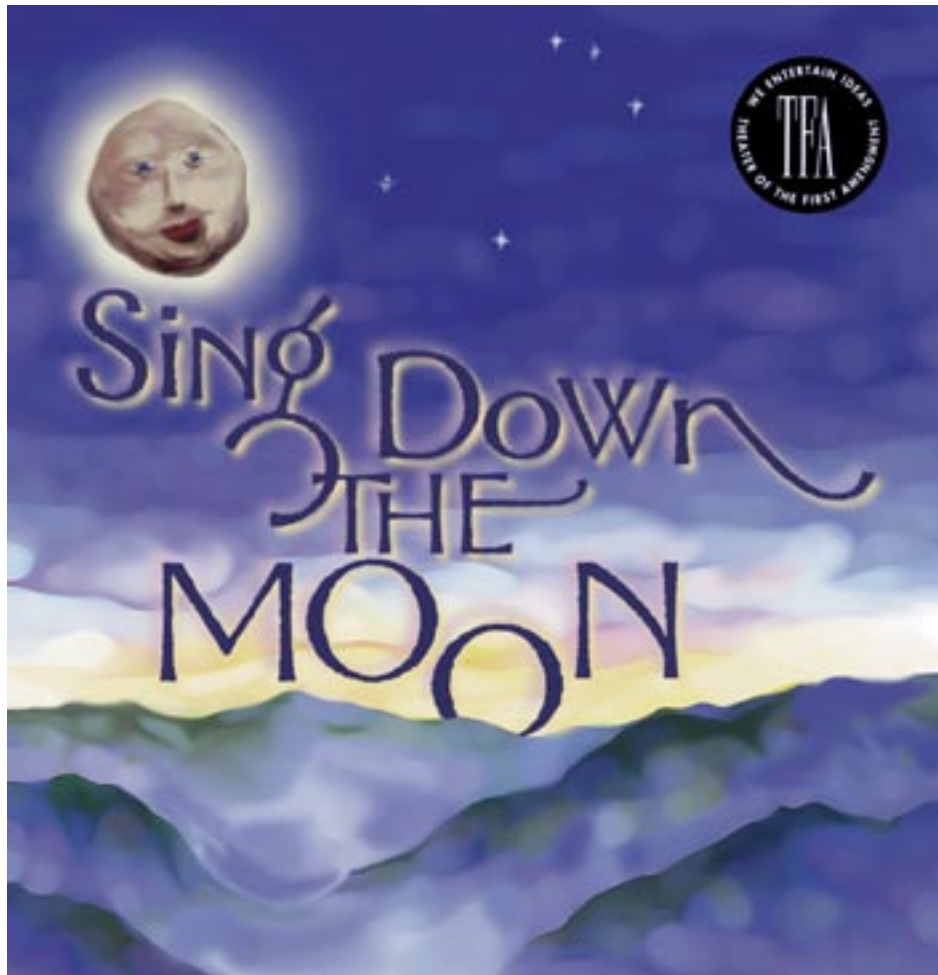


Theater of the First Amendment
presents
A musical play for families



Appalachian Wonder Tales

By Mary Hall Surface and David Maddox





Theater of the First Amendment

George Mason University's Professional Company

Artistic Director: Rick Davis

Managing Director: Kevin Murray

Artistic Associates: Paul D'Andrea

Kristin Johnsen-Neshati

presents

Sing Down the Moon

by Mary Hall Surface and David Maddox

Directed by Mary Hall Surface

Musical Direction by David Maddox

Scenic Design: Tony Cisek

Original Costume Design: Holly Highfill

Costume Coordination: Kate McGhee

Lighting Design: Dan Covey

Original Choreography: Beth Davis

Additional Choreography: Dan Joyce

Dramaturgy: Kristin Johnsen-Neshati

Technical Director: Ethan Osborne

Stage Management: Scott San Martin *

Company Management: Kira Hoffmann

Original Craft Design: Anne Kennedy

Additional Craft Design: Marie Schneggenberger

Properties: Susan Senita Bradshaw

Props Mistress: Jessie Duncanson

Theater of the First Amendment is a member of
the League of Washington Theatres and
Theatre Communications Group

Study Guide Editors: Rebecca Breed

Kristin Johnsen-Neshati

Graphic Design & Illustrations: Robin DePalma

Contributor: Kevin Murray



Dear Teachers,

Welcome to the world of *Sing Down the Moon!*

This study guide has been designed as a resource for teachers, scout leaders and other volunteers looking for background material and related activities to prepare children's groups to see Theater of the First Amendment's production of *Sing Down the Moon*.

Here you'll find background material useful for any group, followed by specific study questions, readings and activities, broken down by groups: K-3, 4-5, 6-8 and 9-12. We also encourage you to look for items of interest in section for older and younger students. A bibliography appears at the end to guide further reading.

Appalachia is a culturally rich and fascinating region, and we encourage you to explore it further through your library, the internet, area folk life exhibits and field trips. We hope you'll find this study guide useful, and we encourage you to send us your comments by e-mail.

Happy reading, and enjoy the show!

Rebecca Breed,
Assistant Literary Manager

rbreed@gmu.edu

Kristin Johnsen-Neshati
Dramaturg/Artistic Associate

kneshati@gmu.edu

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PLAY SYNOPSIS

Sing Down the Moon is a collection of five wonder (or fairy) tales and one animal tale from Appalachia. Many of these stories have their roots in fairy tales that may be familiar to you.

Jack and the Wonder Bean: Jack and his Ma are very poor mountain folks, forced to sell their cow to buy food. Jack trades the cow for one bean, which turns out to be a wonder bean and grows into a giant bean tree overnight. Jack climbs the bean tree three times, risking being eaten by the giant and his wife, to find food, music, and money for himself and his Ma.

Catskins: Catskins is a poor orphan working in the kitchen of a Lady and her Mama, who are preparing to go to a dance at the Rich Boy's house. Catskins disguises herself in magical garments three times and goes to the dance, where the Rich Boy falls in love with her and gives her his ring. Each night she runs off, and finally the Rich Boy is so sad he takes sick. Catskins bakes him a cake with his ring hidden inside, and the Rich Boy solves the mystery of the girl who wears cat hides.

Jack's First Job: Jack finds a job, but he keeps losing his pay. His Mama becomes frustrated with him and tries to teach him how to get his pay home safely. But Jack takes her too literally and keeps making mistakes. Finally, Jack's silliness works a

small miracle, and he never has to work again.

The Sow and Her Three Pigs: The Sow tries to give her three daughters advice, but only Nancy listens. The first two pigs build flimsy houses, and the fox knocks their houses down easily and eats the pigs in one gulp. Only Nancy's house is strong. Nancy uses a few tricks of her own to outsmart the wily fox and get rid of him forever.

Jack of Hearts and King Marock: Jack sets off into the world to seek his fortune. He wins money in a card game against Marock, who disappears before paying Jack. Jack finds an ally in Marock's one kind daughter, who helps him to complete a series of seemingly impossible tasks and plan a brilliant escape.

The Enchanted Tree: A Girl becomes lost in the forest, but is befriended by a scary-looking crow who brings her food. Eventually she agrees to repay the crow's kindness by retrieving a ring from a witch, thus breaking the witch's spell on the forest

and transforming the mysterious crow.

*Hold a mirror over a spring on the first day of May,
and you'll see the face
of your future sweetheart.
-An Appalachian saying*



THE PROGRAM

ACT 1

Jack and the Wonder Bean
Catskins
Jack's First Job

ACT 2

The Sow and Her Three Pigs
Jack of Hearts and King Marock
The Enchanted Tree

THE ENSEMBLE

Sherri Edelen*, Jennifer Gerdts*,
Eric Lee Johnson*, Kathryn Kelley*,
Amy McWilliams*, Dwayne Nitz*,
Jenna Sokolowski, Paul Takacs*,
Steve Tipton*

SETTING

Appalachia, here and yonder

TIME

Now and then, a while back

**Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of professional Actors and Stage Managers.*

Theater of the First Amendment operates under a Developing Contract with Actors' Equity.

👉 Who Does What in the Theater? 👈

The **playwright** writes a story in the form of **an action**. Something usually happens to transform the play's **protagonist** (or main character), requiring him or her to undergo permanent change. This process is often described as the character's **journey**. The playwright usually writes many drafts, called **rewrites**.

The **actor** is responsible for portraying a **character** through physical action and speech. The actor determines the character's **objective** (the thing the character needs to do) and figures out how he or she will deal with the **obstacles** that get in the way.

The **artistic director** determines the theater's mission and guides its **season planning**. He or she will often direct one or more plays per year and also advise guest directors working at the theater. The artistic director works closely with the **managing director** on the theater's budget, the **production schedule** and long-range planning. The artistic director and managing director meet with the **board of directors** to discuss fund-raising goals, and they work with the **development director** to write **copy for grant proposals**. The managing director also works closely with the **company manager**, who hires the guest artists, prepares their contracts, arranges any necessary travel and lodging, and communicates directly with the stage manager and director on the progress of rehearsals. The company manager (or, in some theaters, the **casting director**) collects actors' **headshots** (pictures and résumés) and calls actors to **audition** for the director.

