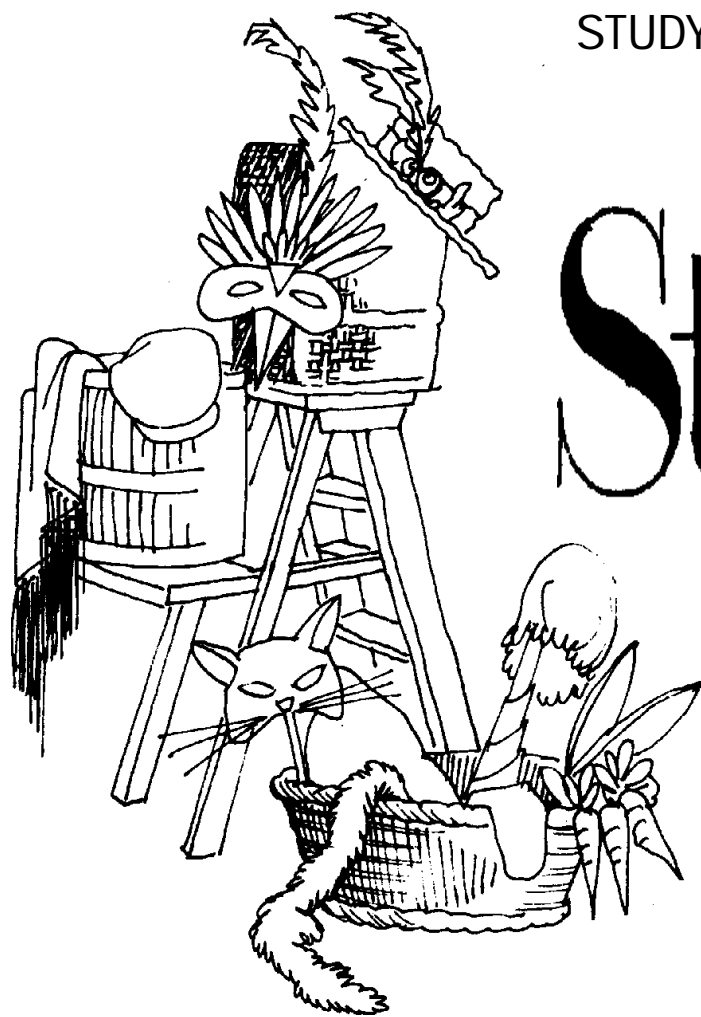


Pushcart Players

STUDY GUIDE



Stone Soup

and other stories

Rooted in the belief that the arts are basic to education, Pushcart Players joins the literacy movement with a collection of folk tales brought to life through the magic of story-telling. Entitled *“Stone Soup and Other Stories,”* this charming presentation drawn from international classics is an excellent springboard for subsequent reading and reading-related activities. *“Stone Soup and Other Stories”* contains story favorites from Africa, India, Eastern Europe and our own United States. Filled with humor, fantasy, color and wit, each tale gently raises value clarification issues as well.

This study guide is designed to assist teachers, parents and group leaders in preparing students for the presentation. It also offers suggestions for discussion and reading tie-in activities following the program. It is our hope that the material suggested in this guide will be tailored to the age and interest of your students and presented in an uncritical classroom or home setting.



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The Prudential 



Pushcart is a member of Actors' Equity Association, Alliance for Arts Education NJ, ArtPride, Arts Council of the Essex Area, Arts Council of the Morris Area, Coalition for Arts & Humanities, Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, NJ Theatre Alliance, Producer's League of Theatre for Young Audiences.

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Freddie Lee Fisher



Pre-show:

This story has its origins in the mountains of West Virginia and features an eight-year-old named Freddie Lee Fisher. He lives with his father and often goes to visit his grandpa. At the end of each visit, Freddie Lee's grandpa gives him a present to take "carefully on home." No matter how hard he tries, Freddie Lee's good intentions turn to near disaster with each return trip.

