



The Stinky Cheese Man

TEACHER GUIDE

Kupferberg Center Performances @ Queens College

The Teacher Guide is a convenient source of background information, mini-lessons, and pre- and post-concert activities that coordinate with the performance and Student Guide to encourage learning across the curriculum. Most activities can be easily adapted to suit different age groups. This Guide supports the "Blueprint for Teaching & Learning in the Arts," and includes City and State Learning Standards. Click on the URL's to link directly to suggested websites. Feel free to reproduce these materials, as well as Student Activity Pages that may be posted on this website.

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Please send documentation (photographs, compositions, etc.) of class activities based on this guide so we can share your successes with other schools attending Revelations performances. Thanks!

About the Company

Established in 1988, and now celebrating its twentieth season, the Griffin Theatre Company is a not-for-profit, professional theatre company located in Chicago. The mission of the Griffin Theatre Company is to create extraordinary and meaningful theatrical experiences for both children and adults, instilling all with an appreciation for the performing arts. The Griffin Theatre Company produces literary adaptations, original work and classic plays of wit, style and compassion, that challenge and inspire their audiences.

About the Show

The play, *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*, is based on the book of the same name by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith. Like the main character of "Jack and the Beanstalk" fame, this Jack has to use his wits to save himself from the terrible Giant. Meanwhile, a host of familiar fairytale characters keep messing up his plans—and then there's that annoying Stinky Cheese Man who keeps coming around! *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* deconstructs the tradition of the fairy tale. Characters slide in and out of tales; Cinderella rebuffs Rumpelstiltskin, and Goldilocks meets the Three Elephants. Nothing is quite the same as you or your students remember it. Students will be asked to participate in this hilarious romp to help Jack avoid becoming the Giant's next meal.

CURRICULUM FOCUS: LANGUAGE ARTS

ACTIVITY: Create an Author Study For Your Class

NYC English Language Arts Standards: Reading: 1a, b, d; Literature 5b

Core Curriculum State Standards: Reading Standards for Literature: Key Ideas and Details 1, 2, 3; Craft and Structure 5, 6; Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7, 9; Writing Standards: Text Type and Purposes 3.

Coordinate With Student Guide: "The Authors"

1. Set up an area in the classroom with a bin of books written and/or illustrated by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith.
2. Give time during the day for students to peruse books.
3. Have students create a "log," or chart of the books they've read.
4. Have students identify which books they liked the best and why.
5. Have students compare and contrast two books by the same author or one by Scieszka and one by Smith.
6. Have students write their own story in the style of Jon Scieszka or Lane Smith.

Bookshelf for Authors' Study

Jon Scieszka in collaborations with Lane Smith:

- *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*, Viking Press, 1989.
- *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*, Viking Press, 1992.
- *Seen Art?* Viking Press, 1995.
- *Math Curse*, Viking Press, 1995.
- *Squids Will Be Squids*, Viking Press, 1998.
- *Baloney, (Henry P.)*, Viking Press, 2001
- *Science Verse*, Viking Press, 2004.
- *Cowboy and Octopus*, Viking Press, 2007

The *Time Warp Trio* series features Lane Smith as well as Adam MacCauley as illustrators. Some of the titles include:

- *Knights of the Kitchen Table*, Penguin Books, 1991
- *Summer Reading is Killing Me!* Penguin 2000
- *It's All Greek to Me* Penguin 2001
- *Sam Samurai*, Penguin 2002
- *The Not-So-Jolly-Roger*
- *Me Oh Maya*

Smash! Crash! and *Melvin Might?* Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing 2008.

SPHDZ Book #1! (Spaceheadz) Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2011.

Teacher Resources

[Jon Scieszka Worldwide](#), Jon's web site

[Guys Read](#)

["An Interview with Jon Scieszka"](#) by Gordon McAlpin; *Bookslut*; June 2005.

["Guys Read: Encouraging Boys to Love Books"](#); *NPR's All Things Considered*; May 12, 2005.

["Author Interview: Jon Scieszka"](#) by Mary Brigid Barrett; *NCBLA-zine*; [The National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance](#); 2005.

["GUYS READ: Helping Boys Become Better Readers, Better Students, Better Guys"](#) by Cara Bafle; Wire Side Chat at [Education World](#); 2005.

