

A STUDY GUIDE FOR PREPARING YOUR  
STUDENTS TO SEE OGLEBAY INSTITUTE'S  
PRODUCTION OF

# **RUMPELSTILTSKIN**

BY WILLIAM OAKLEY

Produced with special arrangement with  
Pioneer Drama Service, Inc.

## **MISSION:**

CHILDREN'S THEATRE is a formal theatrical experience in which a simple, continuous story is SHOWN to children ages 5-14 by adult actors. Our goal is to provide the children with the best possible theatre experience and we promise that the play will both entertain and teach them a lesson.

## **PLOT SUMMARY:**

The children enter the room, Glady, the comic storyteller helps seat them around the set which includes a large curtain, a trunk and two stools. The children are assigned "roles" in the play. Some are sheep, cows, pigs, woodchoppers or townspeople, who respond to various cues during the play. Two children are selected to take part in the action of the play itself. And then, RUMPELSTILTSKIN begins! The simple and poor Miller is forced to request a job from the greedy, but loving King so he may care for his beautiful daughter, Annette. To please the King, the Miller tells him that Annette can spin straw into gold. This fib proves to cause many problems for Annette and her father. The little rascalion, Rumpelstiltskin, shows up on the scene and helps Annette, but for what price? From beginning to end, the children are not only entertained as an audience, but become personally involved as they play various roles. This fun version of the familiar tale about greed, magic and the power of belief are packed with comedy, action and adventure!

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS:**

<b>Glady:</b>	a comic story-teller
<b>Miller:</b>	a simple peasant
<b>Annette:</b>	his beautiful daughter
<b>Rumpelstiltskin:</b>	a rascalion
<b>King:</b>	a greedy, but loving monarch

## **RUNNING TIME:**

The play runs 45-50 minutes, depending upon audience participation.

## **TECHNICAL NEEDS:**

We will need 15' X 15" floor space and 10' height for the set and an electrical outlet near the backstage area.

## ABOUT THE CAST

**Rick Call** (*King*) is a retired businessman from Steubenville, Ohio, where he began acting with the Steubenville Players in 1975. Now a veteran of well over one hundred productions, Rick has done work at many venues, including Towngate Theatre, The Cornerstone Project, Music Hall Players, Bethany, Carlow, and West Liberty State Colleges. Some favorite roles have been in *Our Town*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Tommy* and *Educating Rita*. 2008 marks Rick's sixth season with the Towngate Theatre Children's Company. In addition to acting, Rick enjoys playing guitar and clarinet and used those instruments in some of the recordings used for last years play, *Puss in Boots*.

**Brittany Harriman** (*Rumpelstiltskin*) has appeared in many productions at the Towngate Theatre; most recently, *I Remember Mama* and *Witness for the Prosecution*. You may also find her working in the Towngate Box Office when movies are playing. Brittany remembers how much she enjoyed watching the children's plays when in Elementary School. She is very excited to bring the same joy to children now.

**Nancy Longo** (*Glady*) is very pleased to be from the beautiful Ohio River valley. She was born in Steubenville, Ohio, raised in Weirton, WV, and currently lives in Toronto, Ohio. Nancy has been doing community theatre for a very long time. It has been her privilege to create some wonderful women for the Steubenville Players, The Brooke Hills Playhouse, The Potter Players, Excalibur Productions, Towngate Theatre, and now for her second season with this illustrious group of actors in the Towngate Theatre Children's Company. Nancy portrayed the role of Princess Clarissa in last years play, *Puss in Boots*. She is a member of The Ohio Community Theatre Association and has participated in many theatre festivals across the states of Ohio and West Virginia. In her spare time, Nancy loves listening to music, singing, and hanging out with her family and friends.

**Gretchen Schneider** (*Annette*) is a recent graduate of West Liberty State College with a B.A. in Communications with a concentration in Theatre. She has many years of experience both on and off stage. Gretchen was part of the *Imaginary Factory*, a traveling Children's Theatre troupe at WLSC for her entire college career. She performed in *Aesop's Fables*, *The Brother's Grimm* and *Mother Goose*, just to mention a few. During her final semester she was given the privilege of directing *Alice in Wonderland*. Gretchen has found a true love for Children's Theatre and finds it most rewarding. Over the last month, she has been teaching an after-school program at the Laughlin Chapel in Wheeling.

