

## 2011-2012 Season Play Guide



**Performances on  
LCT's Main Stage  
December 12-15  
10:00 & 11:45 AM**



**ON TOUR  
TO SCHOOLS  
September 6 -  
December 9, 2011**



### OUR MISSION TO SCHOOLS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

The mission of Lexington Children's Theatre Education Department is to provide students of all ages with the means to actively explore the beauty, diversity, complexity and challenges of the world around them through the dramatic process. We strive for young people to develop their own creative voice, their imagination and their understanding of drama and its role in society.

### FREE TEACHER PREVIEWS

Want to be more fully prepared to share the theatrical experience with your students? LCT offers teachers the opportunity to preview many of our Main Stage productions.

Each Preview lasts about two hours and includes a free performance of the play. Don't miss this chance to bring some drama into your classroom!

Call Jeremy (859-254-4546 x226)  
to reserve your spot today!

Dear Educator,

Lexington Children's Theatre is proud to be producing our 73rd season of plays for young people and their families. As an organization that values the arts and education, we have created this resource for teachers called the Play Guide.

Our Play Guides are designed to be a valuable tool for teachers in two ways: helping you prepare your students for the enriching performance given by LCT, as well as serving as an educational tool for extending the production experience back into your classroom.

We designed each activity to assist in achieving the Kentucky Core Content (KCC) and to integrate the arts with your core curricular subjects.

Teachers are important voices as LCT. We rely heavily on your input. If you have comments or suggestions about our Play Guides, show selections or any of our programming your thoughts are greatly appreciated. Please look for the Teacher Response form that you will receive following a performance.

We are thrilled that you rely on LCT to provide your students a quality theatrical experience and we hope this resource aids you in extending our production into your classroom.

**LCT's Education Department**

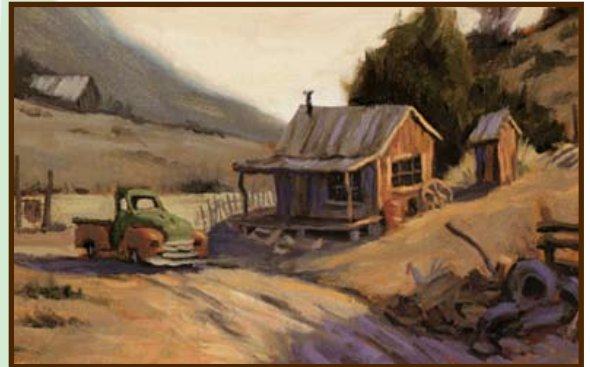
# Play Synopsis

Old Jake is a grumpy and superstitious pumpkin farmer who sits on the porch of his old shack whittling little wooden figurines with his only companion Shoestring, his hound dog. Now, Stillwaters Farm had been plagued for years and no matter how hard he worked it produced only rocks. Then one morning Old Jake and Shoestring ride the old pickup truck to E.B. Sweeney's General Store for some supplies, but on their way they find a trunk in the road.

Old Jake posts a sign about the trunk, but no one comes to claim it, and the trunk soon becomes Shoestring's favorite backrest. After winter passed, Jake decides it has been long enough and decides it's safe to look inside the trunk, and he finds a bunch of cotton calico skirts.

When Old Jake's home starts flooding he throws those skirts into the air and they and the rain suddenly stop. The skirts become muddy and torn, just like Old Jake. But he decides to use the skirts to help his farm look a little brighter. Jake finds that he is happier too, he doesn't even grumble when the Good Samaritan ladies drop by. After sewing and patching everything, Old Jake has one skirt left and decides to keep it as a symbol of his good luck.

Upon seeing Old Jake's note at the general store Otis Brown and his daughter Sarah arrive on the farm. Now, you see, those skirts belonged to Mrs. Brown, Sarah's mother, who recently passed away. Old Jake explains that he used the skirts, but has one left and gives it to Sarah. He then decides to give her something else. Jake lets Sarah choose from any of his woodcarvings and she picks a doll wearing a calico skirt. That year Old Jake had a great harvest and it was remembered as "The Year of the Skirts". No longer a lonely closed off and grumpy farmer, Old Jake has been changed by the simple cotton calico skirts!



## Your Role in Our Play



You may wish to have a discussion with your class about your upcoming LCT experience and their role as audience members. Remind your students that theatre can only exist with an audience. Your students' energy and response directly affects the actors onstage. The quality of the performance depends as much on the audience as it does on each of the theatre professionals behind the scenes and onstage.

Young audiences should know that watching live theatre is not like watching more familiar forms of entertainment: they cannot pause or rewind us like a videotape, there are no commercials for bathroom breaks, nor can they turn up the volume to hear us if someone else is talking. Your students are encouraged to listen and watch the play intently, so that they may laugh and cheer for their favorite characters when it is appropriate.

At the end of the play, applause is an opportunity for your students to thank the actors, while the actors are thanking you for the role they played as an audience.