["Jon & Lane go to Barnes & Noble"](#); Gordon McAlpin's [Stripped Books](#); October 2004.

To learn more about Griffin Theatre Company, go to: <http://griffintheatre.com>

["Commentary: Children's Books by Celebrities"](#); *NPR's Morning Edition*; June 14, 2004.

["Author Chat with Jon Scieszka"](#); New York Public Library's ["On-Lion"](#) for Kids; April 1998.

["The Stinky Interview"](#) by Ace Colhoun; *The Peak*, Simon Fraser University's Student Newspaper; March 11, 1996.

Character Match Answers

Cinderumplestiltskin - poor girl with a difficult and ugly step-family and a strange little man who spins straw into gold

Giant - a very hungry and impatient listener

Frog Princess - a princess fooled by a "cute" frog

Little Red Hen - a grain-obsessed squawker

Pea Princess - a beautiful young girl who gets an awful night's sleep

Jack -our main storyteller and beanstalk adventurer

Stinky Cheese Man - a smelly hero who loves to play tag

Little Red Running Shorts - the track star who must race the wolf

ACTIVITY: Create an Original Fractured Fairy Tale

**NYC English Language Standards: Writing 2b, c; Speaking, Listening, Viewing 3 b,c;
Literature 5b**

**Core Curriculum State Standards: Writing Standards: Text Type and Purposes 3
Coordinate With Student Guide: "Fairy Tale Fun"**

- *Follow the directions in the Student Guide for students to make up their own fractured fairy tale. This project needs to be done in more than one sitting.*

Whole Group: Make a list of familiar fairy tales. "Choose Jack and the Beanstalk" to use as an example, as in "Stinky Cheese Man." Either follow what the authors did, or create another example of how the story can be changed. Another option is to read some other fractured fairy tales:

- *Sleepless Beauty* by Frances Minters sets the story of Sleeping Beauty in New York City in the present, where Beauty uses an alarm clock to wake herself, foiling the plans of the Wicked Witch;
- *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Scieszka and Lane tells the story from the wolf's point of view; see other examples in the "Bookshelf" section below.

Replicate the chart in the Student Guide and fill in the changes to model how to use it, by fracturing one of the stories you selected to share. Ask the students to help you make the changes with lots of different ideas. No idea is incorrect; no idea is too silly! But do try to stay away from excessively violent interpretations.

1. Change the main characters.
2. Change the setting – where it takes place, or when it takes place (long ago and far away, or modern times?)
3. Change the point of view (i.e., the Giant's viewpoint instead of Jack's.)
4. Change the problem, or conflict in the story
5. Change an item (make something magical?)
6. Change the ending (do they all live "happily ever after?")

Individual/Partner Work Grade 3: Have students make a list of their favorite fairy tales in the space provided in the Student Guide. Give them time to speak with their writing partners about which story they think would lend itself to being changed. Allow them to talk about their ideas. Give them

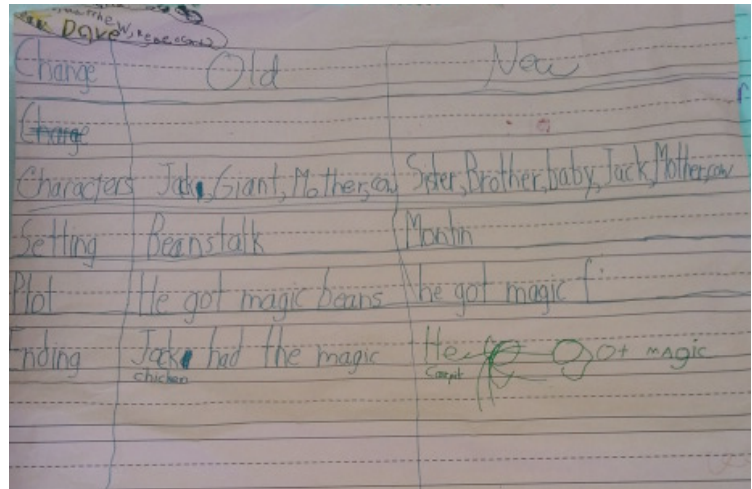
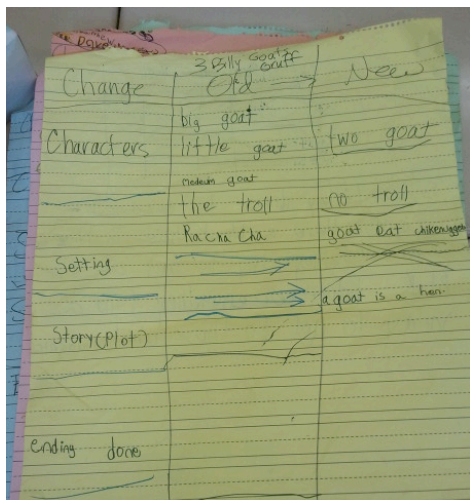
the choice to work alone or work with a partner; if they do work with a partner, they can write the story and dialogue together, or be responsible for certain parts of the story on their own, then stitch it together.

