



# WALNUT STREET THEATRE

Touring Outreach Company

## THE BRAVE LITTLE TAILOR

by Brian Guehring  
Study Guide

### PLAY SYNOPSIS

Everyday, the small, meek tailor in the village is bullied by his boss, smothered by his mother, and harassed by customers. This young tailor, however, dreams of fighting dragons and saving princesses and during one vivid fantasy, he manages to kill seven flies in one blow. Rumors buzz around the village until the king hears of a tailor who can kill seven giants in one blow. The tailor is brought before the cowardly king and his beautiful daughter. This meek tailor then must find his own courage (with the help of the princess) and battle a rampaging unicorn, two troublesome giants, and a fierce dragon.

### ABOUT GRIMMS' FAIRY TALES

Brothers Jacob Ludwig Karl Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Karl Grimm (1786-1859) are best known for collecting and publishing an anthology of folklore known as *Grimms' Fairy Tales*, which includes more than 200 stories including Snow White, Rapunzel, and Cinderella. *The Brave Little Tailor* is an adaptation of the Grimms' fairy tale "The Valiant Little Tailor."

### PRE-SHOW ACTIVITY

Define the word "bravery" with your students. What are the characteristics of "bravery?" What are some examples of "bravery?"

Give your students blank construction paper, scissors, glue sticks, and a variety of old magazines. Ask them to find pictures that represent "bravery" and make a bravery collage. Have each student share his or her bravery collage with the class and explain how it represents bravery. Younger students could draw a picture instead of making a collage.

### QUESTIONS FOR BEFORE THE SHOW

- \* *What do you expect from a show called *The Brave Little Tailor*?*
- \* *What does the word "adaptation" mean?*
- \* *Who were the Brothers Grimm?*
- \* *Have you ever been given a challenge that you thought would be impossible? How did you handle that challenge?*
- \* *Have you ever been told that you are too small to do something? How did that make you feel?*



### QUESTIONS FOR AFTER THE SHOW

- \* *How did the tailor's small size affect his ability to battle each of the creatures?*
- \* *Why do you think people bullied the tailor in the beginning of the play?*
- \* *Why do you think it was against the law to kill a unicorn?*
- \* *Was the king a good leader or a bad leader? Why?*



## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

# THE MORAL OF THE STORY...

### SELF ESTEEM CHAIN

In *The Brave Little Tailor*, the Little Tailor has a lot of skills that people fail to recognize, but in the end, those skills end up being very valuable. It is probably the case that some, if not most, of your students have hidden skills and talents that they don't often brag about or share with others.

Give each student five strips of paper approximately two inches wide by ten inches long. Have each student write one special skill or talent they might have on each of their strips. Monitor the students and be sure to provide encouragement especially when students struggle to come up with five skills. Once all students have completed their strips, have them use the strips to make a mini paper chain. As the students finish their mini chains, use extra strips of paper to link the chains together to make one large class chain. When it's finished, find a place in the room to display the chain, which is meant to remind them all that they are each good at something and that when they join together they make a unique and extremely talented group.

### RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES

The Little Tailor is given a series of increasingly difficult challenges. At first he is not sure that he'll be able to complete his task, but once he starts to believe in himself he finds a solution. If you used the pre-show discussion questions, refer back to your class discussion about a time when your students have faced overwhelming challenges. After seeing how the Little Tailor met his challenges in an unconventional way, reopen the discussion. Ask your students to think about a time when they were unhappy with the outcome of a conflict. Have them brainstorm creative alternative solutions, much like the Little Tailor did.

Have the students draw a comic strip depicting the situation and its new outcome. Younger students can simply draw a series of illustrations to tell their story, and older students could include dialogue in their comic strips.



### MOCK TRIAL

The king fed the giant to keep him from attacking the people. As a result, the people had very little food left for themselves. Have your students perform a mock trial with the king as the defendant. Pretend that he has been charged with treason. For the purposes of this activity, give your students the following definition:

“treason”: hurting your own country by helping your country's enemy.

Assign a group of students to be the prosecutors and another group of students to be defense attorneys. The prosecution will have to prove that the king committed treason by providing the enemy with food, and the defense will have to prove that the king was acting with his peoples' best interests in mind by peacefully negotiating with the giant. Assign students to play the king and any witnesses needed: the Little Tailor, the princess, the giant, townspeople, etc. Assign any remaining students to participate as a jury.

### HURTFUL WORDS

Early in the play, the tailor is the victim of a lot of verbal abuse. The mean words of the Master Tailor, the Baker's Wife, and the Jam Seller all serve to lower the Little Tailor's self esteem. Open a dialogue with your students about the effects of insults on people's confidence.