Items to watch or listen for: a chocolate cake, a cup of butter, a puppy, three pies.

Post-show:

When Freddie Lee comes home from his Grandpa's house with the crumbled cake, his father says, "Freddie Lee Fisher, that is no way to carry cake," and then describes the correct way to carry it. Freddie Lee then applies the cake-carrying method to the butter, the butter-carrying method to the puppy, and so on.

- How did you feel each time Freddie Lee was confused? Why?
- Why do you believe Freddie Lee remembered things as he did?
- How did you feel when Freddie Lee's father told him he didn't have the sense he was born with? Write a poem about that.
- When Papa told Freddie Lee he loved him just the same, Freddie Lee said he was going to remember that. Do you think he will? Talk about that.

The Greatest Being



Pre-show:

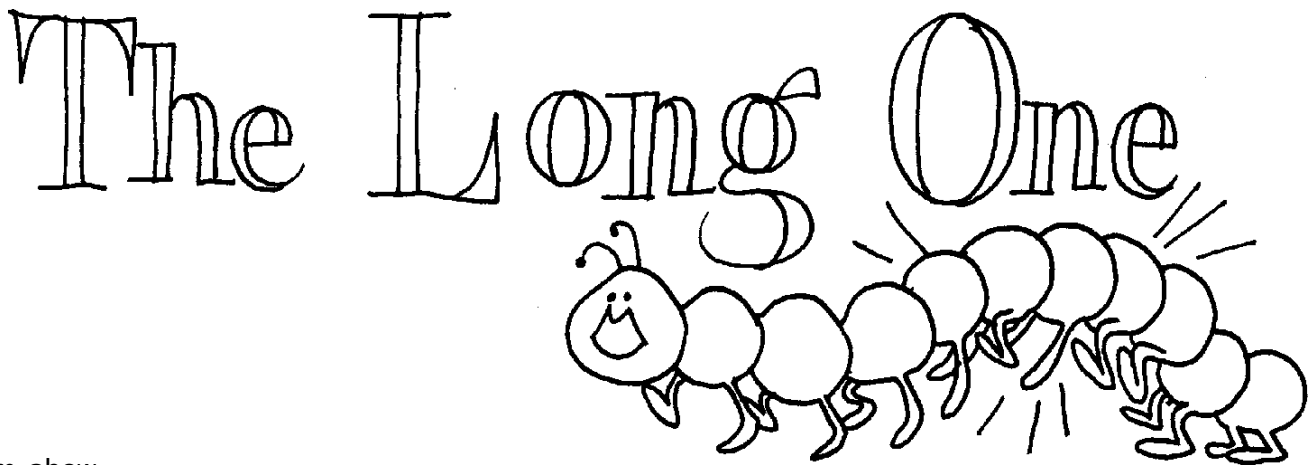
"The Greatest Being" is a folk tale favorite from India. It is about a father who wants his daughter, a royal princess, to marry the greatest being in the world. He sends his daughter traveling, far and wide, offering her hand in marriage to the sun up in the sky, the cloud, the wind and the mountain. Each time she is certain that she's in the presence of the greatest being. But in the end, she makes an interesting discovery closer to home.

Characters to watch and listen for: the sun, a cloud, the wind, a weary mountain.

Post-show:

When the father decides that Kashi the Mousecatcher isn't good enough for his daughter to marry, he sends his daughter to search for the greatest being in the world. The sun, the cloud, the wind and the mountain tell her they couldn't possibly be the greatest because there is another who is greater. In the end, the daughter and father agree that Kashi the Mousecatcher is the greatest being and the one that Rashi, the princess, should marry.

- Why do you think the father wants his daughter to marry the greatest being in the world?
- Do you think there is such a person? Discuss.
- How do you think the daughter might have felt about her father choosing her mate? Talk about that.
- What do you believe happened when the daughter went to Kashi the Mousecatcher, told him that he was the greatest being in the world and offered him her hand in marriage?
- Try writing a new ending for the story.