The **director** is responsible for clearly presenting the **arc** of the play (the story's progress from beginning to end) and the total **stage picture**. He or she ensures that the actors are working together, that their interpretation of the play suits his or her **vision** and that the actors can be seen and heard. The director listens for **volume** and pays attention to **pacing**. If the play runs too long, he or she may make **cuts** to scenes. The director also has final say on the set, costume, lighting and sound design.

The **dramaturg** works with the director (and often the playwright) as a consultant on production. The dramaturg provides **research** on the historical or cultural background of the play and attends **rehearsal**, especially **run-throughs**. The dramaturg looks for many of the same things that concern the director. The dramaturg gives **notes** to the director, often in the form of questions, to help the director see what parts of the **production** may be unclear to the **audience**.

The **set designer** creates the physical environment

of the play. He or she provides a **ground plan** (an overhead drawing to scale of the set as it fits into the performance space). The set designer may provide the director with **renderings** (painted or drawn) or a three-dimensional **model** of what the set will look like when it's built. The set designer works closely with the **props designer**, who is responsible for the furniture and hand-held objects used on stage.

The set designer gives his or her plans to the **technical director**, who estimates the cost of materials and labor for building the set, makes detailed **technical drawings** of how the set will be constructed, and hires the **carpenters** and **painters** to do the job in the **scene shop**.

The **costume designer** designs the clothing the actors will wear. The costumes can be **built, bought or rented**. The costume designer considers the **period** in which the play takes place, the season, the gender, age, social status, and personality of each character before designing his or her clothing. Costume designers use **line** (or silhouette), **color** and **texture** (the weave of cloth) in creating their designs.

The costume designer gives his or her **renderings** to the **costume shop supervisor**, who takes the actors' **measurements**, **drafts the patterns** for **costume construction**, estimates the cost of materials and labor, and then hires **stitchers** to sew the costumes in the **shop**. The **wardrobe crew** is responsible for the costumes once the show is running. Their duties include laundry, repairs, **quick changes** and wig maintenance.

The **lighting designer** listens to the director describe his or her vision of the play in **production** meetings and then attends the **designer run-through** (a rehearsal of the whole play, usually about two weeks into a four-week rehearsal period). The lighting designer creates a **lighting plot**, which indicates where the **instruments** (or lights) will be located over the stage. The lighting designer creates a design that ensures the actors will be visible and also suggests **tempo** (pace) and **mood** (atmosphere).

The lighting designer gives the light plot to the **master electrician**, who will supervise an **electrical crew** to hang the necessary lights, often from a network of metal rods overhead, called a **grid**. The light may be diffuse or sharply outlined, depending on the type of lighting instrument used, and its position when **focused**. Color is controlled by slipping sheets of colored gel in front of each instrument. Light may also be patterned with the use of templates attached

to the instruments, called **gobos**.

The **sound designer** is responsible for providing all the sound or music for a production. This may include live sound **cues** (such as an offstage doorbell), recorded **sound effects** (such as rain), **preshow** or **postshow** recorded music, or an original score. Sound can be used to **underscore** or complement the action on stage.

A **choreographer** may be hired to create dance **numbers** or movements to be performed by the actors. In the case of musicals, the choreographer and director **collaborate** with a **musical director**, who hires and trains the **musicians** to play the **composer's** score.

The **stage manager** takes notes throughout rehearsal, paying close attention to the **staging** (actors' movements), the **rehearsal props** the actors will need, and the places where lights and sound **cues** will be incorporated into the show. The stage manager often works with an **assistant stage manager**, who may be assigned the duties of prompting actors in rehearsal when they **call for lines**, and leading the **stage crew** through **scene changes** once **tech** (technical rehearsal) begins.

The **house manager** trains the **ushers** to greet the **patrons**, tear their tickets and guide them to their seats. The house manager needs to be prepared in the event that audience members come late, need special accommodations (such as handicap seating), or an emergency arises.

The **publicist** writes a **press release** describing the production for local papers, and invites **critics** to come to opening night. The publicist also prepares a **press kit** (including photos, a cast list and other helpful information) for the people who will write the **reviews**.

The **audience** comes to the theater and sees the show!

Theater Etiquette

You are about to attend a live performance. Theater is a participatory experience for everyone, actor and audience member alike. Proper theater etiquette ensures an enjoyable experience for you, other audience members and the performers.

1. As always, be polite. Listen to the instructions of your teacher, counselor or parent. If there is an announcement from the theater staff before the show, please pay close attention.

2. Please do not talk, whisper or leave your seat during the performance. Appropriate laughter and applause are always appreciated by the performers.

3. Remain with your group at all times.

4. Food, drinks and gum are not permitted in the theater.

5. Cameras, tape and video recorders, and any electronic devices (pagers, cell phones, games) are not permitted in the theater. These devices are a distraction to the performers and can disrupt the performance.

6. Be aware of the location of fire exits before the performance begins.

WHERE IS APPALACHIA?

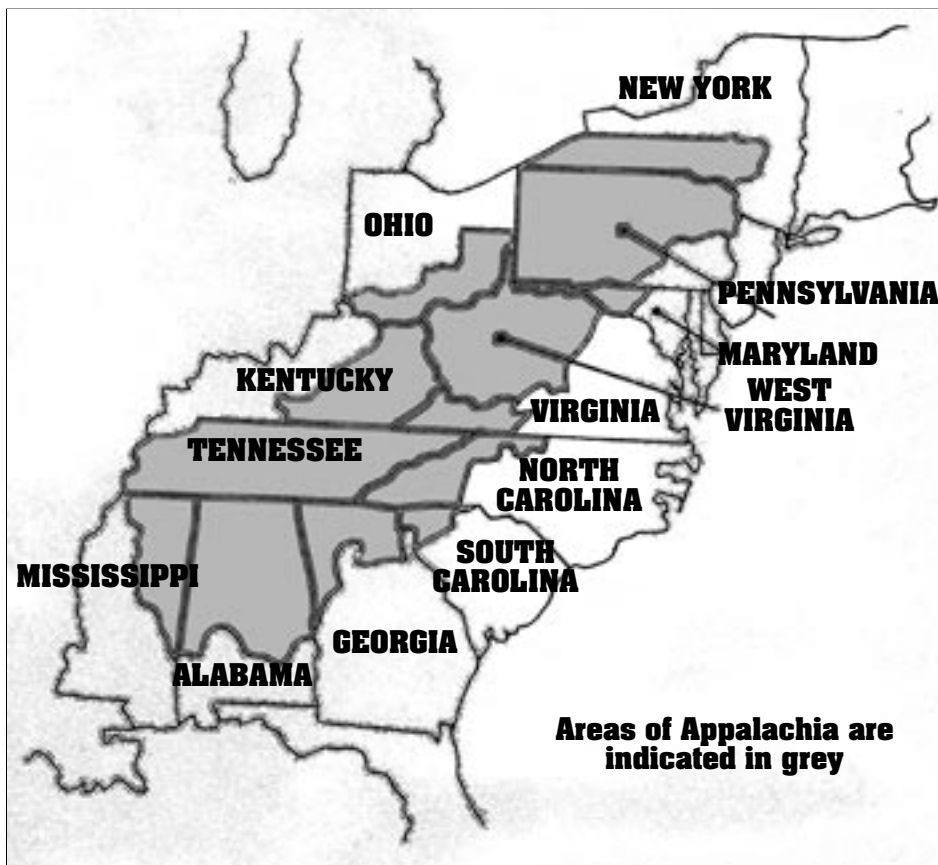
The Appalachian Mountains are the principal mountain system of the Eastern United States and Canada, stretching from central Alabama to the Island of Newfoundland. Included in the Appalachian range are the Catskills of New York State, the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee, and the Blue Ridge Mountains, which stretch from Pennsylvania to Tennessee. While the Appalachian Mountain range is very long, it is relatively narrow, rarely reaching more than 100 miles wide.

In the United States, the Appalachian Mountains include two National Parks: Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina and Tennessee, and many National Forests. The Appalachian National Scenic Trail, a continuous footpath over 2100 miles long which meanders through the mountains from Maine to Georgia, is enjoyed by thousands of through-hikers and day-trippers each year.

The Appalachian Mountains are among the oldest mountains on earth. Between 1.1 billion and 540 million years ago, during the Precambrian period, long periods of sedimentation alternated with violent eruptions. These rocks were then subjected to extreme heat and pressure and changed to metamorphic rocks. Limestone became marble, shale became slate and schist, sandstone became quartzite, and magma became granite. The intense pressure and heat destroyed all traces of animal and plant life, so there is no fossil record of Precambrian species in the area.

During the Paleozoic period, sediments deposited and stratified, creating layers of shale, sandstone, and coal, forming some of the richest coal beds in the world. The Permian period (toward the end of the Paleozoic, about 250 million years ago) saw dramatic Appalachian folding. Ancient crystalline metamorphic rocks in some places ended up on top of more recently formed sedimentary rocks.

During the Pleistocene Epoch (1.6 million to 10,000 years ago) continental ice sheets crept over North America and the Northern Appalachians. The Southern Appalachians became a refuge for plants and animals, and many species still live in the Southern Appalachians that would otherwise be uncommon in the area. Conversely, when the glaciers receded, some Southern species were brought north. Bison, elk, and wolves once roamed in Southern Appalachia, and caribou and moose were common in the North. Today many of those animals are rarely seen due to over-hunting and habitat destruction, but Appalachian



visitors are still delighted by the appearance of black bear, white-tailed deer, wild boar, fox, raccoon or beaver, or one of many bird species.

