



Performance Notes for The Golden Goose

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

- NARRATORS— Simple, nice clothes.
- NURSE— Long skirt, long-sleeved shirt, and long white aprons. She can also wear a white nurse's cap. Black or brown shoes.
- DUKE BORIS— Long dark pants, black or brown boots or shoes, a dark long-sleeved shirt, and a black blazer or buttoned vest. A gold sash would be a nice touch. It can be a strip of fabric that is worn over one shoulder



and sewn or safety-pinned together at the opposite hip.

In Scenes 1 & 6 he wears a bathrobe or nightgown over his clothes.

- **DUCHESS OLGA**— A long pale-colored dress, such as white, light blue, or light pink. Jewelry would be a nice touch. She can wear a long pearl necklace, gold pendant and/or broach.

In Scenes 1 & 6 she wears a bathrobe or nightgown over her clothes.

Costume Note for **DUKE** and **DUCHESS**: During the Scene 2, **DUKE** and **DUCHESS** can be “aged” by combing generous amounts of baby powder through his slicked-back hair (make sure actors are not asthmatic or allergic to talc products).

- **WIDOW, ANNA, KATYA, SOFIA**— Shawls, long-sleeved shirts, long skirts, and knit gloves with the fingertips cut off. Black or brown boots or shoes. They may also wear kerchiefs.

Note: Clothes should look tattered and worn. You can tear clothes in a few places, rub some dirt on them, and/or sew patches on to make them look old.

Note: **SOFIA** must have sleeves long enough to hide the twigs.

- **FAIRY**— Light colored flowy dress, possibly shiny or sparkly, and wings.
- **SERVING MAN** and **SERVING WOMAN**— Simple, plain light-colored clothing and black or brown shoes.
- **MESSENGER**— Black or brown pants, a tan or white long-sleeved shirt, and a black or brown vest. Black or brown boots or shoes.
- **VILLAGERS**— Long sleeved shirts, pants or skirts and black or brown shoes. They can have vests or shawls and hats or kerchiefs. Clothing is tattered and worn. They can also wear knit gloves with fingers cut off.
- **GHOST/DIMITRI**— Nice black pants, long sleeved shirt, and a buttoned vest (for **DIMITRI**). He also later wears a red waistband- the one that **NURSE** found in Scene 1 or one just like it. Over these clothes, he wears a white sheet or white cape and a white eye mask (for **GHOST**). Cape can be made out of a white sheet or fabric, draped over shoulders and pinned in the front near the collarbone.



Note: When GHOST exits in the middle of Scene 5, he quickly removes the sheet and the mask, and adds the red waistband, in order to become DIMITRI. He can start his quick change while the TREES exit, and TREES can exit slowly to give him more time.

SOFIA re-enters the Great Hall first, and sits by the fire to wait. This will also give the actor a little more time to change from GHOST to DIMITRI. When he re-enters the Great Hall, he is DIMITRI.

- ANIMALS— Fantastical costumes that suggest the essence of the animal, along with headbands with ears and/or antlers. One option is to have them dress in pants and shirt in the color of their animal, and add bits of colorful/shiny/sparkly material. Another option is to have the entire costume be a colorful/shiny version of the animal.
- GOLD TREE— Gold fabric draped and a gold hat. He or she holds gold branches in each hand (see props notes).
- SILVER TREE— Silver fabric draped and a silver hat. He or she holds silver branches in each hand (see props notes).



PROPS

Scene 1

- A doll wrapped in a blanket or cloth for DUKE and DUCHESS to hold.
- A wand for FAIRY. This can be a plastic wand or made out of cardboard.

Scene 2

- Gold fabric for STAGEHANDS to put over furniture at top of scene (to represent furniture being reupholstered).
- A few party decorations and birthday presents for SERVING WOMAN to carry in. Several brightly wrapped boxes can serve as birthday presents. Decorations can be made from construction paper.
- A dust cloth or feather duster for SERVING MAN to use.



