



“The Brave Little Tailor” Study Guide

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1. ENCHANTMENT THEATRE COMPANY

For more than 30 years, Enchantment Theatre Company has been guided by our mission: to create original theater for young audiences and families. We accomplish this through the imaginative telling of fairy tales, fables and myths that inspire, challenge and enrich our audience, both onstage and in the classroom. Enchantment believes deeply in the transformative power of theater to awaken children’s imaginations and to nurture their humanity. Our unique style of performance – incorporating expressive masks, life-sized puppets, magical illusion, original music, dance and pantomime – is accessible to children of all ages and backgrounds and encourages everyone – regardless of age and language barriers – to engage in the joy of a live theatrical production.

2. ABOUT ENCHANTMENT THEATRE COMPANY'S STYLE

Our unique style of performance brings stories to life in a way that inspires children to use their imaginations and stimulates them to bring their curiosity, discoveries and questions back to the classroom to explore the story in different ways.

- **Masks** – the actors wear masks on their faces so they can play many characters different from themselves
- **Puppets** – the actors use puppets to play characters that are animals or large creatures (two puppets from last year's "The Fisherman and the Flounder" shown at right)
- **Music** – a composer wrote the music to go along with the story and to reinforce the action that is seen on stage
- **Narration** – one voice will tell the story as we watch the actors use their bodies to tell the story



3. WHY FAIRY TALES AND BROTHERS GRIMM

Enchantment Theatre Company believes that myths, fables and fairy tales have intrinsic value for children's development. These classic and magical tales are not only filled with promise – the weak can become strong, the poor can become rich, the unimaginable becomes possible – they provide children with models for how to be in life. And most importantly, they invite children into a new way of seeing and being, where they can discover a deeper understanding of others and of themselves. Myths, fables and fairy tales are essential because they:

- Model problem solving
- Build emotional resiliency
- Give us a common language (cultural literacy & canon)
- Cross cultural boundaries
- Teach the dramatic structure of a story
- Develop a child's imagination
- Give teachers opportunities to teach critical thinking skills
- Teach lessons
- Support new Common Core Standards

a. About the Brothers Grimm

The story of *The Brave Little Tailor* was written by two brothers, named Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. We call them the Brothers Grimm and they lived over 200 years ago. When Jacob was 11 and Wilhelm was 10, their father died. This caused great hardship for their family and affected the brothers for many years. In spite of their family's poverty, Jacob and Wilhelm were able to attend college at the University of Marburg. While at university, the brothers developed a passion for folktales. They began to collect and write down many of the stories that they knew from growing up in Germany. The stories they wrote down are known as folk stories.

Folk stories are tales or legends that are told and passed on by a group of people through many generations; most of the time these stories were told out loud. Because Jacob and Wilhelm were from Germany, they wrote down and recorded all of the stories they found from the German people. Did you know the Brothers Grimm wrote down more than 200 stories?

So, what is the difference between a folk story and a fairy tale? As we said above, a folk tale is a short story that comes from the oral tradition. Folk tales often have to do with everyday life and frequently feature wily peasants getting the better of their superiors. In many cases the characters are animals with human characteristics. Fairy tales are a subgenre of folk tales and almost always involve some element of magic and the triumph of good over evil.

Do you recognize any of these stories?

- The Frog Prince
- Rapunzel
- Cinderella
- Little Red Riding Hood
- Hansel and Gretel
- Rumpelstiltskin
- Sleeping Beauty

All of these were stories written down by the Brothers Grimm!

b. The Brothers Grimm Version of “The Brave Little Tailor”

There was once a little Tailor who killed seven flies with one blow. He was so proud of his achievement that he made a sash with the words “Seven with One Blow” and set off to seek his fortune. On his journey he met a Giant who thought that “Seven with One Blow” meant that the Tailor had killed seven men at once instead of seven flies! The Giant challenged the Tailor to a match of strength, but the Tailor bested the Giant using his cleverness and wits. The Giant invited the Tailor to visit his cave and meet his fellow giants. The Giants offered the Tailor a huge bed to sleep in, but the Tailor was so uncomfortable in the lumpy bed that he went to sleep in a corner of the cave instead. The Giants jumped on the bed, thinking that they were killing the Tailor. When the Tailor woke the next morning, the Giants had gone, so the Tailor continued on his journey.

