



Fairy and Folk Tales Through Drama

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Foreword

Mankind's rich heritage of Fairy and Folk Tales will always be a source of delight and deep fascination for the young and very young. With that in mind, I decided to write a set of plays based on some well known favourites to foster the 'starry-eyed-wonder' of children in the lower and middle primary. I have already tried a few of the plays at school assemblies with great success and pleasurable applause from audiences.

It is my firm belief, gained through years of teaching experience, that dramatization is a stimulating and an enjoyable way of developing much-needed speaking and listening skills. An appreciation of literature is also very essential in the formative years. Many of these skills will doubtless, coincide with the prescribed language indicators and outcomes. As teachers, we are aware that role-play, through individual and group participation is of vital importance for the development of self confidence, accurate pronunciation and enunciation of words, clear and expressive speech, facial expressions and gestures to denote feeling, and the extension of courtesy to others; skills which automatically flow into most, if not all, educational areas.

The plays in this book are designed for performance in an informal classroom situation or for a wider audience at school assemblies and concerts. The excitement, joy and satisfaction felt by both teacher and taught cannot be underestimated.

Elizabeth Swasbrook

Contents

The Elves And The Shoemaker (1)	5
The Elves And The Shoemaker (2)	8
The Three Wishes	12
The Wolf's Story	15
The Ugly Dwarf	20
The Wind And The Farmer	25
The Trout And The Fisherman	30
The Four Seasons	35
The Jar Of Olives	39
The Blind Men And The Elephant.....	43
The Nightingale	46
Two Men And A Donkey.....	49

Teaching Suggestions

The following suggestions should be used as a guide only. Most teachers have a wealth of experience and their own effective methods to draw upon.

1. In selecting characters, make the best use of children's abilities.
2. Inspire the shy and retiring ones to have a go as this usually produces amazing results.
3. The main purpose of the chorus and group speaking is to encourage whole-class involvement to avoid the feeling of being left out.
4. Utilize your ingenuity to design simple props and scenic back-drops where necessary. The best resources at hand are children, parents and art/craft sessions.
5. An essential ingredient for success is regular and consistent practice as the old adage 'Practise makes perfect' is decidedly true. Allocate a regular practice time each day for at least four weeks.
6. Children should be given sufficient time to learn parts as rote learning definitely strengthens the memory.
7. Other teaching points are facial expressions, gestures and appropriate body movements that highlight the performance.
8. The plays may be adapted, simplified, or shortened to suit class needs providing the story line is left intact.

The Elves And The Shoemaker (1)

(Based on a traditional fairytale)

CHARACTERS

- Shoemaker**
- His wife**
- Two elves**
- Shoppers - 3 or more**
- Gentlemen - 3**
- Narrators - 3 class groups (more groups if desired)**

Setting: [A shoe shop - Placard "QUALITY BOOTS AND SHOES" - a table, one piece of leather, small tools. Backdrop - a village scene. A few pairs of boots and shoes to be gradually displayed as the play progresses.]

Group 1 (together, loud and clear)
Once upon a time, in a small village, in a beautiful green valley, there lived a kindly old shoemaker and his wife.

Group 2 They were very poor. Business hadn't been good at all. There wasn't enough money to buy leather and food.

Shoemaker (sadly, holding up a piece of leather)
Only one piece of leather left and no money to buy more. Whatever are we going to do?

Wife (cheerfully)
Never mind, dear husband. That piece seems enough for one pair of gentleman's boots. Do not worry. Things will be well!

Group 3 The shoemaker carefully cut out the pieces. He soon felt tired and decided to complete the boots the next day.

Shoemaker (yawning and stretching)
I think I'll go to bed now and complete this tomorrow.

Group 1 When the shoemaker returned to the workroom the next morning, he was absolutely amazed to find a pair of beautifully finished boots in the shop window.

Shoemaker (calls out excitedly - holds up a pair of boots)
Wife! Wife! Do come here and see these beautiful boots. I wonder who could have made them?

Wife (holds them and puts them down)
They are very beautiful indeed. Quick, someone is coming in!

- Gentleman** (enters and sees the boots)
My, these are a perfect pair of boots. I've never seen anything like them before. You must be an excellent shoemaker! If they are for sale, name your price.
- Group 2** The Shoemaker, being an honest man, asked for just what the boots were worth. The gentleman was extremely pleased, paid the price and walked out smiling.
- Wife** (happily)
Now you can buy enough leather to make two pairs with money left over for food.
- Group 3** That night the shoemaker cut two pairs. Once again he felt very tired and went straight to bed.
- Group 1** The next morning the same pleasant surprise awaited him. The two pairs were sold the very next day.

(Display two pairs - two gentlemen walk in and purchase the two pairs.)
- Group 2** This happened day after day. Boots and shoes were completed mysteriously. Business boomed! People flocked to his shop from all over the countryside.

(Display a few more pairs of boots and shoes. Shoppers come in.)
- Group 3** The Shoemaker became well-known for his good quality boots and shoes. He and his wife were now well off but they remained honest and kind.
- Shoemaker** (looking fondly at his wife with hands on her shoulder)
Dear wife, now that we are doing so well, don't you think it is time we found out who our kind helpers are?
- Wife** I was thinking the same thing. It will be nice to say 'thank you.'
- Shoemaker** Tonight, we will stay up and peep into the workroom but we must be very quiet.
- Wife** (smiling and clapping her hands)
What a marvellous idea!
- Group 1** That night they hid behind the door and peeped into the workroom. To their complete surprise, they saw two ill-clad elves, busily working and singing a sweet song.
- Elves** (singing sweetly)
Each night we do a kindly deed, helping only those in need!
Once all is well, we slip away, to help others another day!

Group 3

The next day, the good wife decided to sew some tiny clothes for the elves. She used brightly coloured material and made little coats, trousers and caps to keep them warm.

Elf 1

(picking up the clothes and smiling)
What do we have here? These will fit us perfectly!

Elf 2

This is their way of thanking us. It was good to help these two kindly people. Now that they're doing so well, we must leave and go elsewhere.

(They take the garments and slip away, blowing kisses.)

Group 3

The Shoemaker and his wife knew the elves would not return. They were grateful for their help. They were never in want and lived happily ever after.

THE END

(Cast take a bow)

