



Kit list for picture book dramas

A full kit list for performing
Jack and the Beanstalk, by
Richard Walker and Niamh
Sharkey

Age 3-11

CFE Levels 1 and 2

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About this resource

This kit list is part of a set of resources to support you creating and performing picture book dramas in school.

Kit list for picture book dramas

***Jack and the Beanstalk*, by Richard Walker and illustrated by Niamh Sharkey**

This version of the traditional tale is a wonderful resource for P6/7 children to turn into a drama for an audience of teachers, parents and friends and/or for younger siblings and pupils in your school.

The language is vivid and rich and presents lots of opportunities for characters to speak expressively within the exciting narrative action. There are many props and stage management tasks to complete and lots of sound effects to make. So it is a splendid story for a playmaking project with a whole class.

Casting

This story lends itself to group/team work where each group has specific tasks to prepare and then contribute their skills to the re-telling of the whole story in performance.

Narrators

This is quite a long tale which can be shared between any number of narrators. You can decide to narrate yourself or divide the pages between confident readers who can rehearse the story together so as to present it with great expression and fluency.

You could have a storytelling chair at one side of the acting area in which each narrator must sit with the book and tell their particular part of the story. Narrators waiting to take part could sit alongside or round this chair, leaving the acting area clear for characters and action.

Sound makers

At the other side of the acting area a group of sound makers can accompany the action of each character with an instrument of vocal sound effect. Rather like a small band, they should be organised to play particular sounds for particular characters or props. You can use instruments you have available in your music store or the children can design or make some themselves (see below for suggestions).

Characters

Jack, Daisy, little old man, little old woman, Jack's mum, giant, goose, harp

(Action and dialogue as in book/narrated sections)

Those you cast as characters can search the story for their dialogue, by looking for the words that appear in speech marks. You can help them make a simple script of these words or lines of dialogue, or you can suggest each character takes a note of the cues and their own words and then listens for their cues in the narration.

Beanstalk team- the narration for the growth of the beanstalk is brilliant for a piece of movement drama, in which a group of children represent the beans “slipping through the cracks in the ground, wriggling deep into the earth, pushing upwards and bursting through the soil, etc.”

Design and stage management team(s)- there are a number of essential props to be made, set and manipulated in this production. It would be useful to assign these tasks to a special group right from the start (see setting and props).

Setting

Split acting area into four squares, with audience at one end where they can see the action move from one section to another.

Section 1: represent Jack’s house with a table, and two chairs.

Section 2: Jack’s and Mum’s bedroom/store – two duvets/blankets, two pillows, rope.

Section 3: Land of clouds and door to Giant’s castle - door between two chairs.

Section 4: Inside castle – kitchen utensils, shelves with sacks of gold, harp, goose basket, etc., plus plate for giant’s stew.

Right in the middle place a hoop for the beanstalk to grow from.

Costume

Each character can wear an item of costume which denotes who they are.

| Character | Costume |
|------------------|---|
| Jack | A neckerchief and a baseball cap perhaps. |
| Mum | An apron, and sleeves rolled up. |
| Daisy the Cow | Two children with black and white neckerchiefs and a headband with horns (pipe cleaners) worn by the front child. |
| Little Old Man | Baggy jacket |
| Little Old Woman | Apron and mob cap or headscarf tied at the neck. |
| Giant | Wellies, hat, and big voice! |
| Goose | Mask with feathers and beak (in card added over nose). |
| Harp | Minstrel’s cloak, plus card harp shape with string /twine stretched across it for strings. |
| Beanstalk team | Should agree to wear similar outfits, e.g. leggings, t shirts, leaves to hold as they appear from the ground. |

Props

Explain to the children what props are: the things characters carry and use in the story, which are kept as the special property of everyone taking part in the drama. Let particular children take the responsibility of making certain props for the production.

| Object | Props |
|----------------------|---|
| Beanstalk | A long piece of rope can be sourced and painted green. Then the stage management team can work out a way of making this 'grow' and be held in place at the centre of the action ready for Jack to climb (circling it) up or down, during the story. |
| Magic beans | Need to be larger than life. Team suggest ideas. |
| Keys | Spare keys on a ribbon to be tied around Little Old woman's waist. |
| Bars | Long card rolls balancing across two chairs (which provide door to Giant's castle). |
| Chains | Long piece of chain. |
| Sacks of gold | Pillow cases stuffed with newspaper and tied at the top. (Don't worry about putting coins in to jingle. They won't! But a sound maker can provide all the jingling you need.) |

Sound

Your band of sound makers can decide to give each character or prop a sound whenever they move, or they can accompany the action with sound effects to illustrate or add atmosphere to what is going on.

| Characters | Instrument |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Jack | Shaker |
| Daisy | Coconuts |
| Little Old Man | Swanee Whistle |
| Little Old Woman | Trembling Tambourin |
| Jack's Mum | Saucepan and Lid |
| Giant | Bodhran/Drum |
| Goose | Bells |

| | |
|------|--------|
| Harp | Zither |
|------|--------|

| Props | Instrument |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Magic Beans | Claves x 6 |
| Beanstalk | Swanee Whistles |
| Keys | Keys |
| Bars | Vibra Slap |
| Chains | Rattling – chain and tin |
| Sacks of Gold | Jingling coins |

| Action and atmosphere | Sound effects |
|---|---|
| Beanstalk tapping | Octophone and beater |
| Window opening | Clatterpillar |
| Shadows | Spring drum, cymbals |
| Door creaking open | Vocal volunteer |
| Candle flickering | Cymbal and brush |
| Jack draggin bulging sacks | Sacks jingling |
| Jack sliding down beanstalk | Swanee whistle |
| Jack climbing up beanstalk | Swanee Whistle reverse |
| Lowering the sack | Vibra-slap/Swanee staccato |
| Jack running away | Octophones, spring drum and whanger/cymbal = CRASH! |
| Jack shouting | QUICK! |
| Giant | Shouting |
| Old woman and Jack slithering down | Swanees |
| Beanstalk bending and swaying | Swanees |
| BOINNNGGG! | Cymbal crescendo and crash |