The most extensive broad-leaved deciduous forests in the world are found in Southern Appalachia, which include Hickory, Poplar, Walnut, Sycamore, Chestnut, and Tulip Trees, as well as many flowering trees and shrubs. The Northern Appalachians are known for coniferous and hardwood forests, including Red Spruce, Balsam Fir, Sugar Maple, Buckeye, Beech, Ash, Birch, Red Oak, and White Oak.

Many Native Americans once lived in the Appalachians, including the Pennacooks, Mahican, and Susquehanna in the North and the Cherokee in the South. They were eventually driven out of the mountains by European settlers, and by the mid-Nineteenth Century, none remained in their mountain homes.

One famous removal of Native Americans was the Trail of Tears, a forced march of the Cherokee from their ancestral mountains to Oklahoma, which took place in the fall and winter of 1838 and 1839.

The Appalachian Mountains form a natural barrier between the Eastern seaboard of the United States and the lowlands of the continental interior, and they formed a barrier to colonial expansion as well. The mountains are high, the rivers rugged, the forest dense. The central Appalachians had the most easily traversable gaps. German and Scotch/Irish settlers went through these gaps and into Pennsylvania and down the Appalachian Valley in Virginia and Tennessee, where many people of these ancestries still live today.

Some areas of Appalachia remained isolated until the early Twentieth Century, especially mountainous areas in Southern Appalachia where rough terrain hindered road construction. The residents of such areas developed their own rich folk culture with distinctive art, music, and folklore. Sometimes, traces of European culture can be seen in the unique expressions of Appalachian artists.

The Appalachian Mountains are now a premier tourist spot, where visitors from all over the world

enjoy hiking, driving, camping, fishing, skiing, white-water rafting, spelunking, and rappelling.

Lumber, pulp, coal, iron ore, salt, granite, and marble are found in abundance in the Appalachians, but the collection of these resources has had a terrible effect on the environment, often leaving mountains scarred and residents poor after available resources have been stripped

from the land and business has moved elsewhere. Contemporary Appalachian residents have to contend with economic deprivation and environmental deterioration. Health, housing, education, and roads are often substandard, and unemployment is high. Much of the land has been devastated by mining for minerals and coal.



Catskins

As told by Richard Case

ONCE there was a girl had no father and mother. She stayed with some people and they made her work for what she ate. They never paid her a thing, didn't give her any clothes or nothin'. All she had was one old dress, and when it got ragged all she could find to patch it with was old cat-hides; and fin'ly her whole dress wasn't nothin' but cat-skins—cat-skins all over, with the tails hangin' out. So they called her Catskins.

Well, this man's wife she took sick and died. And one day, fairly soon after the buryin', the man was out in the fields plowin'; and Catskins she washed herself and put on the dead woman's weddin' dress: went out in the yard and started walkin' around. That man he saw her and came runnin' to the house. He looked at Catskins and asked her would she marry him.

"Well," she says, "you get me a dress the color of all the fish that swim in the sea."

So he got her the dress. Said, "Will you marry me now?"

She says to him, says, "Will you get me a dress the color of all the birds that fly through the air?" He got her that kind of a dress, says, "Will you marry me?"

"Now," she says to him, "you'll have to get me a dress the color of all the flowers that grow in the world."

So he went and got her that dress, says, "Now will you marry me?"

"I might marry ye," she told him, "if you give me your flyin' box."

He didn't want to part with his flyin' box, but he wanted to marry Catskins awful bad; so he went and got her the flyin' box. "Now, let's get married."

"Well," she says, "you go on out so I can put on one of my dresses."

And time the man left out the back door Catskins dragged the flyin' box out the front door, put all her dresses in it; then she got in the box right quick, says:

"Rise and fly!

'Way up high!"

And the box rose up in the air and Catskins flew on off from there.

She flew right on across the country till she saw a big house—

"Light me down!

Right to the ground!"

The box lit, and she got out—

"Sink and lock, under this rock!"

So the box sunk out of sight under the rock and Catskins she went on to the big house in her old cat-skin dress. It was a rich man lived there, and Catskins went around to the back door and knocked. The woman of the house opened the door and looked out; and when she saw Catskins, she jumped.

"Law me! What do you want?"

"I want to work."

"Do you think I'd hire a thing like you?"

The old woman's girl was standin' there by the door, says,

"Don't be so hard-hearted, Mother. Let her work in the kitchen."

"All right then—but never a bite she cooks will go in my mouth."

So Catskins went to the kitchen to go to work; and time she walked in the door with them cats' tails a-hangin' out all over her, the kitchen folks was scared to death. They ran out of there like somethin' was after 'em! Then some of 'em slipped back and peeked around the doors, and hollered "Scat!" But when they saw it was just a poor girl and not any sort of varmint they came on back; and so Catskins went to work with the poor folks there in the kitchen.

Well, they were havin' a big dance at the King's house one night and Catskins was helpin' that girl get ready to go.

"You want to go, Catskins? You can look in the windows with the other poor folks."

Catskins said she didn't think she'd go: she might—and she might not. Then when they'd all left, she went to her box—

"Rise again,
and let me in!"

And the box rose from under the rock and unlocked itself for her. She took out the dress that was the color of all the fish in the sea and put it on and got in her box and flew on up to the King's house.

"Who's that?" everybody said when she walked in. "Who can that be?" But nobody knew who she was.

The King's son was there and he took off with her right now! Kept her for his partner and they led off in every set they danced. That boy he kept his eyes on Catskins every minute but she hardly let him talk to her; and directly they were doin' Lady-'Round-the-Lady, and she and that boy got around the set to the couple near the door, and when Catskins did Lady-'Round-the-Gent-and-the-Gent-Don't-Go she slipped out the door and ran to her box and flew on back. And when they all came home there she was sittin' by the

kitchen fire in her old cat-skin dress.

"Were you there, Catskins?"

"Yes, I was there."

"Did you see that pretty girl?"

"Yes, I saw her."

"Well, the King is havin' another dance tonight. I wonder will that girl come." Said, "You let me sleep till three o'clock tomorrow; I want to be beautiful for that dance."

So the next night Catskins helped that girl get her hair done up, and after they all left she went to her box. And when she walked in that time she had on her dress the color of all the birds in the air.

"There she is!" they all went to whisperin'. "That's her!" But nobody knew who she was.

The King's son he got her again and they danced and she talked to him a little. She had a hard time gettin' away from him because he wouldn't pay attention to anybody but her—but fin'ly she slipped out the door and took off; and when they all got back to the house there was little old Catskins sittin' in the kitchen.

"O Catskins! Were you there?"

"Yes, I was there."

"And did you see what a pretty dress that girl had on this time?"

"Yes, I saw it."

"They say the King's boy is stuck on her—hard. He's goin' to have another dance tomorrow night. Don't you wake me up till four o'clock. I want to be real beautiful, because this is the last dance."

Well, the next night the girl said to Catskins, "If you want to go, I'll lend you one of my dresses, and you can come on in and dance."

"Humpf!" said the old woman. "You can lend her a dress if you want to, but never a dress of mine will go on her back!"

So the girl got one of her old dresses for Catskins, and Catskins thanked her and when they'd all left she went to her box and got out her dress the color of all the flowers in the world. And when she walked in the King's house that time everybody just carried on over how beautiful she was, and they all tried to figure out who she could be, but nobody knew her.

The King's boy wouldn't let go of her hand all evenin', and they danced and danced—every figure, from Four-Hands 'Round to Killiecrankie—and she talked to him, and they laughed, and everybody had the best kind of time. Then, just about midnight, he slipped a ring on her finger and when he did that he let go of her hand a second, and Catskins was out the door and gone 'fore he could turn around.

So she hid her dresses and that ring in the flyin' box and made it hide again under that rock—and when they all came back in home there was little Catskins sittin' in the kitchen up against the fire place with soot

and ashes all over her face and hands.

"Oo, Catskins! Were you there tonight?"

"Yes, I was there."

"Why, I never saw ye."

"I saw you."

"Well, did you ever see such a pretty dress as that girl had on?"

"Yes, it was right pretty."

"Well, there won't be any more dances now; and they say that when that girl left nobody saw which way she went or nothin'. And they tell me the King's boy never did learn her name or where she came from."

The very next day the King's son started huntin' for the girl who wore the three beautiful dresses. He hunted and he searched, and he asked everybody he met up with but nobody could tell him a thing; but he kept on searchin' and huntin' for her, and he wouldn't eat, and fin'ly he was sick-in-bed. The doctors came and they said he was lovesick: said he'd die unless that girl was found.

Well, all the girls tried to make up to him; baked him cakes and took 'em up there to where he was Iyin' sick-in-bed. So one day Catskins said she'd bake a cake for him.

"I say!" That old woman went to squawkin'. "*You* bake him a cake! He would get sick if you was to bake him a cake!"

"Aw, Mother, don't be so hard-hearted. Let her bake him a cake if she wants to."

"Well! There'll be no bite of it go in my mouth!"

So Catskins she went and got that ring, and when she baked the cake she put the ring in it. She got it baked and made it real pretty with white icin', and then the old woman she came and took it away from her.

"You ugly thing! Do you think you could go up there in your old cat-hides? I'll take it to him myself."