- A traditional Russian waistband, bright red and decorated at both ends with gold pompoms and tassels, for NURSE to bring on. This can be represented with a strip of red fabric with pieces of gold or yellow yarn attached to the ends, either with hot glue, fabric glue, or by sewing them.

Scene 3

- A drumstick or gong stick and a cymbal, gong or metal garbage can lid to simulate the 12 strikes of the clock at midnight. The strikes can be made offstage, but should be loud enough that audience can hear.

Note: To reduce chimes after the first two or three, as called for in the script, you can simply hit the cymbal/gong/lid really loud the first two times, then soften the hits after.

Scene 4

- A white tablecloth for SERVING WOMAN to carry on.
- A rolling cart for SERVING WOMAN to bring on and off for the overnight guests (SERVING WOMAN brings cart on three times during this scene). Cart can be covered in a white table to make it look nicer. On the cart are several items: Wooden-looking bowls, plates, and spoons.

Note: Actors can pretend to eat, or you can use simple food items, such as bread, cheese, fruit, etc, for the visual effect. If you do use food items, they can come in on the rolling cart with the dinnerware.

- Logs/firewood for SERVING MAN to carry on and off. (SERVING MAN bring the logs on three times during this scene). These can be real logs or bundles of real twigs. You can also make logs from brown construction paper or cardboard, or you can use paper towel rolls and paint them a darker brown.

Note: In order to make it easier to bring logs on and off, you can tie them in a stack, or glue them together (if they are paper), so that SERVING MAN only has to carry one bundle instead of several individual logs.

- A drumstick or gong stick and a cymbal, gong or metal garbage can lid to simulate the 12 strikes of the clock at midnight. The strikes can be made offstage, but should be loud enough that audience can hear.

Note: To reduce chimes after the first two or three, as called for in the script, you can simply hit the cymbal/gong/lid really loud the first two times, then soften the hits after.

- A bag of coins for DUKE to give to ANNA. The bag can be empty or filled with small objects for weight and sound.



Scene 5

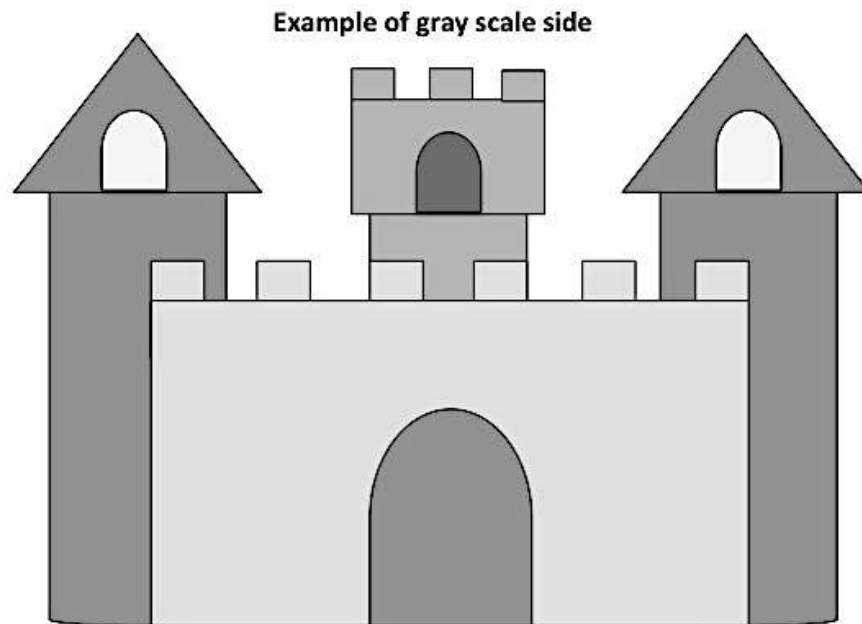
- Two small gold branches for GOLD TREE to hold. These can be real branches or cut from cardboard, and spray-painted gold. SOFIA takes one from TREE.
- Two small silver branches for SILVER TREE to hold. These can be real branches or cut from cardboard, and spray-painted silver. SOFIA takes one from TREE.