For Grades 1 and 2, have students work in small groups instead of partners. Be sure each group has a “leader;” someone who thrives on being creative, and who can help the group formulate ideas. One person in the group needs to be the “recorder,” who can draw or write (in invented spelling, of course!) the group’s ideas down in a way that is legible. (If they are drawing only, more than one can help with that task).

For kindergarten students, brainstorm the chart as a whole group and create the story together.

Project Outline—All Grades

- After deciding on which story to “fracture,” students fill out the chart in their Student Guide and decide which parts of the story they will change, and which will remain the same or retain the flavor of the story, even if its meaning or message is entirely changed.



These charts are by first-grade students in Teacher Guide author Kathy Devine’s class.

- Using the space provided in the Student Guide, have students draw their main characters. Students in Grades 2 and 3 should write the characteristics of their characters on the lines provided underneath the drawing box.
- Have students write an outline of the story. They can divide the outline into “scenes.”
- Have students create dialogue between characters for each scene. They can do this by getting on their feet and improvising (making up the dialogue by talking to each other as if they are the characters), then writing down their words (K-1 can just improvise the dialogue). Ask each group to practice what they created. It is helpful to have one student be the narrator. Coach them to not “tell” the whole story like they are reading a book, but to allow time for the characters to speak to one another, like in a play.

- If you have some simple costume pieces in your classroom, now is the time to break them out! Have each group choose some simple costume pieces to enhance their fractured fairy tale.
- Now have each group share their stories with the whole class in an informal performance. When each piece is finished, ask the group if they can identify the parts of the story that were changed, or “fractured.”

Music Connection: Following directions in student guide, third graders may choose a theme song appropriate to character; have student rewrite some of the lyrics to better suit their characters.

Teacher Resource Bookshelf

Twice Upon a Time: A Guide to Fractured, Altered, and Retold Folk and Fairy Tales by Bomhold, Catharine and Terry E. Elder (*Children's and Young Adult Literature Reference*). Libraries Unlimited, 2008.

Fractured Fairy Tales: Multiplication & Division: 25 Tales With Computation and Word Problems to Reinforce Key Skills by Greenberg, Dan. Teaching Resources, 2005.

Fairy Tales Reader's Theatre by Fredericks, Anthony D. Libraries Unlimited, 2009.

Lohnes, Marilyn. *Fractured Fairy Tales: Puppet Plays & Patterns*, Upstart Books, 2002.

12 Fabulously Funny Fairy Tale Plays: Humorous Takes on Favorite Tales That Boost Reading Skills, Build Fluency & Keep Your Class Chuckling With Lots of Read-Aloud Fun! by McCory Martin, Justin. Teaching Resources, 2002.

Sleepless Beauty AND Cinder-Elly, both by Frances Minters. Puffin, 1999.

Rapunzel: A Groovy Fairy Tale by Lynn Roberts. Harry N. Abrams, 2003.

The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig by Eugene Trivizas. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 1997.

Cinderella Outgrows the Glass Slipper and Other Zany Fractured Fairy Tale Plays: 5 Funny Plays with Related Writing Activities and Graphic Organizers ... Kids to Explore Plot, Characters, and Setting by Joan M. Wolf. Teaching Resources, 2002.