So she traipsed on up to the King's house, and took the cake on in to that boy. His mother cut him a piece and that ring fell out on the plate.

"Why, look!" she says. "It's a ring!"

And when she showed it to that boy he sat up, says, "Where did that ring come from?"

"Out of the cake."

"Who baked it?"

"I did," said the old woman. "I did!"

"No such thing!" the King's son told her. "Whoever baked that cake you bring her here right now, or I'll have your head cut off!" And he called for his clothes and started gettin' up out the bed.

The old woman she left there scared to death, and she fetched Catskins back in a hurry.

Catskins stood there in the door and the King's son looked at her, and then she smiled.

"You're the very one!" he said; and he went to take

her by the hand, but she turned and ran out again. She went and raised her box, and then she got in it—

“Rise and fly!
Not too high!”

And it rose up and took her back to the King’s place. She put on the first dress and came in the house. The King’s son looked at her, says, “No—the other one.” So she went and came back in with the second dress on. “No—that’s not right yet.” She went and put on her flower dress and when she came back in that time he went to her and took her hands and kissed her.

“Will you marry me?”

“Yes,” Catskins told him.

So they got married, and they lived happy.

And some folks tell it that the King made that old woman put on the catskin dress and work in his kitchen the rest of her days.

“Catskins” from *Grandfather Tales*, collected and retold by Richard Chase. Copyright© 1948, renewed 1976 by Richard Chase. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

THE PRINCESS IN DISGUISE

As Told by the Brothers Grimm

A KING once had a wife with golden hair who was so beautiful that none on earth could be found equal to her. It happened that she fell ill, and as soon as she knew she must die, she sent for the King and said to him, “After my death I know you will want to marry another wife; but you must promise me that, however beautiful she may be, if she is not as beautiful as I am and has not golden hair like mine you will not marry her.”

The King had no sooner given his promise than she closed her eyes and died.

For a long time he refused to be comforted, and thought it was impossible he could ever take another wife. At length his counselors came to

him, and said, “A King should not remain unmarried; we ought to have a Queen.”

So he at last consented, and then messengers were sent far and wide to find a bride whose beauty should equal that of the dead Queen. But none was to be found in the whole world; for even when equally beautiful they had not golden hair. So the messengers returned without obtaining what they sought.

Now, the King had a daughter who was quite as beautiful as her dead mother, and had also golden hair. She had all this while been growing up, and very soon the King noticed how exactly she resembled her dead mother. So he sent for his counselors, and said to them, “I will marry my daughter; she is the image of my dead wife, and no other bride can be found to enable me to keep my promise to her.”

When the counselors heard this, they were dreadfully shocked, and said, “It is forbidden for a father to marry his daughter; nothing but evil could spring from such a sin, and the kingdom will be ruined.”

When the King’s daughter heard of her father’s proposition she was greatly alarmed, the more so as she saw how resolved he was to carry out his intention. She hoped, however, to be able to save him and herself from such ruin and disgrace, so she said to him, “Before I consent to your wish I shall require three things—a dress as golden as the sun, another as silvery as the moon, and a third as glittering as the stars; and besides this, I shall require a mantle made of a thousand skins of rough fur sewn together, and every animal in the kingdom must give a piece of his skin toward it.”

“Ah!” she thought, “I have asked for impossibilities, and I hope I shall be able to make my father give up his wicked intentions.”

The King, however, was not to be diverted from his purpose. All the most skillful young women in the kingdom were employed to weave the three dresses, one to be as golden as the sun, another as silvery as the moon, and the third as glittering as the stars. He sent hunters into the forest to kill the wild animals and bring home their skins, of which the mantle was to be made; and at last when all was finished he brought them and laid them before her, and then said, “Tomorrow our marriage shall take place.”

Then the King’s daughter saw that there was

no hope of changing her father's heart, so she determined to run away from the castle.

In the night, when everyone slept, she rose and took from her jewel-case a gold ring, a gold spinning-wheel, and a golden hook. The three dresses of the sun, moon, and stars she folded in so small a parcel that they were placed in a walnut-shell; then she put on the fur mantle, stained her face and hands black with walnut-juice, and committing herself to the care of Heaven, she left her home.

After traveling the whole night she came at last to a large forest, and feeling very tired she crept into a hollow tree and went to sleep. The sun rose, but she still slept on, and did not awake till nearly noon.

It happened on this very day that the King to whom the wood belonged was hunting in the forest, and when his hounds came to the tree they sniffed about, and ran round and round the tree barking loudly. The King called to his hunters, and said, "Just go and see what wild animal the dogs are barking at."

They obeyed, and quickly returning told the King that in the hollow tree was a most beautiful creature, such as they had never seen before, that the skin was covered with a thousand different sorts of fur, and that it was fast asleep.

"Then," said the King, "go and see if you can capture it alive. Then bind it on the wagon and bring it home."

While the hunters were binding the maiden she awoke, and full of terror cried out to them, "I am only a poor child, forsaken by my father and mother; take pity on me, and take me with you!" "Well," they replied, "you may be useful to the cook, little Roughskin. Come with us; you can at least sweep up the ashes."

So they seated her on the wagon and took her home to the King's castle. They showed her a little stable under the steps, where no daylight ever came, and said, "Roughskin, here you can live and sleep." So the King's daughter was sent into the kitchen to fetch the wood, draw the water, stir the fire, pluck the fowls, look after the vegetables, sweep the ashes, and do all the hard work.

Poor Roughskin, as they called her, lived for a long time most miserably, and the beautiful King's daughter knew not when it would end or how. It happened, however, after a time that a festival was to take place in the castle, so she said to the cook,

"May I go out for a little while to see the company arrive? I will stand outside the door." "Yes, you may go," he replied, "but in half an hour I shall want you to sweep up the ashes and put the kitchen in order."

Then she took her little oil-lamp, went into the stable, threw off the fur coat, washed the nut-stains from her face and hands, so that her full beauty appeared before the day. After this she opened the nutshell and took out the dress that was golden as the sun, and put it on. As soon as she was quite dressed she went out and presented herself at the entrance of the castle as a visitor. No one recognized her as Roughskin, they thought she was a King's daughter, and sent and told the King of her arrival. He went to receive her, offered her his hand, and while they danced together he thought in his heart, "My eyes have never seen any maiden before so beautiful as this."

As soon as the dance was over she bowed to the King, and before he could look round she had vanished, no one knew where. The sentinel at the castle gate was called and questioned, but he had not seen any one pass.

But she had run to her stable, quickly removed her dress, stained her face and hands, put on her fur coat, and was again Roughskin. When she entered the kitchen and began to do her work and sweep up the ashes, the cook said, "Leave that alone till tomorrow; I want you to cook some soup for the King. I will also taste a little when it is ready. But do not let one of your hairs fall in, or you will get nothing to eat in future from me."

Then the cook went out, and Roughskin made the King's soup as nicely as she could, and cut bread for it, and when it was ready she fetched from her little stable her gold ring and laid it in the dish in which the soup was prepared.

After the King had left the ballroom he called for the soup, and while eating it thought he had never tasted better soup in his life. But when the dish was nearly empty he saw to his surprise a gold ring lying at the bottom, and could not imagine how it came there. Then he ordered the cook to come to him, and he was in a terrible fright when he heard the order. "You must certainly have let a hair fall into the soup. If you have, I shall thrash you!" he said.

As soon as he appeared the King said, "Who cooked this soup?" "I cooked it," he replied. "That is not true," said the King. "This soup is made quite

differently and much better than you ever made it.”

Then the cook was obliged to confess that Roughskin had made the soup. “Go and send her to me,” said the King.

As soon as she appeared the King said to her, “Who art thou, maiden?” She replied, “I am a poor child, without father or mother.” He asked again, “Why are you in my castle?” “Because I am trying to earn my bread by helping the cook,” she replied. “How came this ring in the soup?” he said again. “I know nothing about the ring!” she replied.

When the King found he could learn nothing from Roughskin, he sent her away. A little time after this there was another festival, and Roughskin had again permission from the cook to go and see the visitors. “But,” he added, “come back in half an hour and cook for the King the soup that he is so fond of.”

She promised to return, and ran quickly into her little stable, washed off the stains, and took out of the nutshell her dress, silvery as the moon, and put it on. Then she appeared at the castle like a King’s daughter, and the King came to receive her with great pleasure; he was so glad to see her again, and while the dancing continued the King kept her as his partner. When the ball ended she disappeared so quickly that the King could not imagine what had become of her. But she had rushed down to her stable, made herself again the rough little creature that was called Roughskin, and went into the kitchen to cook the soup.

While the cook was upstairs she fetched the golden spinning-wheel and dropped it into the soup as soon as it was ready. The King again ate it with great relish; it was as good as before, and when he sent for the cook and asked who made it, he was obliged to own that it was Roughskin. She was also ordered to appear before the King, but he could get nothing out of her, excepting that she was a poor child, and knew nothing of the golden spinning-wheel.

At the King’s third festival everything happened as before. But the cook said, “I will let you go and see the dancing room this time, Roughskin; but I believe you are a witch, for although the soup is good, and the King says it is better than I can make it, there is always something dropped into it which I cannot understand.” Roughskin did not stop to listen; she ran quickly to her little stable, washed off the nut stains, and this time dressed herself in the dress that glittered like the stars.