Using painted newsprint or large blue construction paper, trace and cut out a large genderless human figure. Hang the figure, named “Bluey,” in front of the class. One by one, have the students come forward and call out some mean words they have said or heard and rip off a piece of the figure as they say it. Have the students keep their pieces until everyone has gone. Then have the students bring their pieces back to the front of the room, and—using tape—have the students try to put “Bluey” back together. The moral of the activity is that mean words can tear someone apart, and it's very difficult to put people back together after they've lost confidence in themselves.



# CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

## TAILOR MADE VESTS (MATH & ART)

*The Brave Little Tailor* gives you a great opportunity to work on measurement skills with your students. You'll need tape measures, butcher paper (about 3' per student), scissors, crayons, markers, and colored pencils. Tell the students that they are going to make their own vests but that they have to measure very carefully if they are going to fit. Have them pair up, and give each student a rectangular piece of butcher paper. Have them fold the paper in half once so that the fold is horizontal. Then have them fold the paper in half again the other way. Open the second fold back up. Remember to demonstrate everything for your students.

Now have your students measure their partner's torso width from the middle of their neck to the end of their shoulder. Using that measurement, measure out from the fold line that distance. Do the same thing on the other side of the fold line. Have the students cut down both of those lines. Next, have the students measure from the middle of their neck to the edge of their neck. The students should measure that distance from their middle line, and make a mark. Do the same on the other side of the line. Next, have the students cut a semi-circle from the mark that they just made to the mark on the other side of the line. The students will then cut along the center fold, but only cut the top sheet of paper. As you circulate and seal up the sides of the vests with staples, give the students a chance to decorate their vests. Have the students try them on to see if they fit. If some of them don't fit, have the students think of reasons why that might have happened. Discuss the importance of accuracy in measurement.

## JAM JINGLES! (MUSIC/ART/LANG. ARTS)

The Little Tailor is reluctant to buy jam from the pushy Jam Seller until she bullies him into buying it. Have your class break into groups and brainstorm ways for the Jam Seller to market her jam without resorting to extortion. Give the students the options to design a poster, write a TV or radio commercial, or write a short song or jingle that the Jam Seller could use to advertise her jam. Each poster, commercial, or song should be creative and answer the following questions:

- What types of jam are for sale?
- How much does the jam cost?
- Where can someone buy the jam?



## ADAPT YOUR OWN FAIRY TALE (LANG. ARTS)

Select another one of the Grimms' fairy tales to read to your class. On the board, make a list of characters from the story. As a class, write a description of the setting on the board. Using the first page or so of the story as a guide, write some sample dialogue for the characters on the board. Now that you've modeled this for the class, have them break into groups to adapt the rest story into a play. After your students have had a chance to finish their scripts, you can either arrange for each play to have a staged reading in front of the class or perhaps something more involved like a class puppet show festival or a full fledged production.

After you've shared the plays, reflect with your class on the challenges of creating live theatre. How could a director solve the problem of putting a giant dragon on stage? How could a 10 year old actor convince the audience that he was actually a 300 year old wizard? How could a set designer build a huge castle on a stage no bigger than a quarter of your classroom?

## CRYPTOZOLOGY (SCIENCE/LANG. ARTS)

The Brave Little Tailor includes many fantastical creatures such as unicorns, giants, and dragons. Many students may not know that there is a branch of science dedicated to the study of creatures like these whose existence is disputed or presumed fictitious by most people. This field of study—cryptozoology—will certainly capture your students' attention and engage their imagination. Have your students become cryptozoologists for the day and research one of the following cryptids. Have your students pick one of the creatures from the list below and write a scene where the Little Tailor uses his brain and not his brawn to defeat his new adversary. Younger students could draw a picture that depicts the Little Tailor's battle.

- gnomes
- Bigfoot
- jackalopes
- Loch Ness Monster
- Phoenix
- yeti
- mermaids
- The Jersey Devil
- La Chupacabra





# WALNUT STREET THEATRE

Walnut Street Theatre has the unique distinction of being the oldest, continuously operating theatre in the English-speaking world, having served Philadelphia audiences for 200 years! It is also the Official State Theatre of Pennsylvania, and a National Historic Landmark.

Today, under the direction of Producing Artistic Director Bernard Havard, Walnut Street Theatre is in its 25th season as a self-producing, non-profit theatre. Walnut Street Theatre continues to entertain and enlighten diverse audiences with high quality theatrical programming. With more than 56,000 subscribers, the Walnut is also the most subscribed theatre company in the world!

The Walnut Street Theatre is celebrating 23 years of bringing high-quality professional theatre to schools across the Delaware Valley. Our multi-cultural Touring Outreach Company introduces students to the world of theatre through age-appropriate, curriculum-based pieces, that are socially relevant, entertaining, and exciting. Last season, 109,867 children and adults were impacted by the Walnut's Education Programs.