The Beanstalk and Beyond: Developing Critical Thinking Through Fairy Tales by Joan M. Wolf. Teacher Ideas Press, 1997.

POST-SHOW ACTIVITY: Write a review of the play

NYC Standards: Writing 2 a, b; Literature 5 a, b

Core Curriculum State Standards: Writing Standards: Text Type and Purposes 1

Have students write an opinion piece about the play. Ask them to include what they thought about the more controversial aspects of the play, such as the use of the word “stupid,” and of the physical fighting between Jack and the Giant. What aspects of the play did they really like: the humor, the characters, and the changes in plot? Have students describe at least three things they liked (or didn't like) about the play, and whether they would recommend it to others.

CURRICULUM FOCUS: SOCIAL STUDIES

NYC Social Studies Standard: 1

**NYC English Language Standards: Writing 2b, c; Speaking, Listening, Viewing 3 b;
Literature 5a**

Core Curriculum State Standards: Speaking and Listening Standards: Comprehension and Collaboration 1, 2, 3; Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas 5, 6

Whole Group: Using these open-ended questions, discuss fairy tales in our culture, their purpose and value. Accept all responses; explain that fairy tales often came about to help teach a lesson (don't go into the woods alone, don't talk to strangers, be brave and resourceful, etc.):

- a. Why do you think fairy tales are important to people?
- b. What purpose do you think fractured fairy tales serve? Why do you think that?
- c. What do you think the author (Scieszka) thinks about fairy tales? Why?
- d. What is your favorite tale and why? What is your favorite fractured fairy tale and why?

Curriculum Focus: Science

NYC Science Standard: 8a

In this world of processed food and cheese slices wrapped in plastic, it is hard to imagine what all the fuss is about when the Stinky Cheese Man appears. Students may not even recognize that his head is actually a big cheese if they have never before seen a whole cheese.

Introduce your students to the world of cheese with this simple observational experiment:
Which Cheese Is the stinkiest?

Materials

Paper plates
Cups of water
Checklist
Pencils

3-4 different types of stink cheeses from list below, and American cheese:

1. Vieux Boulogne (the stinkiest cheese!) or Eposisses de Bourgogne (not allowed on the trains in France, it's so stinky!)
 2. Cheddar (not very stinky)
 3. Pont l'Eveque (very stinky – one of the top three stinky cheeses)
 4. Camembert de Normandy (one of the top three stinky cheeses)
- (If you can't find the world's stinkiest cheeses, you can substitute some of your own favorites. The stinkier, the better. It will become obvious why the Stinky Cheese Man is not very popular! Some examples: Stilton, Brie, Roquefort, Munster, and Limburger)

Procedure

1. Divide class by science groups or tables
2. Place paper plates on each table, each plate containing one type of cheese
3. Each person gets a checklist and their own paper plate
4. Each person takes one piece of cheese from each plate and places it on their own plate
5. Using the sense of smell, each student records which cheese they think is the "smelliest."
6. Compare answers.

Extension: Taste each cheese. How does the smell affect the taste? Use the cups of water to clear the palate. Celebrate by having some cheese and crackers and apples to eat after the experiment is over, preferably a cheese the children will enjoy – like good old American cheese!

The Science: What makes cheese stinky? Cheese is a fermented product. It turns from milk to cheese because of bacteria naturally present in the milk, molds on the cheese surface, and enzymes that break down the sugars and proteins in the milk. When you combine all these special smells with the particular milk type and composition, you get a different smell for every cheese!

Follow-up: there are several good websites that describe how cheeses are made, and which ones have one the award as “stinkiest.” Third graders can follow-up with a homework assignment, writing a “how-to” narrative on the making of cheese, and answering the following questions:

- Why does cheese stink?
- How is it made?
- What are the top 3 stinky cheeses?

Websites

www.Stinkycheese.com

Cheese Making Illustrated

http://biology.clc.uc.edu/fankhauser/cheese/cheese_5_gallons/cheese_5gal_00.htm

Beginning Cheese Making

http://biology.clc.uc.edu/fankhauser/cheese/cheese_course/cheese_course.htm

The Top 10 Stinky Cheese In The World

<http://lilomag.com/2010/05/30/the-top-10-stinky-cheese-in-the-world/>

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