The Tailor arrived at a large castle, but was so tired that he lay down at the castle gates to sleep. Two townspeople saw him sleeping and read his sash. They thought he must be a great warrior and they ran to tell the King. The King resolved to appoint the Tailor as his General but all the soldiers were upset because they were afraid that this new general would kill seven of them with one blow if he got angry. The King then decided to give the Tailor an impossible task to get rid of him. The King asked the Tailor to defeat the Giants that were plundering the kingdom and if he did so, he could have half his kingdom and the hand of the Princess in marriage.

The Tailor went off alone to find the Giants. He hid in a tree, and when the Giants lay down to sleep next to it, he threw a rock at one and then the other. Each Giant thought the other was doing this instead of the Tailor, so they began to fight and killed one another. The Tailor triumphantly went back to the King to tell him that the Giants were dead. The King was astonished and gave the Tailor one more task before he could have his reward. He asked the Tailor to capture a unicorn who was running wild in the forest. The Tailor cleverly trapped the unicorn when its horn got caught in a tree and he brought it back to the King. The King gave the Tailor one last task, to trap a

dangerous wild boar. The Tailor coaxed the wild boar into a small chapel in the woods and again went back to the King to seek his reward. This time the King had no choice but to give the Tailor his daughter in marriage and half his kingdom. The Princess overheard the Tailor talking in his sleep about sewing clothes and she told her father that he must be nothing but a common tailor. The King arranged to have his servants attack the Tailor while he was sleeping, but the Tailor scared the servants by calling out that he had killed seven in one blow and he wasn't afraid of a few servants hiding by his door. The servants ran away and the King never bothered the Tailor again.

c. Enchantment Theatre's Version of "The Brave Little Tailor"

Once upon a time there was a little Tailor who worked very hard at his trade. One day a beautiful Princess came by his stall and bought some fine sewing from him. At last he was able to purchase a bit of jam and bread! However, just as he sat down to eat, flies landed on his jam. He picked up a piece of cloth and killed seven of the flies all at once. He was so proud of this accomplishment that he made a sash with the words "Seven with One Blow" sewn across it. He hoped to win the Princess's hand in marriage and he set off to make his fortune.

As he journeyed, he met a Giant who thought that the Tailor had killed seven men instead of seven flies and challenged him to a duel of strength. The Tailor cleverly defeated the Giant. Then the Giant invited the Tailor to his cave and introduced him to his brother Giant. The Tailor jumped into the Giant's bed to sleep while the two Giants plotted to kill him. The Tailor was so uncomfortable in the lumpy bed that he went to sleep in a corner of the cave instead. The Giants attacked the bed with their clubs and thought that they had killed the Tailor. The Giants went to sleep and when the Tailor cheerfully woke them in the morning, they ran off in fright.

The Tailor continued on his journey and arrived at the castle. He was so tired from his travels that he fell asleep. Two townspeople saw him and read his sash. They hurriedly ran to tell the King about the great warrior who was asleep at the castle gates. The King told his Courtier to make the Tailor his new General. The Courtier did as he was asked but was jealous of the Tailor and convinced the King that the Tailor was a dangerous fellow who might kill them all with one blow if he got angry. The King decided to send the Tailor off on an impossible mission to get rid of him. He told the Tailor that he would give him the Princess' hand in marriage and half of his kingdom if the Tailor could capture a dangerous Rhinoceros who was running wild in the forest.