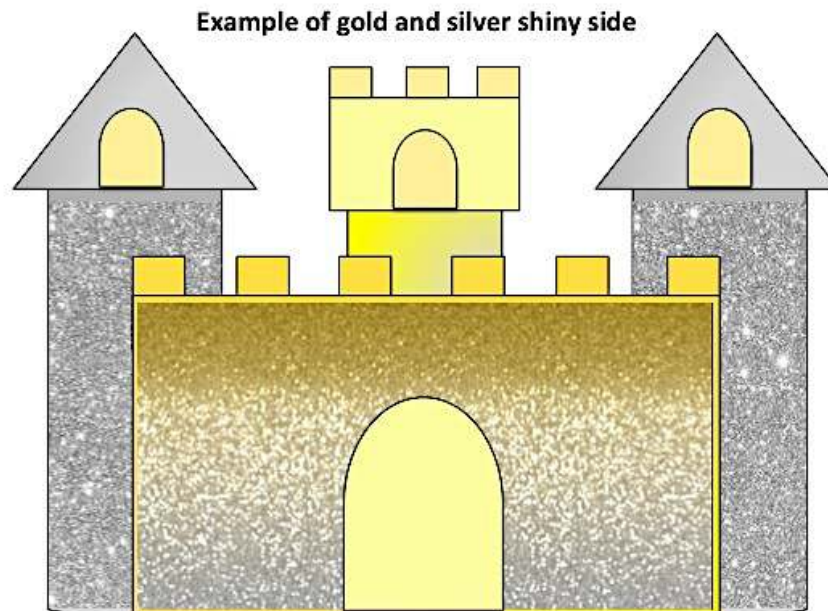
Scene 6

- Gold and silver branches (one of each- the same branches that SOFIA took from TREES).
- A castle for STAGE HANDS to bring on. This can be made from cardboard. Draw the outline of a symmetrical castle on a large flat piece of cardboard, such as a flattened refrigerator box, and cut it out.

On one side, paint the parts of the castle in gray scale, using gray, black, and white- no color. On the other side, paint the same parts of the castle in silver and gold, or yellows. Use metallic paints and/or glitter to make the castle look shiny.

See images for examples:





SETS

The stage is divided into two sections, with The Study on one side and the Great Hall on the other side. If you want to use a backdrop, you can paint it to show both rooms. If you choose to not paint a backdrop, you can just rely on the furniture to establish the different rooms.

The Widow's home in Scene 1 and the Magic Forest in Scene 5 will be pop-up scenes at the front of the stage. More information below:

- **Scene 1**— The Castle, in the Study and The Widow's Cottage.
In the study there is a small desk or table and a chair. You can put books on the desk/table. If you have a backdrop, you can paint a large bookcase and a window.
The Widow's Cottage is a "pop-up" scene, which happens half way through the scene. There is a table and three chairs sitting at the front of the stage in front of the great hall set.
Optional: To further separate the Cottage from the Great Hall,



STAGE HANDS can hold up a piece of fabric as a backdrop, behind the table and chairs.

WIDOW, ANNA, KATYA, and SOFIA can bring off the furniture at the end of Scene 1, or STAGE HANDS can bring it off.

- **Scene 2**— The Castle, in the Great Hall. There is a table with two chairs, a couch, a fireplace, and a free-standing grandfather clock with moveable hands.

For the couch, you can use a real couch, or you can create the affect of a couch using chairs, pillows, and a blanket.

To create the couch place three sturdy chairs (that do not have arms) in a row. They should be sturdy enough to hold the actor who plays GHOST/DIMITRI when he lies down. On each chair, place a pillow. Use a large sheet or blanket to cover the chairs and tuck the fabric in around the pillows. If there is a lot of excess fabric, you can gather it and tie it in the back. You can place smaller pillows on top, as well as a smaller blanket. This will give it more of a couch look and will be what GHOST/DIMITRI uses when he sleeps.