### **Touring Actors**

Each season, Walnut Street Theatre holds a nation-wide search to recruit accomplished young professionals for Dorothy Haas Acting Apprenticeships. These actors form our Touring Outreach Company. Nearly 350 candidates are considered each year for these four positions.

### **About the Playwright**

*Brian Guehring* is the Education Director and playwright-in-residence for the Omaha Theater Company, the nation's third largest professional theater for young people. Brian earned his BA in theater from Duke University and his MFA in children's theater and creative drama from University of Texas at Austin. Brian has been teaching theater, acting, creative drama, improvisation, and playwriting for 12 years. As the playwright-in-residence for the Omaha Theater Company for Young People, Brian has adapted the world premiere scripts of *Julie of the Wolves*, *Brave Little Tailor*, *Holiday Time Around the World*, *Sacagawea: Discovering History*, and *Where the Red Fern Grows* which won the 2002 AATE Unpublished Play Project.

***This production was directed by Heather Krause.***

### **Walnut Street Theatre Education Department Staff**

- Director of Education ..... *Susan Nicodemus Quinn*
- Outreach Coordinator ..... *Caroline Leipf*
- Theatre School Coordinator ..... *José Avilés*
- Residency Coordinator ..... *Adam Nicolai*
- Education Apprentice ..... *Chris Taylor*
- Dorothy Haas Acting Apprentices
- ..... *Jenna Angeloni*
- ..... *Jesimiel R. Jenkins*
- ..... *Tim Vetere*
- ..... *Sarah Yoo*

### **Grimms' Fairy Tales Web Resources**

<http://www.grimmfairytales.com>  
(*More stories, games, and activities.*)

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/grimm>  
(*An interactive anthology of Grimms' Fairy Tales.*)

### **Self Esteem & Confidence Web Resources**

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/parenting/your\\_kids/primary\\_confidence.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/parenting/your_kids/primary_confidence.shtml)  
(*A site for parents and teachers with helpful tips on improving a child's self confidence.*)

[http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/self\\_esteem.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/self_esteem.html)  
(*More information and activities.*)

**The Walnut Street Theatre Educational Programs gratefully acknowledge support from the following:**

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- The Rosenlund Family Foundation \* Samuel S. Fels Fund \* Target*
- United Way of :Bucks County, Burlington County, Delaware, Capital Region, North Penn, Southeastern PA, and Tri-State*

# RIBBON OF BRAVERY!

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

THINK ABOUT SOMEONE YOU KNOW WHO IS BRAVE. WRITE THAT PERSON'S NAME IN THE CIRCLE AT THE TOP OF THE RIBBON. FROM THE LIST BELOW, PICK TWO WORDS THAT DESCRIBE THAT PERSON. COPY EACH WORD ONTO THE STRIPS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE RIBBON. COLOR YOUR RIBBON, CUT IT OUT, AND GIVE IT TO SOMEONE BRAVE!

**HONEST**  
**STRONG**  
**FEARLESS**  
**SMART**  
**NICE**  
**FAIR**  
**KIND**  
**BOLD**



**EXTENSION:** HAVE A BRAVERY AWARDS CEREMONY WHERE STUDENTS CAN MAKE A SHORT SPEECH ABOUT THE PERSON THEY CHOSE TO RECEIVE THEIR RIBBON OF BRAVERY.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

# HELP THE BRAVE LITTLE TAILOR FIND THE WORDS BELOW!



JESTER



TAILOR



SWORD



PRINCESS



GIANT



BAKER



KING



DRAGON



UNICORN



JAM



S	S	N	J	J	C	U	R	J	E	S	T	E	R	M
W	T	C	R	E	T	S	N	E	N	R	R	R	O	T
O	G	S	E	A	S	N	W	I	B	B	A	K	O	R
R	B	A	K	E	B	T	I	O	C	K	U	T	A	R
A	T	T	A	K	G	R	O	W	R	O	U	I	K	D
A	T	R	T	A	I	L	O	R	A	D	R	B	G	N
N	K	I	N	G	A	N	I	G	P	J	P	N	S	K
B	G	I	T	G	R	I	E	A	O	A	E	N	S	D
R	P	I	B	N	I	T	G	K	N	M	O	S	W	N
A	R	N	A	P	R	I	N	C	E	S	S	C	S	S
U	I	S	K	N	T	O	O	C	R	A	P	R	A	R
E	N	N	E	N	T	A	R	D	R	A	G	O	N	O
R	C	I	R	E	R	D	I	D	T	N	E	O	T	N
I	O	N	C	E	R	G	I	L	E	J	E	S	T	U
E	O	M	S	K	K	E	R	S	O	R	I	A	I	L