# Prepare for the Play

## SINGING FOLK SONGS

One of the wonderful elements in *Old Jake's Skirts* is the inclusion of many folk songs sung by the actors throughout the play. To enter into Old Jake's world, teach your class these songs and sing them together. Then sing the songs in a round. To sing a round, split the class into two groups. Then have one group start while second group waits to sing until after the first phrase. If your feeling really confident you can continue to split into three groups!

### YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE

You are my sunshine  
My only sunshine.  
You make me happy  
When skies are grey.  
You'll never know, dear,  
How much I love you.  
Please don't take my sunshine away

### ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT

Row, row, row your boat  
Gently Down the stream.  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,  
Life is but a dream.



### OH MY DARLING

Oh my darling, oh my darling,  
Oh my darling, Clementine!  
Thou art lost and gone forever  
Dreadful sorry, Clementine



KCCs SS-E-2.1.2, AH-EP-1.1.1

## TRANSFORMATIONS

Old Jake uses his imagination to fix his farm using the skirts from the trunk. Here is an activity that will have your students stretching their imagination.

Bring in a skirt or a large piece of fabric. Stand in front of the class and use the skirt or fabric as something that it is not, without using words. For example a jump rope, a mirror, a hat, water, or an animal.



See if your students can guess what the fabric has become. After a few examples, allow a student to use and transform the fabric and continue until all have had a turn. Prompt the students to not repeat ideas, and be ready with some ideas for those that need help. The goal of this activity is for students to be clear in their choices so others can quickly recognize what the object has become.

KCCs AH-E-1.3.3, PL-E-2.1.3

# PUPPETRY

In the play *Old Jake's Skirts* there are three forms of puppetry. Shoestring is a hand puppet, Old Jake's wittings are also manipulated as found object puppets, and the crows and rabbits are rod puppets.

For this activity we will use the costume renderings to create rod puppets of Sarah, Shoestring and Old Jake. Once you have created your puppets work with your friends to bring the play to life your classroom.

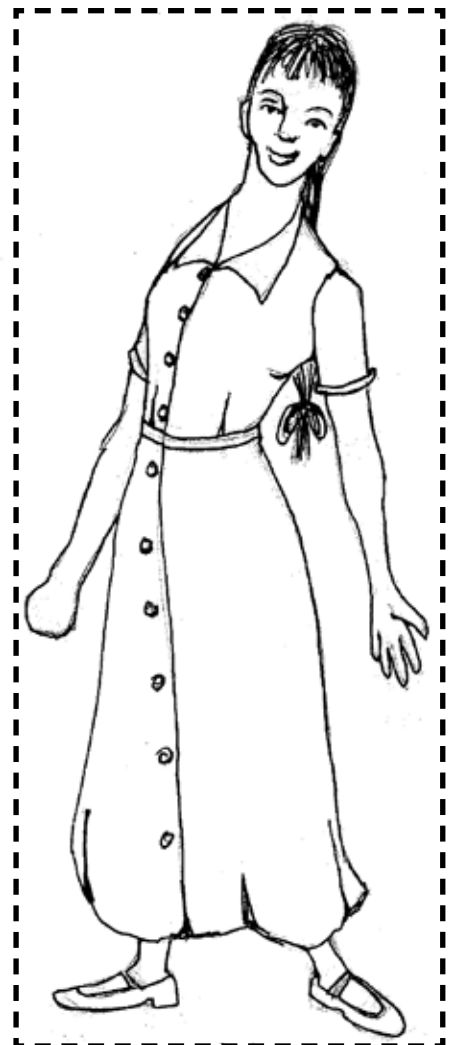
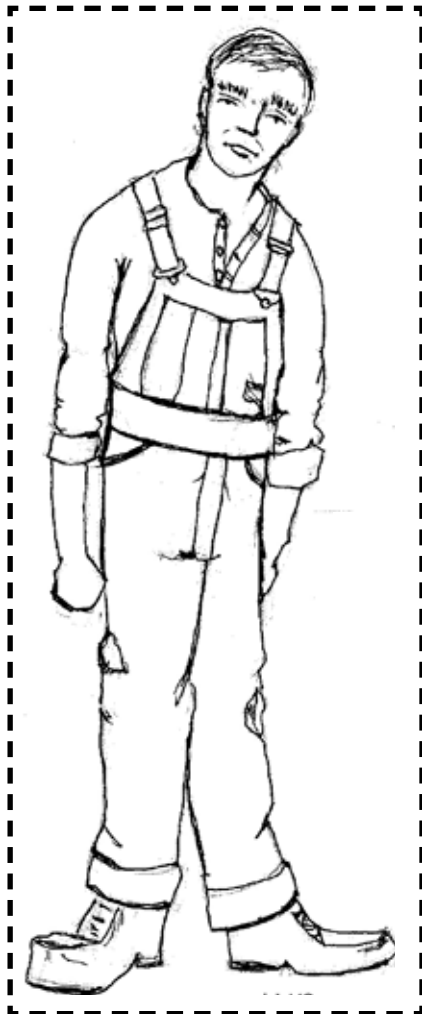
**Supplies needed:** crayons, scissors, popsicle sticks, tape.