Note: At the end of Scene 1, STAGE HANDS can cover the couch in a gold fabric, to represent the furniture being upholstered.

For the fireplace, you can use a flattened box and paint it to look like a fireplace, and prop it up against a chair or stool.

Note: If you want to give the affect of a fire being made and put out (by SERVING MAN), you can cut some flames from construction paper, put some tape loops on the back, and hide it behind the fireplace. SERVING MAN can attach it to and detach it from the fireplace when he brings on the logs.

For the grandfather clock, you can use a tall cardboard box. Paint the front of the box to look like a clock, making the clock face large enough that the audience can see it. Use a box cutter to cut the top part of the face from the 11 to the 12. Paint the small hand on the clock face, on the 12.

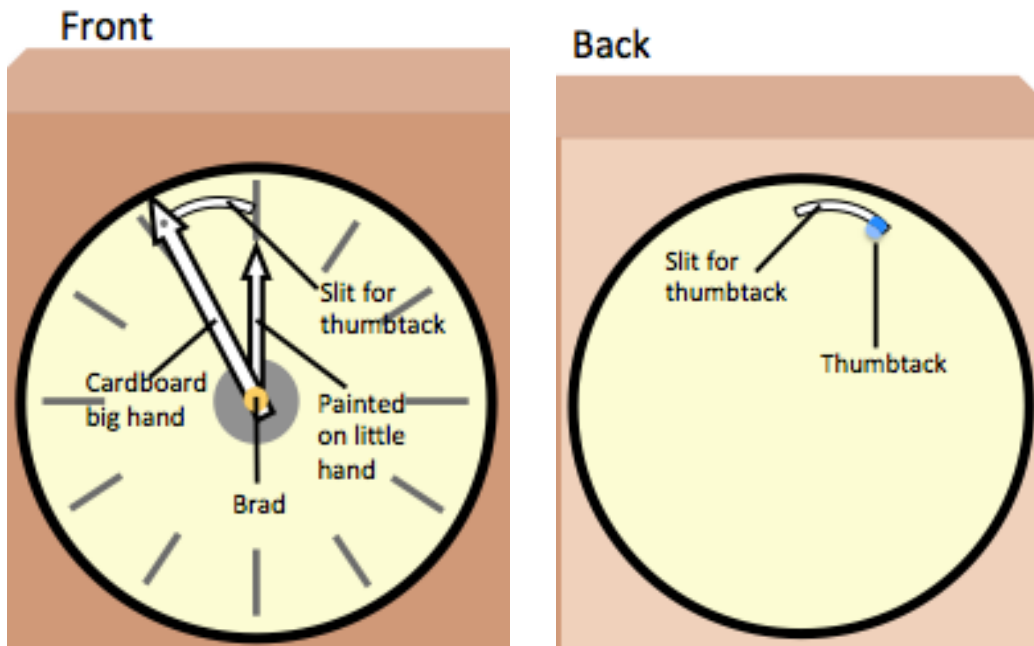
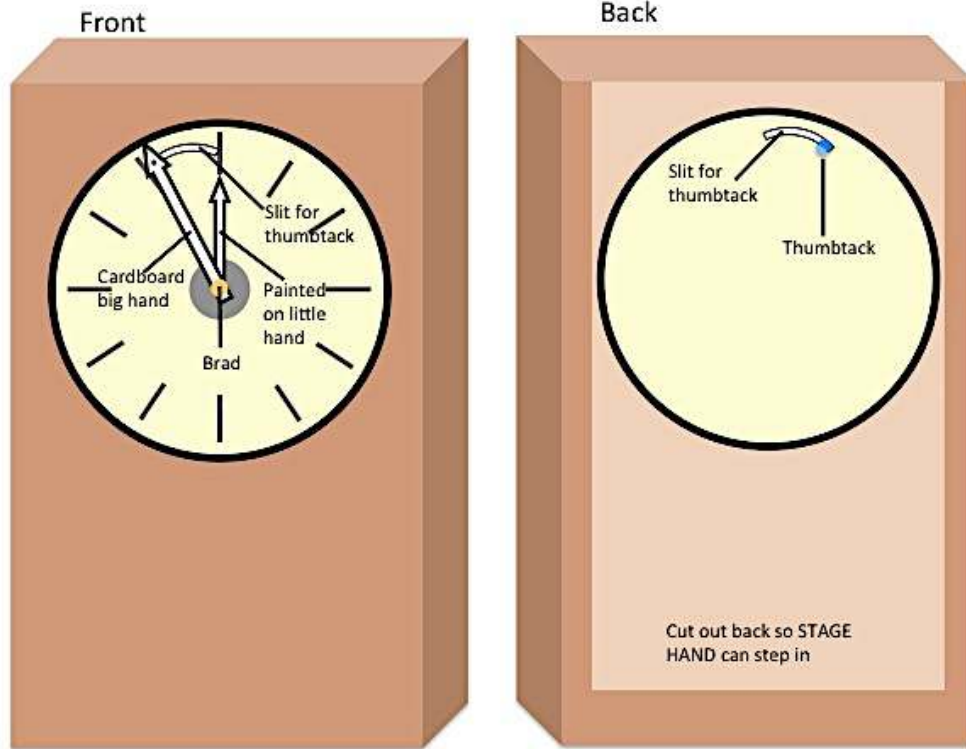
Make the big hand out of thin cardboard or cardstock. Use a brad to attach it to the center of the clock face, so that it is able to move.

