

The Willow Girl



Illustrated with original and traditional fiddle music, this show features a huge Willow Tree pup-

About the Show

When a young Chinese girl immigrates to the American frontier, she finds herself facing discrimination in a swirl of other immigrants and cultures. But she possesses special gifts. She has been taught the healing power of plants and has a secret friend...the mysterious spirit who inhabits a beautiful Willow Tree!

When the Willow Girl meets two Irish brothers, one generous, the other selfish and unkind, they all discover that the magic of The Willow works two ways. This rod puppet show is a wonderful blend of humor, mystery, drama and magical effects.



Performing Arts: Meeting Arts & Academic Standards

The activities in this study guide address specific standards to assist classroom teachers in integrating the performance to meet Arts and Academic Standards. The standards are sequential, moving from *Readiness (K)*, to *Foundations (1-3)*, through *Essentials (4-8)*.



Theatre Etiquette

Please review appropriate theatre behavior with your students prior to the show.

YOU, the audience are the most important part of any live theatre event. Performers depend on you to:

- ☺ Remain seated
- ☺ Listen
- ☺ Refrain from talking during the performance
- ☺ Laugh when something in the show is funny
- ☺ Clap to show appreciation

Please turn off cell phones, pagers, and other devices. Cameras and other recording devices are prohibited.

About the Catskill Puppet Theater

Since 1979, John Potocnik and Carol Mandigo, co-founders of the Catskill Puppet Theater, have been touring internationally, enchanting your and old with their delightful musical productions. Combining backgrounds in art, music, drama and American folk culture, they head one of the nation's finest touring companies, receiving accolades from such premiere venues as the Calgary, Winneg and Ottawa International Children's Festivals, New York's Symphony Space, Chataugua Institution, First Night Boston and New York, New Jersey Center for the Performing Arts and hundreds more theaters, schools, libraries, fairs and festivals. The *Catskill Puppet People* bring quality children's theater to over 100,000 people each year.



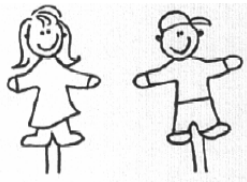
The Catskill Puppet Theater takes great pride in carrying on in the living tradition of the old traveling puppet troupes.

Points to Discuss Before the Performance

1. Discuss ways in which two people can be different. Think of examples from your school and neighborhood. What might these people disagree on? Make a list.
2. Next, think of ways two people can be alike in spite of their differences. What might they agree on? Make a list.
3. Write or draw an original story about how these two people who are so different could become friends. (W-R1, W-F3, W-E2)

Activity: A Puppet Show!

Draw the characters in the story you wrote. Cut out the characters. Attach each figure to a straw, pencil, or ruler to make a rod puppet. Use them to act out the story for the class. (1AT-R1, 1AT-F3, 1AT-E1)



Remember Your Resources

MPS Creative Arts Resource Center

Suggested Materials Available for Checkout:

Process Kits:

Creative Writing
Hand Puppet Skills
Paper Puppets
Shadow Puppets
Soft Puppets



We have many other resources!

CALL TO RESERVE YOUR ITEMS TODAY!

(480) 472-0023

Other Recommended Reading

Shannon: Lost and Found, San Francisco, 1880
by Kathleen V. Kudlinski (6-12)

Maggie's Door by Patricia Reilly Giff (9-12)

Coolies by Yin (5 and up)

Points to Discuss After the Performance

The Chinese people suffered discrimination because of their skin color and other physical characteristics, such as the shape of their eyes. They also had habits that seemed “foreign.”

Irish immigrants faced discrimination too, perhaps a bit less than the Chinese because they looked more like other Americans and came from a similar culture. Many Irish people immigrated to find work, especially during the Great Potato Famine, when many people in Ireland were starving.

The Irish worked together with the Chinese in mines and also in building the transcontinental railroads. In the Willow Girl you will hear lots of Irish music. Favorite instruments were the fiddle and a tin penny whistle.

In the U.S., unfortunately, we are very familiar with discrimination against people based on their physical appearance. Can you think of examples of discrimination due to habits or behaviors that seem “foreign” or unfamiliar?

Imagine taking a long scary voyage to another country. When you arrive, you find that you don't understand the language or the customs. How would you feel if no matter how nice you tried to be, nobody seemed to like you?

Do you know any people who seem different from yourself? How could you help them feel more comfortable?

(Use this discussion for “Character

Activity: Sow & Grow

In *The Willow Girl*, Dauchin's seed grows into a magical willow tree. Seeds are pretty magical themselves.

Grow a seed with your classmates! Divide into teams—Planters, Waterers, Sunlighters. Decide how the teams can cooperate so that the seed will sprout and grow. Every week, discuss visible changes and brainstorm about what might be happening under the soil. Describe observations with pictographs, pictures, models and words. (1SC-R6)