**Step One:** Color the images below.

**Step Two:** Cut out the images.

**Step Three:** Using the tape, attach the images to one end of a popsicle stick

**Step Four:** Now act out your favorite moment from the play. Or use the plot structure you created in the sequencing activity to tell the whole story.



Extension:

You can also draw, color and create your own images to make more puppets and add to the story!

# Shopping for the Basics

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

Time for your weekly shopping trip to the E.B. Sweeney's general store, where you will pick up your basic supplies for the week! You have **15 dollars** to spend, make a list so that you don't forget to get anything and to be sure that you don't over spend.



Shopping List:

Amount:

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TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

# Extend the Experience

## PUT IT IN ORDER!

In small groups ask the class to put the following moments in the story in the correct order. Next have them draw a plot structure and place the moments on the plot structure.

Old Jake decides to use the skirts to help around the house.

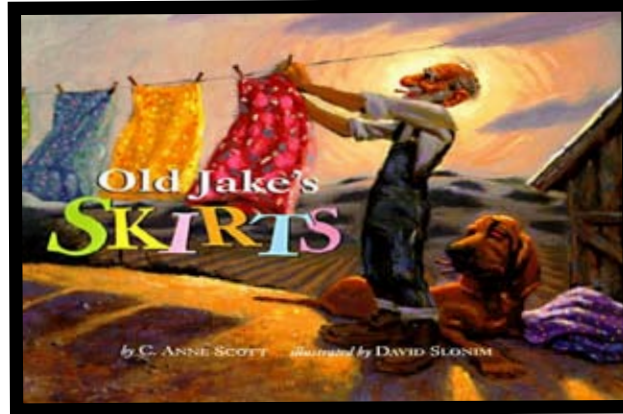
The pumpkins wash away.

Rabbits attack the pumpkin patch.

Old Jake finds a trunk in the road.

The church ladies pay a visit to Old Jake.

It begins to rain.



Sarah and her father come to get the trunk of skirts.

Old Jake goes to Sweeney's store with Shoestring.

Old Jake opens the trunk and discovers it is full of Cotton Calico Skirts.

Extension :

Then have the students use the plot structure to re-tell the story to see how well they remember the what happened.

KCCs RD-E-4.0.8, AH-04-4.3.2

## “The Skirts ‘ll take care of that”

Before the play you might have used a skirt or piece of fabric to be many different objects or things in the pre-show activity *Transformations*. Then during the show, you saw Old Jake turn the skirts he found into many different useful items. What if you were to find a trunk of “useless” skirts? As a class, brainstorm all of the things you could do to fix up your classroom or school?



KCCs PL-E-1.1.3, SS-E-2.4.2

# Suggested Reading

## ***Freedom Summer*** by Deborah Wiles

Set in Mississippi during the summer of 1964, Wiles's affecting debut children's book about two boys, one white and the other African-American underscores the bittersweet aftermath of the passage of the Civil Rights Act.

## ***The Cow Who Wouldn't Come Down*** by Paul Brett Johnson

Somebody forgot to tell Miss Rosemary's cow, Gertrude, that cows can't fly. So she does. However, Miss Rosemary cannot milk a flying cow. She needs Gertrude to come down.

## ***Tomás and the Library Lady*** by Pat Mora and Raul Colon

Tomas Rivera grew up in a migrant family, but when he meets a librarian in Iowa, she introduces him to stories about dinosaurs, horses, and the many fantastic things held within the covers of a book.

## ***The Memory String*** by Eve Bunting

Within hearing of her new stepmother, Laura revisits the button on her memory string. Each button holds a special memory of a special person, but when the cat breaks the string Laura must learn to accept the love of her stepmother.



# LCT Teaches in your School!

Let LCT's professional artists bring their extensive experience into your classroom. An LCT residency program is designed to offer young people the opportunity to learn in a dynamic, fun and challenging way. LCT tailors a residency to the needs of your students, curriculum and budget. We offer residencies that range from a one time visit to a month long intensive program.

- Performance Workshops - Two week intensive unit culminating in a performance. LCT provides all scripts, costumes, props and scenery.
- Kentucky Core Content - Elements of Drama - This residency is a one time visit to assist students in preparation for the KCC testing.
- Spotlight on Reading - Students will explore popular literature through drama, creative writing, art and movement.
- Science and Art - Students can explore a variety of scientific concepts using drama. Experience the wonders of nature, animals, bugs, weather, plants, recycling, or the rain forest through the use of role-play, movement and pantomime.

**Call 254-4546 x233 or x226 TODAY!**

