

upstage **ACTIVITIES**

BIRTHDAY CANDLES

Ernestine's Family Time Capsule

A kitchen in Grand Rapids, Michigan. A working oven. A goldfish in a bowl.
90 years and 90 minutes concurrently.

MATCH

MATCH THE CHARACTER NAME WITH THEIR LINE OF TEXT.

Happy 17th to 107th Birthdays,
Ernestine Ashworth!

SIGNATORY

- Your mother, Alice
- Your daughter, Madeline
- Your great-granddaughter, Ernie
- Your daughter-in-law, Joan
- Your granddaughter, Alex
- Your home's future owner, Beth
- Your son, Billy
- Your home's future owner, John
- Your husband, Matt
- Your neighbor, Kenneth
- Your great-grandson, William

Beloved daughter, girlfriend, wife, mother, friend, aunt,
mother-in-law, widow, second wife, grandmother,
great-grandmother, and great-great-grandmother!

BIRTHDAY GREETING

- Time is a lie, the party already happened, it went great.
- My first memory was right here.
At your knees, making this cake with you.
- We've raised a family, Ernestine. A beautiful family.
- You broke into my house and brought your goldfish?
- She used to live here. This is her
rightful place in the cosmos.
- Risk your heart. Find your place in the universe.
- Do you want to go to prom with me?
- To love as a revolutionary force!
- Practice, practice, practice.
- I didn't know what color nail polish
would reflect your interior life.
- I'm totally going to break the piñata before you both!

IMAGINE

During the play, Ernestine bakes a cake every year on her birthday. The making of the birthday cake is an example of a family ritual that is part of a popular birthday tradition. Rituals and traditions come in many forms, from the food we prepare to the songs we sing and the holidays we celebrate.

A RITUAL is a ceremonial act or action; an act or series of acts regularly repeated in a set precise manner.

A TRADITION is an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior.

Consider a favorite person of yours who made an impact or taught you a ritual. If you were to make the recipe for this person, what would the ingredients be? Think beyond food. What are the flavors of a human personality? A little bit of sass, a lot of bravery, a pinch of thoughtfulness?

1 cup _____

1 tablespoon _____

1 teaspoon _____

A pinch of _____

CREATE

Now that you have made the ingredients to this magical person in your life, what would they look like in cake form? Now, draw a cake, write a detailed description, or create a collage that represents the recipe of this person.

REFLECT

CONGRATS! You have finished your recipe! What have you learned about yourself? In creating this cake, you considered your dreams, habits, comfort materials, family, and friends. Keep these in mind as you evolve through your life. Healing is not constant, through life you will hit peaks and valleys, as long as you commit to yourself and the things that serve you, you can get through it.

- How can you apply this knowledge moving forward?
- How can knowing these things help you navigate change?

DREAM

In *Birthday Candles*, we witness Ernestine's hopes for the future and reflections on her past at various ages. There is a question that echoes through generations of characters in this play:

"In the career of my soul, how many times have I turned from wonder?"

What does this question mean to you?

From your present perspective, write your hopes and monumental moments of wonder around this question to your past self, your current self, and your future self.

My past hope is _____

My current hope is _____

My future hope is _____