



Performance Notes for The Apple Dumpling

THREE WAYS THAT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS CAN UTILIZE THIS PLAY:

1. Students can read the play aloud while sitting in the classroom. Ask the readers to skip all bracketed stage directions. You may prefer to rotate your actors to give all students a chance to read the speaking parts.
2. Students can perform the play in the classroom. Clear an area that can be used as the stage. Have the audience sit on the floor in front of the stage. Students in the play can make simple costumes and/or sets as described below. When the scene change, the characters "on stage" simply walk to the back of the room where they wait until their next appearance "on stage."
3. Students can perform the play on stage. Refer to the production notes that follow. Ask the actors to enter from the back of the room and move through the audience as they approach the stage.



COSTUMES

- FEMALE CHARACTERS – Long, dark skirts with pale simple tops. They can also wear aprons and braids or chignons if they have long hair.
- MALE CHARACTERS – Dark pants and pale or white shirts with sandals or comfortable shoes. They can also wear fake facial hair or have mustaches and beards drawn on with simple hypoallergenic cosmetics.



- HENS – Draped white or yellow fabric and felt ears clipped into hair with hairpins.
- GEESE – Draped white fabric and felt ears clipped into hair with hairpins.
- PUPPY – Draped furry fabric and felt ears clipped into hair with hairpins.



PROPS

Scene 1

- A coat rack or wall hook.
- A shawl, hanging on the coat rack.
- A table.
- Two large tins (one marked “FLOUR” and the other “SUGAR”)
- Several spice jars.
- A butter dish or a stick of butter made form cardboard.
- A bowl or basket filled with plumbs. Plumbs can be real or fake.
- A napkin or cloth to cover the plumbs with.
- A large basket for OLD MAN to give to FARMER’S WIFE for apples.

Scene 2

- A large cloth bag filled with feathers or something that looks like feathers for YOUNG WOMAN to give to FARMER’S WIFE.
- Two bouquets of flowers for HUSBAND and WIFE to give to FARMER’S WIFE.
A long gold chain for YOUNG LORD to give to FARMER’S WIFE. You might wrap the chain in gold tin foil so it is exaggerated and glitters.

Scene 3

- Apples that are detachable from the tree (see set notes for how to accomplish this).



SETS

Create a set that shows two small cottages, FARMER'S WIFE's cottage on one edge and OLD MAN's cottage on the other. In the middle is a pasture. The set stays on stage for the whole play. You can paint one large backdrop that shows all three locations, or paint three separate backdrops.

Paint the backdrop for FARMER'S WIFE's cottage to show a log cabin interior with one large window. Outside the window the branches of a plum tree are visible and there are many plums on the branch. It is important that the audience can see the table where she wants to prepare the apple dumpling. Her cottage can also be created using large painted boxes and plain fabric for a roof. Her shawl hangs on a coat rack or a hook that is attached to one of the "walls".

In the middle of the set is the pasture. It would be good to show a road at the bottom of a backdrop to suggest the road FARMER'S WIFE travels when she leaves her cottages and starts her adventure. You may bring onstage round green cutouts to represent bushes along the way.

The cottage at the other edge of the stage belongs to OLD MAN. The audience should see the exterior of his cottage.

The apple tree is a separate set piece. The tree can be painted onto the backdrop or it can be made out of cardboard and attached to the backdrop. You can trace a tree with several branches onto cardboard and cut it out, then paint it to look like a tree and attach to backdrop.

Whether you paint the tree onto to the backdrop or make it from cardboard, you will need to put Velcro on the branches. Cut at least



eight small squares of Velcro and place onto branches. These are the place where the apples will be attached.

The apples should be sturdy and overly large. They can be cut out of paper and laminated or cut out of cardboard. On the back of each apple, place a small square of Velcro the same size as those on the tree (but the opposite side of the Velcro material) so that the apples can be attached and removed from the branches.