**Tim Thompson** (*Miller/Director*) is the Director of Youth Theatre for Oglebay Institute. He has been acting, directing and teaching theatre since receiving his M.F.A. in acting from West Virginia University in 1985. Tim has directed *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *Charlottes's Web*, *The Secret Garden*, *The Christmas Carol* 1940's *Radio Show*, *Godspell*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Reluctant Dragon* at Towngate Theatre. This is Tim's sixth touring show which includes: *Once Upon A Wolf*, *Aesop's (Oh so slightly updated) Fables*, *Rocks in my Pockets*, *the Emperor's New Clothes* and *Puss in Boots*. He resides in Wheeling, WV with his wife Rachel and daughter Gracie.

## AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

1. Teachers should introduce the basic storyline of *Rumpelstiltskin* to familiarize students with the events and moral of the story. (which is honesty and greed)
  2. Choose TWO STUDENTS to play the King's pages. They should be fifth graders (or your oldest students) and must be comfortable in front of an audience.
  3. All of the students will be asked to make WIND SOUNDS.
  4. Kindergarteners and First graders will be asked to make the sound of SHEEP.  
**"Ba, Ba, Ba"**
  5. Second graders will be asked to make the sound of PIGS.  
**"Oink, Oink, Oink"**
  6. Third graders will be asked to make the sound of COWS.  
**"Moo, Moo, Moo"**
  7. Fourth graders will be asked to make the sound of WOODCHOPPERS.  
**"Cop, Chop, Chop...Timberrrr"**
  8. Fifth (and sixth) will be asked to make the sound of VILLAGERS.  
**"Hello"** (and answers to questions the Miller asks)
- \* THE TWO STUDENTS PLAYING THE PAGES NEED TO SHOW UP 10 MINUTES EARLY SO THEY MAY HAVE A BRIEF REHEARSAL WITH THE ACTORS.**

## VOCABULARY WORDS:

*Cue*: words or action that tells actors or audience when to perform their lines or action.

*Eavesdropping*: to listen secretly.

*Flax*: a fiber that is the source of linen.

*Flutter*: to behave in an agitated aimless manner.

*Greedy*: wanting more than one needs or deserves.

*Miller*: one that operates a mill; especially a flour mill.

*"nosey-parkers"*: phrase meaning "those who don't mind their own business."

*Pages*: in this context, messengers for the king.

*Rapscallion*: rascal (word used to describe Rumpelstiltskin).

*Shenanigans*: mischievous activity; to trick.

*Shilly-shally*: to waste time.

*Skeins*: a loosely twisted quantity of yarn or thread.

*Turrets*: a little tower often found at the corner of the castle walls.

## **POST PRODUCTION QUESTIONS:**

1. Why does the Miller tell the King that his daughter can spin straw into gold?
2. Why does the King hire the Miller and say he will make Annette his Queen if she **can** spin the straw into gold?
3. Who was your favorite character? Why?
4. Why do you think some plays have a narrator or story-teller like Glady?
5. What lessons did you learn?
6. What was the funniest part of the play?
7. Can you remember the first two things Annette gives to Rumpelstiltskin so he will help her spin the straw into gold?
8. Why do you think Rumpelstiltskin asks Annette for her first born child?
9. How does Annette discover Rumpelstiltskin's name?

## **POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Have students brainstorm about times in their lives when someone told a lie in order to get something they wanted (like the miller). Discuss how this can cause many problems.
2. Think of different ways people are greedy. Maybe use current events to illustrate this.
3. Create your own Rumpelstiltskin costume. Use a large piece of construction paper and roll it into a cone to make the hat. What color would you like it to be? What color best describes him? Next, use some cotton to make his beard. Use a piece of paper and some yarn to make the base of it and then glue the cotton to the paper to make the hair. You could even make a ragged scarf from an old tee-shirt by cutting it several inches below the collar. Draw pictures of all the different looks that your class creates.
4. Make up your own version of *Rumpelstiltskin*. Use chairs and tables or even your chalkboard to create the set. Make a crown for the king out of yellow or gold paper. Use a piece of any material you may have handy for the miller's apron. Shred some paper for the straw and use Christmas tinsel for the "gold." Maybe have people become the spinning wheel. Use your imagination and have fun!