On the other side (back) of the clock, put a thumbtack through the slit and the big hand, and tape it in the front. This allows the hand to be moved from the backside of the clock. Have a STAGE HAND stand inside the box, and move the hand when it's time.

Note: Make sure STAGE HAND know the cue for when to move the hands to midnight, and when to move them back.



See images on next page:





- **Scene 3**— The Castle, in the Study. The set is the same as in Scene 1, but you can have STAGE HANDS add or move items around a bit to give the effect that time has passed.
- **Scene 4**— The Castle, in the Great Hall. The set is the same as in Scene 2, but you can have STAGE HANDS add or move items around a bit to give the effect that time has passed.
- **Scene 5**— The Magic Forest. This is a “pop-up” scene that takes place in front of the other sets. The actors playing the GOLD TREE and SILVER TREE will enter and stand at the front of the stage in order to establish the boundaries of the forest.
Another option is to have STAGE HANDS bring on a long piece of shiny fabric and hold it up behind the TREES, so that the scene takes place in front of the fabric.
- **Scene 6**— The Castle, in the Great Hall. Set is the same, but stagehands will bring on the gray/golden castle at the end (see prop notes for castle construction).

OTHER STAGING NOTES

- At the end of Scene 1 and the end of Scene 2, NARRATORS show the passing of time. There are a few ways they can do this- they can wave their arms up and down and make a funny noise, or spin around in circles and make a funny noise, or do any sort of dramatic gesture with a funny noise.
- During Scene 2, the FAIRY disappears. . This effect can be achieved in several ways. Two suggestions are as follows: NARRATORS or STAGE HANDS can stand in front of FAIRY and wave their arms and make a noise as FAIRY runs off stage. OR FAIRY herself can mover her arms and make a noise while backing up offstage. In order to differentiate this from the earlier “passing of time”, assign a different gesture and noise.
Another option is make this a comical moment, where the FAIRY hears the DUKE explain that she “disappeared”, and she can look at him, as if to say, “Oh, right!”, and then awkwardly run off stage.
- During Scene 4, the GHOST disappears, twice. This effect can be achieved in several ways. Two suggestions are as follows: Each time he disappears, GHOST can pull his white cape up around himself, in front of his face, and back up as he exits.



Another option is to have GHOST hide behind the grandfather clock- he can either be the one who moves the clock hand, OR he can stand behind whoever is working the clock hand. When he enters, he pops out from behind the clock, and when he disappears, he just steps back behind it.