When the King came as before to receive her in the hall, he thought he had never seen such a beautiful woman in his life. While they were dancing he contrived, without being noticed by the maiden, to slip a gold ring on her finger, and he had given orders that the dancing should continue longer than usual. When it ended, he wanted to hold her hand still, but she pulled it away, and sprang so quickly among the people that she vanished from his eyes.

She ran out of breath to her stable under the steps, for she knew that she had remained longer away than half an hour, and there was not time to take off her dress, so she threw on her fur cloak over it, and in her haste she did not make her face black enough, nor hide her golden hair properly; her hands also remained white. However, when she entered the kitchen, the cook was still away, so she prepared the King’s soup, and dropped into it the golden hook.

The King, when he found another trinket in his soup, sent immediately for Roughskin, and as she entered the room he saw the ring on her white finger which he had placed there. Instantly he seized her hand and held her fast, but in her struggles to get free the fur mantle opened and the star-glittering dress was plainly seen. The King caught the mantle and tore it off, and as he did so her golden hair fell over her shoulders, and she stood before him in her full splendor, and felt that she could no longer conceal who she was. Then she wiped the soot and stains from her face, and was beautiful to the eyes of the King as any woman upon earth.

“You shall be my dear bride,” said the King, “and we will never be parted again, although I know not who you are.”

Then she told him her past history, and all that had happened to her, and he found that she was, as he thought, a King’s daughter. Soon after their marriage was celebrated, and they lived happily till their death.

Yarn Dolls

Yarn

Cotton Balls

Buttons



1

Cut approximately 50 lengths of yarn, each about a foot long. Tie them together in the middle with another piece of yarn.



2

Fold the big bunch of yarn at the tie, and insert a couple of cotton balls to make a head. Tie a piece of yarn around the bunch, just under the head, to make a neck.



3

Divide the yarn below the neck into four sections. Tie the ends of the two outermost sections—these will be arms. (You may want to trim a bit off the ends so they're not too long.)



5

Sew buttons to the face for eyes and mouth, or decorate any other way you like.



Make Your Own Wonder Mask!

You will need:

string

crayons or markers

8-inch paper plate

paste or glue

pink construction paper

hole punch

scissors

1. Color pig with crayons or markers.

2. Cut out circle and paste onto the back of an eight inch paper plate.

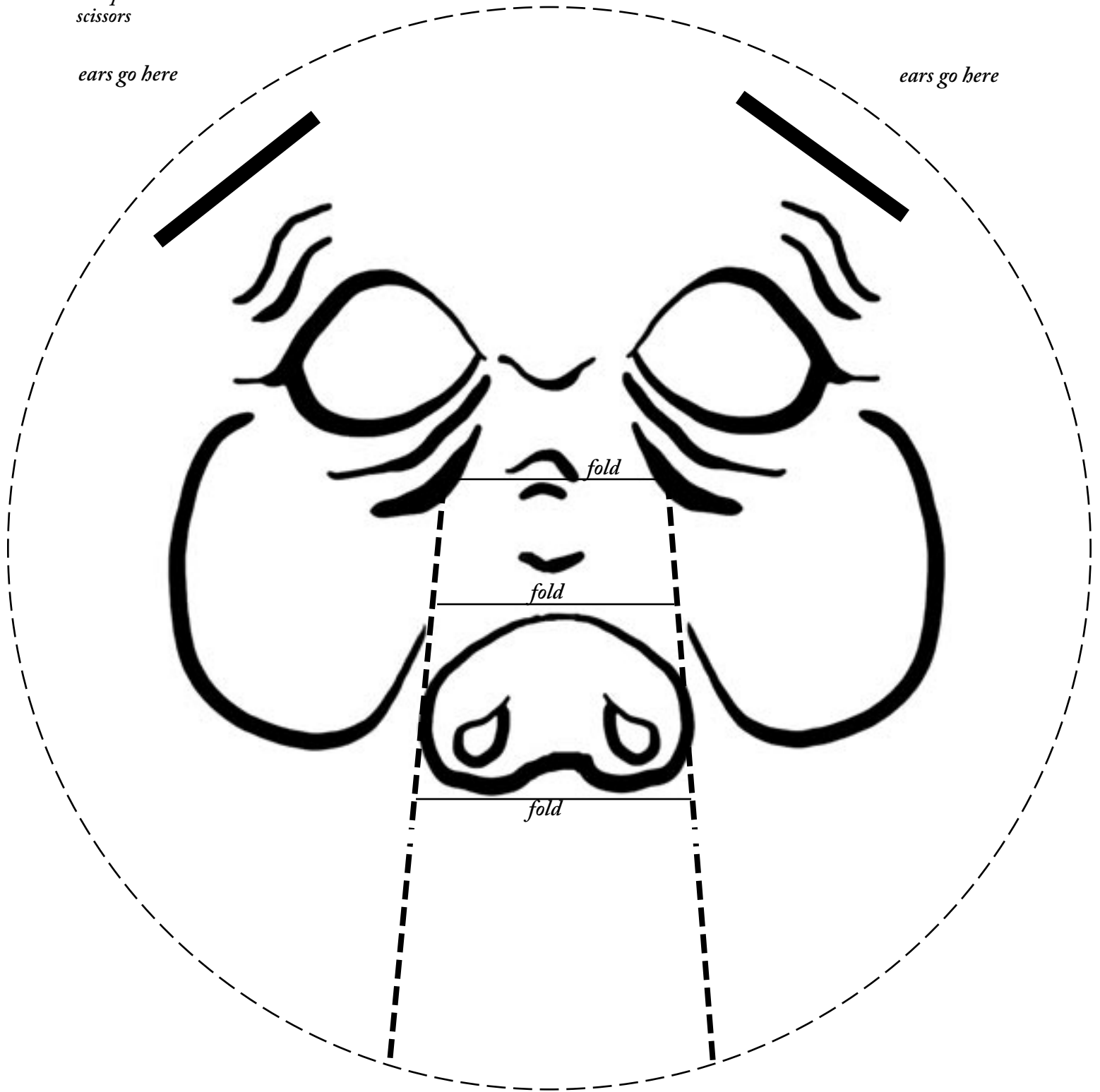
3. Cut along two dotted lines; fold nose across bridge and above & below actual nose design.

4. Cut ear shapes out of construction paper and paste where indicated.

5. Punch holes on side and attach string.

ears go here

ears go here



Grades K-3

Questions for after the Show

Which tale do you think is the funniest? Why?

Wonder tales often teach lessons. What lessons do you recognize in these tales?

A play's lighting helps set the mood and establish location. Do you feel differently on a sunny day than on a cloudy evening? If so, how? Do you think the lighting conveys different feelings in Sing Down the Moon?

How would you show the giant's wife on stage?

How you would show a bean tree?

Try this activity:

How would you move like a fox, or a swan? Try starting out as a fox and then slowly turning into a swan. Now choose another animal to depict through movement and let other people guess your animal.

Use this space to write and illustrate your own Jack tale!
If you like, you can send it to us at
TFA, George Mason University 3E6, Fairfax, VA 22030.



Can You Speak Appalachian?

Match the Appalachian term with its definition.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. pizen | A. crazy old man |
| 2. mater | B. exclamation of surprise |
| 3. poke | C. misbehaving, being rowdy |
| 4. cut the dust | D. chimney |
| 5. gollylaggin' | E. poison |
| 6. iffen | F. someone who can't do anything right |
| 7. cumfluttered | G. set out, hurried |
| 8. Old Scratch | H. go quickly down a dirt road or across a dusty field |
| 9. carousing | I. embarrassed, in a flap |
| 10. gommer | J. completely, directly |
| 11. coot | K. the devil |
| 12. bedad | L. if |
| 13. chimbly | M. tomato |
| 14. lit out | N. bag or sack |
| 15. plumb | O. courting, kissing |

1E, 2M, 3N, 4H, 5O, 6L, 7I, 8K, 9C, 10F, 11A, 12B, 13D, 14G, 15J

Answers:

Source: Haley, Gail E. *Mountain Jack Tales*, New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1992.

Apple-Head Dolls

Peeler

Knife

Large Apple

Fabric

Plastic Bottle

Rubber Band

Markers (optional)

Yarn (optional)



Peel and core the apple.

Using the knife, carefully carve a face on one side of the apple.



Place the apple in a dry place for a couple of days until it shrinks and the face looks wrinkled.



Wrap fabric around a plastic bottle and secure at the neck of the bottle with a rubber band.

Gently push the apple head on the top of the bottle.



Decorate the head however you like, using yarn for hair, markers to draw on makeup, etc.



Corn Husk



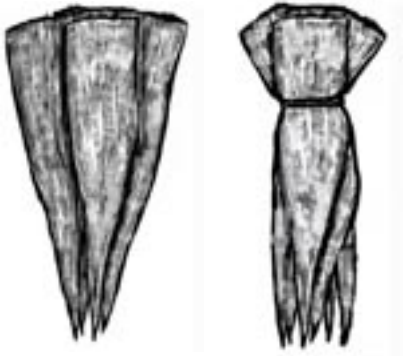
Corn husks or tamale wrappers

String or yarn

Markers (optional)

If you are using dried corn husks, soak the corn husks in warm water until they become pliable, about one hour. (Skip this step if your corn husks are green.)

Take four or five corn husks that are about the same size, and lay them on top of each other so they overlap. Tie a piece of string around them at the big end, about a 1/2 inch from the top.