The Tailor went in search of the Rhinoceros and fooled it into getting its horn caught in a tree. The Tailor freed the Rhino and brought it back to the King as a present. The Rhino frightened the cowardly Courtier but the Princess took it as a pet. She recognized the Tailor but did not reveal his secret. The King then told the Tailor that he could have his reward if he could do just one more task – defeat the Giants who were robbing and scaring the villagers. The Tailor set off to find the Giants. He hid in a tree and when the Giants fell asleep under it, he bopped one on the head and then the other, making them think that they were doing this to each other. The Giants began to fight and they killed one another. The Tailor returned to the King with their clubs as proof that he had killed them. Just as the King was trying to think of another task for the Tailor, a villager ran into the court announcing that there was a Dragon in the forest. The King sent the Tailor off to kill the Dragon. The Princess told the Tailor she believed in him and the Tailor fearfully set off. This time the Tailor wasn't sure how he was going to defeat the Dragon. When the Dragon appeared,

the Tailor tried to use his sash as a weapon, but the Dragon took it from him. Just as the Tailor was about to get eaten by the Dragon, a mysterious warrior appeared and killed the Dragon. It was the Princess in disguise. She gave the Tailor the Dragon's tail as proof of his victory and told him not to tell anyone that it was she who killed the dragon. The Tailor returned to the court with the Dragon's tail, but he told the King that it was the Princess who had killed the Dragon and that he wasn't a warrior at all but only a simple Tailor. The King was astonished but recognized the bravery of his daughter and the cleverness of the Tailor and their love for one another. He gave the Tailor his reward and sent the Courtier off in disgrace.

4. PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

Class Exercise 1:

In our experience it's best to read the story several times to the students before they come to see the show. This can be done in a single sitting or over several days.

1) Read the story to encourage imagination

Simply read the story to your students, no need to act it out, just keep a matter-of-fact tone. During the first reading, invite children to close their eyes, simply to listen to the story and imagine the scenes. **Ask them: what did they see in their mind's eye (tailor, giant, castle), what did they hear (loud footsteps, dragon's roar), what did they sense (quiet forest, dangerous animals)?**

2) Read the story for understanding

On the second reading, ask your students to notice different characters, language, descriptions. What kind of story is it (fictional, fantasy)? Is it set in an imaginary world? How do you know? Is the ending happy or sad? Are there any words you don't understand? E.g. tailor, sash, wits...?

3) Read the story for elaboration

This time, read the story and ask your students to remember their favorite parts so they can retell them in their own words, retell the whole story or act out a new ending like Enchantment Theatre did.

You may want to talk about the moral of the story. What is it teaching us? What is the Tailor able to accomplish by using his wits and his courage? What does the story tell us about judging someone by outward appearances? Sometimes the Tailor goes along with what people believe him to be. What do you think about doing that?

NOTE: In our talkback the actors will ask the students several questions:

- 1) Do you think the Tailor was surprised by his own cleverness and bravery?
- 2) If you were the Tailor, would you have told the King that it was his daughter who killed the dragon?
- 3) What was different about the story you saw on stage and the Brothers Grimm version that you read?

Questions 1 & 2 could be discussion or activity points before or after seeing the show. Question 3 could be a discussion point after seeing the show.

Class Exercise 2:

- 1) What is another story that you know and like to hear?
- 2) Can you write down what happens in the story?
- 3) Can you tell us the story out loud?
 - This could be a project that is worked on over a period of time, in multiple sessions.
 - Work with the students on writing down the story piece by piece and finding causal and temporal links.
 - Students review the story repeatedly, growing familiar with the through line of the story.
 - They practice telling pieces of the story out loud. What happens first? What happens next? Why did that happen?
 - The goal would be that they could tell the story to the class without looking at any paper, that they would not be reciting a memorized portion of text, but really just telling the story themselves, in the mode of passing on an oral tradition.

Class Exercise 3:

Before going to the show, ask your students to close their eyes once again and recall what they imagined in their mind's eye (tailor, giant, castle, etc.) when you read the story aloud. Then for a moment, ask them to see themselves sitting quietly in the classroom. Are they excited about seeing the play? What do they notice about how they feel? Can they move their attention from themselves to the whole class...then to the whole school? Then ask them to easily bring their attention back to the class and then to themselves. How do they feel now? Are they ready to enjoy the show with their fellow students?

5. POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

Regardless of age, experience has shown that it is worthwhile to speak with your students after a performance (their favorite part might have changed or for older students ask them how acting, music, puppets, etc. changed their response to the story) and then ask them to draw a response to the show. This is important because creating a visual piece of work allows the response to remain in the imaginative realm of their mind's eye, rather than being committed straightaway to an intellectual realm. They could also make a class collage/poster/or hallway display depicting times when they or people they know were brave.

Art/Drama Activities for Younger Students:

1) Make half-masks in class (the same style that the actors wear):

- Cut a paper plate in half
- Cut out a triangle along the center of the edge, giving a space for the nose.
- Using a large hole punch, create a hole for the eyes.
- Hole punch two small holes on the sides & twist pipe cleaners through them to attach the mask behind the head
- Decorate the masks using materials of your choice (markers, crayons, glitter, feathers, stickers, paper scraps of different colors, gems, etc).

2) Physical activity: wearing your mask

- What character did you create?
- How does this character walk? Do they have heavy steps, or light steps? Do they move fast or slow? Do they glide across the floor? Do they stomp their feet? (ask questions that generate different ways of moving)
- What does your character look like when they are happy? What does your character look like when they are sad?
- How does this character sound? Can they talk? What sounds do they make? (ask questions that generate different vocal qualities)



Examples of Enchantment Theatre masks

Art/Drama Activities for Older Students:

1) Create a cartoon of your favorite part of the story (write the narration along the bottom and dialogue in speech bubbles.) Then create a group comic strip. Take the original cartoons and hang them up in sequence. What are the missing scenes? What is the dialogue needed in between scenes?

2) Physical activity: acting out the story, through a variety of different ways

- Actors mime the whole piece with someone narrating/reading on the side
- Actors mime the piece and the class makes the sound effects
- Actors make the sound effects instead of words and someone narrates
- Actors use their bodies in a way that shows what character they are

Independent Writing or Discussion Work:

- 1) Ask your students (or discuss with younger students) to describe/write about the characteristics of the Tailor; e.g. clever, brave, confident, so on. Then have them write/describe the characteristics of the Giants and the King. How are they different from the Tailor?
- 2) Based on the above definitions for folk tales and fairy tales, into which category does “The Brave Little Tailor” fit?
- 3) Compare and contrast the behavior and characters of the Tailor and the Courtier.
- 4) Write a personal account from the point of view of the Princess.
- 5) Write a poem based on the story.
- 6) Review the performance (pretend you are a theater critic – what was good about the performance, story, acting etc..)
- 7) Help preserve oral traditions (like the Brothers Grimm). Interview a parent, guardian or neighbor and ask them to tell a story they were told when they were young. Write down the story and the context in which it was told.

6. ENCHANTMENT EVERYWHERE STUDENT SURVEY FOR “THE BRAVE LITTLE TAILOR”

Survey can be taken individually or as a class. If taken as a class, we recommend that you ask your students to place their heads down on the desk (e.g. 7-up game) and have them raise their hands for a count. Please also jot down their comments to the open-ended questions below. Thank you.

Name of School: _____ Grade: _____

Student’s Name/Teacher’s Name: _____

| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|-----|
| 1. “The Brave Little Tailor” was fun. | ___ | ___ |
| 2. I learned many new things. | ___ | ___ |
| 3. Watching the show made reading more fun. | ___ | ___ |
| 4. I want to make up my own stories. | ___ | ___ |
| 5. I want to learn more about acting. | ___ | ___ |
| 6. I want to see another show. | ___ | ___ |
| 7. This was my first play. | ___ | ___ |
| 8. I told/will tell my parents about the show. | ___ | ___ |

What was your favorite part of the show? Why?

What was your least favorite part of the show? Why?

PLEASE MAIL/FAX THIS SURVEY TO US AT
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