Pre-show:

This African folk tale is about a rabbit who is afraid to go into his house because "a bad animal is in there and won't come out," and a small young monkey who wants to help Rabbit with his problem. Rabbit doesn't listen to Monkey because he thinks that anyone as young as Monkey couldn't possibly have good ideas. Rabbit's house is almost ruined by some of his larger animal friends before he realizes that he has underestimated Monkey's ideas and abilities.

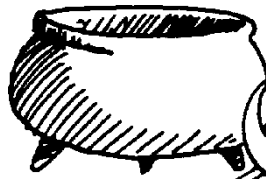
Characters to watch and listen for: Rabbit, Monkey, Ostrich, Tiger, Rhino, Caterpillar.

Dialogue to learn (audience participation): "I am the Long One. Go away or I will trample on you-u-u-u!"

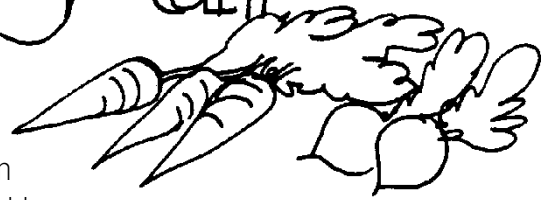
Post-show:

Each time Monkey tries to tell Rabbit how to get The Long One out of his house, Monkey is ignored or told to go away because she's too young. Finally, after unsuccessful attempts by other friends, Monkey succeeds. Rabbit realizes he misjudged Monkey and says, "Your idea was the best idea."

- Why do you believe Rabbit felt someone young couldn't have good ideas?
- How do you think Monkey felt when she was being ignored? Talk about that.
- Can you think of other reasons some people might use to ignore other people? Discuss.
- Draw a picture of what you imagined the Long One to be before you discovered that it was really Caterpillar.



Stone Soup



Pre-show:

Typical of folk tales, there are many versions of this Eastern European story entitled, "Stone Soup." In this version, Matushka, a Russian peasant, is angry because her friend, Setonka Supovitch, is late for the meal they enjoy together each day. When Matushka tells Setonka that "the cupboard is bare today," Setonka doesn't believe her and playfully contrives a way to get his meal just the same.

Items to watch and listen for: a stone, a kettle, a stirring spoon, a few onions, three carrots, a plucked chicken.

Post-show.

After Matushka tells Setonka that there is no food, Setonka agrees to share his recipe for "stone soup." He asks Matushka to gather a stone, a kettle with water, a stirring spoon, a few onions, some carrots and, finally, a chicken. At first Matushka is suspicious, but gradually she finds herself having fun in helping to make "stone soup."

- What do you think might have happened if Matushka had told Setonka that she was angry with him for coming late and, therefore, did not want to prepare the meal?
- How did you feel when Setonka said he was going to play a joke on Matushka? What did you think the joke was going to be?
- Do you think Matushka knew at some point that Setonka was playing a joke on her? If so, why do you think she didn't let on?

CLASSROOM PROJECTS FOR READING TIE-IN

- Create a book jacket for your favorite story.
- Write a new ending for one of the stories.
- Take turns reading a folk tale aloud.
- Create a cartoon strip of one incident in "Freddie Lee Fisher."
- Read a folk tale and write a short script based on the story.
- Construct a mobile using the jungle animals in "The Long One."
- Write a poem about one of the elements in "The Greatest Being."
- Ask your school or town librarian how to go about finding a book of folk tales from Africa (or other places around the world).
- If you could be any character in one of the stories in the play, who would it be? Write a magazine article about that.
- Read a book about a subject that interests you and then write a letter to a friend either recommending it or not, telling the reasons why.
- Read a story that you want to make into a movie. Make a poster describing your movie.
- Create a classroom library by having students "publish" books. Have them write and illustrate a story, bind it as a book and, when approved, have the principal stamp it as published. Students can then lend and borrow each other's work.