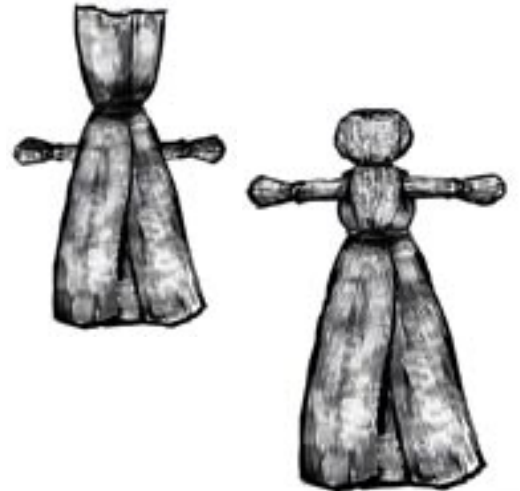
Tie the husks together again, about an inch down, so that a ball is formed for the head. You may want to adjust the husks a bit so there is a smooth surface for the face.



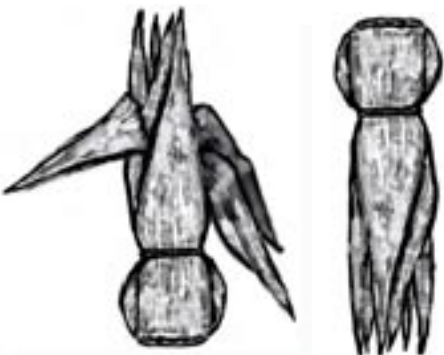
Roll another husk into a tight tube and tie the ends. This will become the arms of your doll.



To form a skirt, take several corn husks and arrange them around the doll so it looks like her skirt is on upside down. Tie the husks at her waist, and fold them down, creating a full skirt.



Fold the corn husks over the tied end in different directions, as if you were peeling a banana.



Slide the arms through the corn husks you tied earlier, just below the head. Tie another string around the long husks, below the arms, to form a waist.



To form pants, take the corn husks below the waist, and divide them into two legs, and tie at the bottom with string.



If you like, you can decorate your doll with markers, or use your imagination to create corn husk clothing.

Grades 4-5

Questions for after the Show

The tale Jack and the Wonder Bean is the Appalachian version of what well-known fairy tale?

Jack is a very foolish central character. Why do you think audiences care about what happens to him?

Many familiar tales from Europe feature kings, princes and princesses. How do the Appalachian tales adapt these types of characters?

What scene do you think of first when you remember the lighting?

Music that is played while a scene is in progress is called underscoring. David Maddox composed all the music in this production, using a distinctive style influenced by his experiences in the Appalachian region. How did the underscoring affect the different moods of the tales?

Try this activity:

How would you react if you met up with a giant or his wife? Show your response through action. What would you do to protect yourself?

Interviews with the Creators of *Sing Down the Moon*

David Maddox

How long have you and Mary Hall Surface been working together?

Since 1997, when we worked on *The Nightingale* at the Kennedy Center, although she remounted a show I had previously worked on as composer—*The Snow Queen*.

How did you become interested in writing for young audiences?

I stumbled into it. In fact, *The Snow Queen* was my first TYA (“Theater for Young Audiences”) show. It was originally directed by Phyllis Look and then remounted by Mary Hall. Kim Peter Kovac of the Kennedy Center invited me to do sound and composition. He knew something of me from my work around town. So, it was a gig for me. But it turned out that I liked TYA shows. *The Nightingale* was my third show at the Kennedy Center.

So much of your work revolves around folk music and traditional instruments. Why are you drawn to them?

I’m most drawn to acoustic instruments, as opposed to electric ones. I like the rich way they sound. I like the way real wood and skin makes sound (as opposed to computers and microchips). So, I like classical instruments also. But I’m drawn to world folk music because of its community, around the kitchen table and at its dance hall origins. It’s party music, and music for drawing people together as community. I like the simple repetitions of traditional dance music. (I also like—to a degree—the minimalist music of people like Phillip Glass.)

Why do you like to update traditional stories?

I like to update *good* stories into new contexts.



There are plenty of traditional stories that are dull. The great stories are worth being told over and over in new ways. It’s no accident that there is a Cinderella story in every culture—it’s a powerful story that speaks to a universal human experience.

What aspects of being a composer do you most enjoy? What do you least enjoy? What do you find the most surprising?

I like writing songs the best—putting words and music together. I also like the puzzle of orchestrating: figuring out how to get the instruments of an orchestra to speak together, each in their own voice, to make the whole sound. What do I least enjoy? Nothing really. There are aspects I find more difficult than others. For example, the first lyrics or notes are always the hardest to get out. Getting started is the most difficult part for me.

The finished music, performed for the first time, is always a little surprising, since it is the first time I have heard it outside of my head. Sometimes it sounds better than I had hoped, sometimes it sounds worse, and then it’s back to the drawing board.

What aspects of being a music director do you most enjoy? Least enjoy? What do you find most surprising?

The best is sitting at the piano in the middle of a bunch of singers, hearing the song.

The worst is struggling to teach a poorly written song (if it is my own song). I'd rather be back trying to fix the song.

The most surprising is when a singer improvises a modification to a melody that is better than my own. It's always a joy to hear a singer find the better or more natural solution.

What advice can you give students who would like to pursue a career in musical composition?

Listen to lots of different kinds of music. Try to identify the characteristics of the music you like or are drawn to. If you like Bizet's *Carmen*, buy the score. Figure out what makes it sound the way it does.

Listen to your music performed by musicians (even informally) to find out what makes "playable" music.

Be at least a little familiar with all the instruments you write for. It's always helpful to know something about them. (For example, it's said that only guitar players can write guitar music)

Write what you like.

What advice can you give students who would like to pursue a career in music direction?

Master the piano. It is *the* instrument of music direction.

Study the relationship between notes on the page and the "feel" of a song.

Think about how you convey to a singer how to "interpret" a song.

Be a people person.

Mary Hall Surface

How did you become interested in writing for young audiences?

I've always been drawn to their receptiveness and enthusiasm. I like that they are so open and imaginative and unjaded. And I like engaging kids in the thoughts and emotions that I would like to see children thinking and feeling. And I like having adults and children share theater together.

So much of your work involves folk tales and mythology. Why are you drawn to these subjects?

I like what they have to say about who we are and the big questions we all wonder about—how do you make the right choices along the road of growing up, as a person and as a culture? And they have great monsters.

Why do you like to update traditional stories?

I think it sheds light on the traditional stories, allowing us to see them in a new way, and perhaps see our modern selves in the stories more easily. Plus, I find it really fun and challenging to find all the parallels of place, time and mythology.

What aspects of being a playwright do you most enjoy and least enjoy? What do you find the most surprising?

I most enjoy finishing the first draft. I least enjoy writing the first draft. I am most surprised when the first draft has some merit.

What's the best thing about directing?

I love bringing together all the creative souls involved in making a production happen and building the best environment for people to do their work. I least enjoy figuring out what props are stored where. I find it most surprising when, seemingly, out of nowhere, a scene you thought was dead suddenly comes to life, and you are not sure why, except that it rests somehow in the combination of everyone's skills brought to bear on the moment.

What advice can you give students who would like to pursue a career in playwriting?

Read lots of plays. Go to see lots of plays. *AND* read and study and learn about lots of things besides theater. And decide what you would like to share or discuss with the world around you.

*To chase flies away,
put a little honey into a saucer
and generously sprinkle the honey
with black pepper.*

An Appalachian Tradition



RECIPES

APPALACHIAN GINGERBREAD

1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup butter
2 eggs
1 cup molasses
2 3/4 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons soda
1 teaspoon ginger
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup buttermilk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cream sugar, butter, and eggs. Add molasses. Sift together flour, salt, soda, and spices. Stir dry ingredients into moist ingredients, alternating with buttermilk. Bake in a greased 9-inch square pan for 30-40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Allow to cool for at least 10 minutes, then cut into nine 1-inch square pieces.

YIELD: 9 Servings



4-5 firm apples, cored and quartered (leave skins on)

1 cup water
1/3 cup sugar
1/2 cup orange juice
1 teaspoon cinnamon
ice cream (optional)

Put water, sugar, orange juice, and cinnamon in a wide skillet and bring to a boil. Simmer for 5 minutes; then add apples and cover. Turning the apples once or twice, cook them until they are tender, about 20 minutes. Serve while hot. Top with ice cream if desired.



BUTTERMILK BISCUITS

3 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 cup shortening
1 1/2 cups buttermilk

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Mix flour, soda, salt, and baking powder. Cut in shortening with a pastry blender or a fork. Add buttermilk and mix quickly until dough forms a ball, adding more flour if necessary so the dough is not too sticky. Turn out on a floured surface and knead a few times. Pat or roll out to a 1/2-inch thickness; then cut with a floured biscuit cutter or an upside down drinking glass. Bake approximately 12 minutes on an ungreased baking sheet.

YIELD: approx. 15 biscuits

FRIED APPLES



Grades 6-8

Questions for after the Show

Folk tales often show heroes and heroines facing a difficult challenge that will permanently change them. What challenges face each of the central characters and how are they transformed?

