### **SALLY RIDE**

"Science is fun. Science is curiosity. We all have natural curiosity. Science is a process of investigating."

NASA astronaut Sally Ride became the first American woman in space, serving as a mission specialist on the space shuttle Challenger in 1983. At 32 years old, she was also the youngest American to ever leave the atmosphere!



# ACTIVITY #1 - WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

7

The world of Theatre comes with a lot of fun terms to describe the various roles people perform and the things done! You may hear some of these terms when you come to the Playhouse or maybe you have heard them before!

Work together to figure out what these theatre terms mean!

**STAGE MANAGER**

**TROUPE**

**CATWALK**

**CALLBOARD**

**GREEN ROOM**

**BLACK OUT**

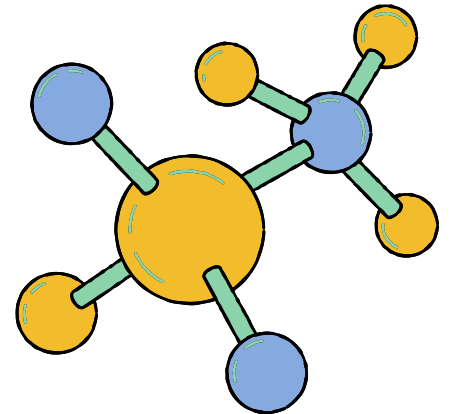
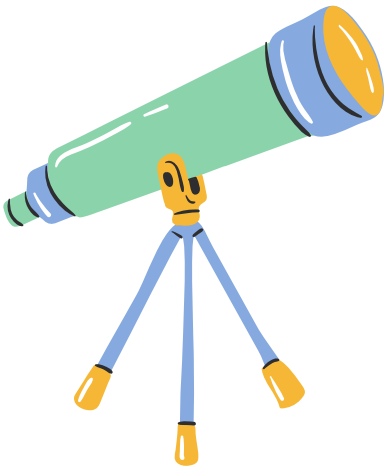
**MONOLOGUE**

**PROP**

**SWING**

**STANDING OVATION**

**CURTAIN CALL**



## DEFINITIONS FOR ABOVE TERMS:



1. Stage Manager - the person who runs the show from opening curtain to closing curtain and is in charge of everything on the stage and in the back of the stage
2. Troupe - a group of actors that form a company
3. Catwalk - a narrow walkway suspended from the ceiling of a theater from which sometimes lights and scenery are hung
4. Callboard - the place backstage where the Stage Manager puts up important information for the cast and crew
5. Green Room - a place for the performers to relax while waiting to go on stage
6. Black Out - the quick shutting off of all the stage lights
7. Monologue - a speech given by one actor
8. Props - all the items used in a play to tell the story not including the scenery or costumes.
9. Swing - a performer in a musical who substitutes when chorus members are unable to perform
10. Standing Ovation - When a performance is so wonderful, the audience will get on their feet and applaud the cast.
11. Curtain call - the bows at the end of a performance
12. Break A Leg - something people tell actors to wish them "Good Luck" before a performance or audition

# **ACTIVITY #2 - THE BIG QUESTION**



**DR. WONDERFUL LOVES ASKING THE BIG QUESTIONS! WHAT BIG QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?**

**WRITE THEM DOWN AND SHARE WITH YOUR FRIENDS IN CLASS. ASK IF ANYONE HAS AN ANSWER! OR MAYBE A WAY TO FIND THE ANSWERS?**



## ACTIVITY #3 - THE HUMAN KNOT

Dr. Wonderful and her dog, Newton, love working together to solve mysteries and have fun! Let's do a fun exercise that encourages teamwork and communication!



No equipment is needed for this game. The approximate playing time is 15 to 20 minutes. However, the length is somewhat dependent upon the number of players. Players stand in a circle and reach out to shake hands with other players, with each hand connecting to a different person, creating a "human knot." Then the players attempt to unthread their bodies without letting go of each other's hands.

# WRITE A LETTER TO DR. WONDERFUL!

## Just for Teachers

Thank you for bringing your students to see The Amazing Adventures of Dr. Wonderful and her Dog at Playhouse on Park and for encouraging the arts in your classroom.

If you mail your class letters to us at Playhouse on Park, we will send a thank you letter back to your class.

Please mail class letters to:

Playhouse Theatre Academy  
Playhouse on Park  
244 Park Rd  
West Hartford, CT 06119

Teachers: if you have thoughts or comments regarding educational programming at Playhouse on Park, please email Michael Hinton, Director of Education, at [mhinton@playhousetheatregroup.org](mailto:mhinton@playhousetheatregroup.org).



-Thank you!  


**Dear Dr. Wonderful Cast and Crew,**

My favorite part of the show was:

Draw your favorite part of the show:

From,

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