This production uses crafts, puppets, dolls and other items to help tell the story. The challenges to the designer in this area were many. Think of different ways the following examples could have been depicted:

How would you show Catskins flying through the air with her flying box?

How would you show the melting butter coming from Jack's hat in "Jack's First Job" without ruining the actor's costume or making him a sticky mess?

Nine actors portrayed all the characters in all the tales. They played roles including people, animals, and inanimate objects. Which costumes stand out in your memory as the most effective?

The play's action takes place in many different locales. Set Designer Tony Cisek was given the challenge of designing scenery that represented all these different locations, but could still fit in the theater! If you were the set designer, what environment would you create for the play's action?

Try this activity:

Find a scene partner and improvise your own Jack tale.

WONDER TALES

You are already familiar with many fairy tales. You heard them or read them while growing up, you have seen variations of them in movies, television shows and cartoons. As very young children, you may have heard tales read aloud.

In many cultures, including our own, these tales are passed from generation to generation, often in verbal, rather than written form. As people immigrate from other countries, they bring their customs, religions and their stories with them. Many tales that originated in Europe, such as those compiled by the Brothers Grimm, came to America with the thousands of immigrants who populated our country in the early part of the 20th century. As with any story that is told and retold, people add or subtract elements. They use their own choice of words to express an idea or an emotion. As time passed, regional variations of familiar tales appeared.

Sing Down the Moon is a celebration of the tales that come from the Appalachian region. More commonly called wonder tales, folk tales or “Jack tales” (you’ll notice a boy named Jack in these tales), some of these stories may strike you as familiar, and some new.

“Fairy tales are an image-language.”
Carl Jung

“Fairy tales provide hope that there is more to life than . . . survival. ‘Once upon a time’ keeps alive our utopian longing for a better world that can be created by our dreams and actions.”
Jack Zipes

What are folk tales? Wonder tales and folk tales are stories rendered through images and symbols. The characters in these stories are not to be understood as actual people, but as symbols of the world from which they come. The events take place in the realm of the unconscious. Scenes shift without definite demarcations. The emphasis is on “feeling” the power of the story, rather than a literal understanding of the characters and events depicted.

Carl Jung, the noted Swiss psychoanalyst, referred to the collective unconscious—a reservoir of latent images that we inherit from our ancestral past, rich with potential waiting to be developed by our own experiences. Folk tales are symbolic forms of communication. The symbolic fabric from which they are woven is this collective unconscious. It is because of this collective unconscious that most folk tales are so easily understood by all of us. For young and old, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, no matter where one is born or under what circumstances one is raised, wonder tales and folk tales provide hope that there is more to life than simple survival.—❧

“Fairy tales survive not simply as a quaint relic of days childlike in belief. Their world of magic is symptomatic of fevers deeply burning in the psyche: permanent presences, desires, fears, ideals, potentialities that have glowed in the nerves, hummed in the blood, baffled the senses, since the beginning.”
Joseph Campbell

Counting the Sums

I must tell them someday
when they are old enough for memory
about the family of twelve
huddled in a creaking cabin
cracked feet oozing
on splintered floors,
show them the photo album
my father by a '52 Ford
his foot propped on the bumper
with the confidence
only the baby boy
in a clan of doting sisters
could ever know,
my mother in a red coat
the hat with fur trim
beaming at the camera
with the smile of a survivor
the strong one
in a house of weakness.
A counting of all their sums
requires the telling
of day after day in two rooms
with four kids and an ironing board
\$20 in a drawer
two weeks to payday
the mouth-drying grief
of a busted radiator,
a day of stinging sweat
in a heat-dancing field
coal grit
in the back of the throat.

—Rita Sims Quillen



RITA SIMS QUILLEN

Born in 1954 in Hiltons, Virginia, the fifth generation to be born in that place, Rita Sims Quillen is the oldest of four children. When she was thirteen, she almost got the part of Mick in the film version of *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*. She married her high school sweetheart at nineteen, graduated from a local community college at the age of twenty-three, and then transferred to East Tennessee State University, where she majored in English/education and minored in business. While an undergraduate, Quillen won first place in the Virginia Highlands Writing Contest (essay division) and published two stories in small magazines. She received the Outstanding English Student Award from ETSU in 1980. Her M.A. thesis, *Looking for Native Ground: Contemporary Appalachian Poetry*, was published in 1989. Quillen, also author of an elaborate bibliography of modern and contemporary mountain poetry that was published in *Appalachian Journal* in 1985, is fast being viewed as an authority on mountain literature. A chapbook of her poetry, *October Dusk*, was published in 1987. A new full length book, *Counting the Sums* (1995), contains a collection of her most recent poetry. Since 1987, Rita has taught in the English Department at Northeast State Technical Community College. She is an associate professor and received the Outstanding Faculty Award in 1992.

Source: Quillen, Rita Sims. "Counting the Sums" in Dyer, Joyce (ed.). *Bloodroot: Reflections on Place by Appalachian Women Writers*. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1998.

*If your man is thinking of leaving you for another woman,
wedge a lock of his hair in the door jam, and his wanderings will cease.*

—Appalachian Wisdom

From the Mountains Faring

An Example of Oral History from Knoxville, Tennessee, 1938 or 1939

*Calvin and me come from the mountains . . .
[to] make a living in some way or another.*

“Calvin and me come from the mountains, for Calvin knowed he could make a living in some way or another about town doing odd jobs. So we left the farm. We fared on down to Knoxville. Our times has not been easy here. But then times has always been hard with us. We was both born poor. Lived poor all our lives. All in all, though, it’s a lots easier making out here than it was back there on the farm. We ain’t never had to ask a penny off of no one. Never asked the government to put us on relief, neither.”

Lola Simmons rocked slowly as she talked. Large bony hands rested on the arms of her chair. Her drab gray calico dress was tucked close under her to clear the floor.

“Calvin’s handy with tools,” she said, “and always has been. He can fix a chair or whatever kind of furniture you’ve got that looks past doing, and it will be stout as new. He can build things, just anything, from the ground up. He’s good on porches and stairs steps. Most anything about a house that needs righting, Calvin can git it in shape. He does a heap of patching screens and painting roofs. He’s not a regular plumber and electrician but he does some of that work, too.”

She pushed a dangling hairpin back to place. Her straight black hair, streaked with gray, was tightly braided in one plait and balled on the back of her head. Her thin face was lined and worn but there was no hardness in her expression.

“This place here we live in, it’s not any great shakes of a place. But we’re going to stay on as long as we can. Every time we’ve moved from here to somewheres on the edge of town, Calvin’s lost work. Here he’s in close-catch of town folks that wants a job done right off. The biggest trouble about living in a basement like this is they’s not any room for spreading. Well, three rooms is enough for me and Calvin and Cap, even if they’re not big rooms. This here sitting room is space enough to hold the parlor furniture and Cap’s bed. Cap’s just only fifteen but

he’s near outgrowed that bed back yonder. He has to lay catercorners of it now. Ought to be some way Calvin could stretch it out, seems to me. I don’t see no way we could put a double bed in that space even if we had cash to buy it—which we ain’t.

“Me and Calvin takes the back room. They’s no grate in it, but some heat comes from the kitchen. That kitchen has a sink with running water, and that’s the closest we ever come to having a bathroom. Well-a-day, not having such means less to us than most coming from the mountains, we is use to a wash pan and a tub for cleaning up. We has a halfway sort of a little water privy in the kitchen closet, but it don’t flush right. I can tell you, though, it beats trotting out in the back yard in the weather.

“The last of the three rooms we has is damp and cold without you keep a fire going all the time. And we can’t do that. The basement’s about all that’s brick about the whole house. That’s the reason our rooms stays that way. The house up above us is in awful shape. The roof leaks. It lets the water come right down the side of the walls. When a hard rain comes they’s water all over the kitchen floor. I just reach the broom out. I keep sweeping it to the back door. The walls stay so wet half the time that wallpaper just pops off everywhere.”

Lola shifted her position. She pointed toward the ragged corner of the ceiling. “And look at that plastering back there in the corner. Dropped smack off last week. Ah, Lord.

“I guess we can’t expect just a whole lot for the rent we pay. The landlord never misses coming a Monday for our two-fifty. But fixing things up is another tale and it’s never told. He won’t do a blessed thing about this wetness and it matters not how much we howl. Tells us now that the government is planning to tear down every house in the block and put up some sort that ain’t tenements. Well, ‘twon’t be no trouble to tear down. Just give a push, and not such a hard one neither, and the last one of these houses will come down and never a wrecking tool needed to help out. And the neighborhood is worse and far

worse than the houses. Oh, I know it's no place to bring a youngin up at all. I thank the Lord that me and Calvin has got but only the one, and that's Cap. We can manage him all right with both of us studying on it. Most of the families in this block has from six all the way to ten youngins, and all sizes. Seems like about half of the mothers is sick. They just let the youngins run around as filthy as cow-dab. I tell you, most of these youngins learn to cuss and swear and take the Lord's name in vain when they's buggers of five years old and less. They start fighting amongst one another. Before long the mas and pas take sides. It ends in a cutting scrape or one or the other taking their leave of the street. Me and Calvin stays clear of it all.

"We don't want no more trouble with neighbors. That's the main reason we moved from the mountains. Trouble with neighbors. Trouble betwixt Calvin and the Osmans over what they'd done to Calvin's coon dog. Drum was a night-running dog and I will freely admit it, but he wasn't a chicken-killer. Calvin had trained him about chickens to where he'd leave them alone. Why, I've seen that Drum flatten out on his belly and whine like he was scared to death if a chicken so much as passed him near. Calvin had trained him so he was really feared of a chicken. But it was something using around the Osman's place of nights and taking their hens so they says 'twas Calvin's Drum. They'd shot him but they dassn't, for they just knowed what a hasty-passioned man my Calvin can be when it comes to his coon dog. So they tried one of their sneaky tricks. They caught Drum off in the woods and they docked his tail right slam up against his rump and they cropped his ears down to his head.

"Calvin flat-out accused them Osmans of doing the job. They swore they didn't, but you could see the

daylight through what they said. So it was a hardness sprung up and before long Calvin hopped all over an Osman and beat the corn out of him. Then the whole tribe ganged on him and came close to beating him to death. Looked like it was going to have to be a killing on one side or other. We didn't have enough kin to fight that Osman bunch. Calvin and me both knowed wasn't room for him and the Osmans on the same mountain. So me and him pulled out and come faring down from the mountains to Knoxville, and ain't never going back again."



Lola's light eyes were far-shot and she nodded her head slightly. "I miss them mountains sometimes. Yes, I miss that steep old land.

"Me and Calvin growed up in the same neighborhood. The schools wasn't much we went to. Still they learned us to read and they learned us to write and how to say words as we should in talking. Calvin and me took a heartburning for each other when we was in that school. Then Mammy died and I come down to Knoxville and I got me a job in a steam laundry here. No place there or home for me, for Pappy

brought in a new wife and started in on a new bunch of youngins. I made four dollars a week. Worked ten hours a day in the damp wash end. It wouldn't be a dry rag on me at the end of them ten hours. Most of us that worked there was girls come in from the country and down from the mountains. We managed by rooming together and doing all our own cooking and washing. Now, you hear folks talk a heap about the way country girls goes on with men when they come to the city. Ah, Lord! We was so wore out by time work hours was over that we was good and glad to fall into bed and sleep. At the laundry I worked up to the finishing room and I made five dollars and fifty cents. But the hours was longer and I was

so tired all the time I'd just as soon been dead and done with it.

"Well and all, it was right after the war that Calvin come down from the mountains. He talked me into going back and keeping house for him. It didn't take a powerful lot of talk. I was sick and tired of working like a slave. But I guess I'd sort of lost track of things I'd once knowed about living on a farm. That's a hard life. Anyhow, I went. I never had it in my mind that it was a thing wrong about me going. But the neighbors talked about us living together. Five years after I went to keeping house for Calvin, Cap come. I don't see no difference in the way me and Calvin feels about Cap because we never did have the time nor money to git a preacher or justice of peace to say a few words over us. It costs a lot of money to git married. More than five dollars some places. We never seen five dollars ahead till we come down here to Knoxville. Then it seemed like a plumb fool waste of money. They tell me that some good lawyer says a common-law marriage is just as good as a church or court one any day. So I ain't noways ashamed that me and Calvin has never got around to the regular kind. He's past fifty and I'm near to it and ain't neither of us ever trotted around loose like half the ones that blows about wedlock and such. We is poor but we's decent.

"Being poor ain't easy nowheres, but it's a sight better in the city than on a farm. City folks just don't know nothing at all about what country folks puts up with. Me and Calvin rented the farm we had in the mountains. It looked like it took the biggest part of what come from it to just meet the rent. Every cent from the tobacco crop went for rent.

"We never did git ahead to the point of having stock of our own. Had to borrow from the neighbors. That meant they'd git theirs plowed when the weather was right. Even if the ground was as hard as a brick, Calvin had to do plowing when he could borrow some mules or some horses. I didn't git nowhere trying to make extry with a garden. Pigs and chickens seemed like two things it just wasn't no way for us to keep from dying. The sort of cows we could pay for wasn't worth the feeding. We's had more butter and milk and meat and eggs here in town than we ever see on that farm. Farm living is plain slaving from one month to the next, from morning to night. And

they's nothing left to show for all the hard work you do. Winter comes and you got to start toting wood for the fires. Have to tote it yourself when they's no sign of horse or mule to help you. Then every bit of the water you've a use for must be drawn from a well or fotch to the house from a spring. Here all you have to do is twist at the hydrant and out pours the water. Neither one of us ever wants to go back to farming.

"Calvin gits plenty of work here in Knoxville. He works cheap and that's the reason, I guess. He's not what you'd call a skilled worker. But he can do as good work as the best of them, I don't care what name you call them by.

"They's more folks here in Knoxville that wants cheap repairing than any other kind. The rich folks is the same way. Calvin knows where he can git supplies cheap. He can take a contract lower than most and still come out on top. If he could just go straight from one job to the next, why, I bet he'd make close to twenty dollars a week. Like things is now, he makes about ten. He loses money looking for jobs and figgering on gitting things in shape to git the contract. Old customers has always stuck with him. But things ain't going to keep dropping to pieces about the same folks' house if they's fixed right. And Calvin always fixes them right. Sort of cuts his own throat, but he does it.

"I do all the washing and ironing and cleaning and cooking. And I can stretch that ten dollars out for the three of us. Rent and coal and kindling and food eats up about seven of it. That leaves three for other things and the clothes we wear. It don't take no more than fifty cents a day to feed the three of us. We's country folks. Glad to git cornbread and beans and potatoes and greens. I've heard some doctors say you could live on cornbread and vegetables without meat. I doubt it. Not and be hardy. I try to git meat for us at least twice a week. Fix an egg apiece for us at breakfast. I pay a nickel a day for a pint of milk for Cap. I know he ought to have it, a growing boy like he is. We never have had to spend a red cent on doctors' bills for no one of us. Not even when Cap come. It didn't cost me nothing because the midwife was a friend of mine. She wouldn't hear of me paying her for helping me through."

Lola got up from her chair to straighten the worn strip of carpet her rocker had wrinkled. She shoved back the old parlor furniture, upholstered in red plush and placed at regular intervals in front of the fireplace, smoothed the rug, and sank back in the rocker.

“Me and Calvin wasn’t only thinking about easy going for our own selves when we come to Knoxville. We knowed Cap would have a better chance at schooling here. And do you know what? That boy ain’t turned sixteen yet and here he wants to quit school and go to work. Some ways I don’t blame him. As hard as we work it looks like it just never is anything left over for us to throw to him to spend for fun. And they ain’t a soul lives around here I care for him to run with. Well, both me and Calvin carries burial insurance. It’ll git us out of his way without cost if anything happens to us. I don’t see no sense in paying out for that on Cap yet. He’s not going to die no time soon. If he’s going to start out for hisself, I want him to have some sort of a good job. He can have every penny he makes for hisself, too. I don’t believe in milking your children.


“I told him it’s got to be some good straight job. Some boys git it in their heads that they can make a sight of money selling liquor. The law cracks down on them almost as soon as they git a start. We see it happen every day around here. You’ve got to keep the law paid off a good and plenty or else the penitentiary is where they’s going to land. Now if they does pay off, where is the profit left from selling? Ain’t none. So there they is. I told Cap if he had it in his head to do that, he better be clearing his head of it right now.

“I don’t blame him one bit for having his mind set on making a little money to have fun on. Seems like me and Calvin ain’t never done a thing ever but work hard all our lives. Some folks find pleasure in

going to meeting on Sunday. But it’s no church I’ve had sight of here in Knoxville where the ones coming in and out ain’t dressed up fit to kill. Some says it’s all the same in the eyes of the Lord about how you dress. But I knows if He’s got sense at all, He knows our clothes is too wore out for Sunday strutting. I know they’s shabby in my own sight.

“Calvin and me both can read right well. In times back we use to read the Bible pretty much. But seems like you always come across something you can’t make out straight. So we just stopped reading it. Looked a pure shame, as wore out as we was, to read things that upset your head.

“I guess I got on to the main of it, though. I know that Jesus Christ died to save sinners. And all that me and Calvin have to do is trust in Him. And we do. And we believe in Him. I don’t see where they’s any way to keep me and Calvin out of Heaven. Calvin moved away from the mountains to keep a killing from happening. That clears what’s said about not killing. We ain’t never stole and have always told the truth. We never brought false witness against nobody. They’s more to it, but I counted them off one day and we is all right. Calvin and me ain’t never harmed a living soul in our lives. So I ain’t bothering about Hell if I never gits inside the door of a Knoxville church. When me and Calvin gits there I’d be more than glad to do what I could to help others git in.

They’s some folks, not a thousand miles away from here, that are going to need a heap of helping. Ah, Lordy, yes!”-

Dean Newman

Jennette Edwards

James Aswell

Grades 9-12

Questions for after the Show

What do the tales tell you about parents and children?

What do they tell you about love?

What differences do you see between the European and Appalachian versions of these stories?

Track the use of numbers in these tales. Which numbers seem to be important, and why?

The acting style for this production requires that the performers both narrate the action and portray specific characters on stage. Why do you think the director chose this performance style for the actors?

Try these activities:

Storytelling is a major art form that's practiced widely in Appalachia. Choose a folktale from your cultural background and try depicting it first on stage with scene partners, and then solo as a storyteller. What do theater and storytelling have in common? How are they different? What skills do you need to tell a story each way?

Try combining these skills in your performance.

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