

# PLAY GUIDE



## Jack and the Wonder Beans

Adapted by Larry Snipes. From the book by James Still.

Presented on the LCT Main Stage: December 10-14, 2018



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Major Contributors:



# Dear Educator -

Lexington Children's Theatre is proud to be producing our 80<sup>th</sup> season of plays for young people and their families. As an organization that values the arts and education, we have created this Play Guide for teachers to utilize in conjunction with seeing a play at LCT.

Our Play Guides are designed to be a valuable tool in two ways: helping you prepare your students for the enriching performance given by LCT's performers, 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 Academic Standards (KAS), including the National Core Arts Standards for Theatre. Teachers have important voices at LCT, and 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 email Jeremy Kisling, our Associate Artistic Director in Charge of Education, at [jkisling@lctonstage.org](mailto:jkisling@lctonstage.org).

Please use the Teacher Response form following a performance. We are thrilled that you rely on LCT to provide your students a quality theatrical experience, and we hope this resource helps you in your classroom.

**LCT's Education Department**

## The mission of our education programming



The mission of Lexington Children's Theatre's 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.

## Your role in the 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 on stage.

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 DVD, 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 you played as an audience.



# Meet the Actors - Jack and the Wonder Beans



Emily Asbury

Emily is excited to return for her fourth show at Lexington Children's Theatre, after performing in *Diary of a Worm, a Spider, and a Fly*, *Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook*, and *Elephant and Piggie's "We are in a Play!"* Most recently she spent her fourth summer as Queen Elizabeth I in the nation's longest-running symphonic outdoor drama, *The Lost Colony*. Other favorite credits include *A Christmas Carol* (Ghost Past) at West Virginia Public Theatre, *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* (Mom) with Two Beans Productions, and three national tours with Chamber Theatre Productions. Emily is a certified Advanced Actor/Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors and a proud graduate of Otterbein University.



Thomas Costello

Thomas is excited to make his debut with Lexington Children's Theatre this fall. He recently graduated with a BFA in Musical Theatre from The South Carolina School of the Arts at Anderson University. Some of his performance highlights include: *Romeo and Juliet* (Romeo), *Othello* (Montano), *Big Fish* (Karl), and *Me and My Girl* (Lord Battersby). Thomas is thrilled for the opportunity to share his passion and love for theatre with young audiences, and hopes to inspire hearts and minds through the power of the stage.



Jon DeVries

Jon is proud to join Lexington Children's Theatre as an Associate Artist this fall performing in their productions of *Jack and the Wonder Beans* and *Amelia Earhart*. Jon's most recent credits include productions of *Robin Hood*, *Deck the Halls*, and *The Boy Who Liked Pulling Hair* in Florida Studio Theatre's Children's Theatre Series. He has also appeared on stage in the Glimmerglass Festival's *Oklahoma!* and *La boheme*, as well as productions at the Howmet Playhouse, Actors' Theatre Grand Rapids, Calvin Theatre Company, and more. He holds a BA in Theatre and Business from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



Mark Tucker

Mark is thrilled to be returning to Lexington Children's Theatre for his fourth seasonal tour. Audiences may remember him as Jim in *The Red Badge of Courage*, a menagerie of creatures in *Cows Don't Fly and other known facts*, the duckling in *The Ugly Duckling*, and Ichabod Crane in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. Mark earned his BFA in Acting from Emory & Henry College. Most recently, Mark spent his summer in the outdoor drama *Unto These Hills*, in Cherokee, NC. When not performing, Mark enjoys coaching and teaching students Shakespeare. Mark would like to thank all the staff and crew of LCT for keeping the imagination alive for people of all ages.



# What to know - before the show!

## Play Synopsis

Way back yonder near Wolfpen Creek or 'round about, a young man named Jack lived with his Mam. The two didn't have much - they owned a cow and lived on garden sass and crumble-in - but they got by. Now, one spring the cow went dry as a hat, and Jack, who loved the cow, had no choice but to go sell it for bread money. As Jack traveled throughout Wolfpen Creek, he snagged some offers but none were quite worth the trade. Then, a gypsy offered him three Wonder Beans for the cow. The gypsy promised the beans would feed Jack and his Mam their lives "tee-total", so Jack made the trade. When Jack returned home, his Mam was madder than a hornets' nest. She tossed the beans out of the window and sent Jack to bed.

The next morning there was a beanstalk growing up, up, up to the sky. Jack's curiosity got the best of him, and he climbed right up to check it out. He wandered through tall flowers and brisk winds until he approached a huge castle where a High Tall Giant Woman asked him in to eat. She wanted to fatten Jack up and cook him in a stew. He was so small she didn't want to share him with her husband, so she hid Jack. When the High Tall Giant fell asleep counting his gold coins, Jack leapt from the oven, grabbed the gold and high tailed it for home.

His Mam was pleased as punch at his return. Life on Wolfpen Creek was once again quiet, but Jack was curious about the land above the beanstalk. He took his foot in his hand and headed back up. The High Tall Giant Woman greeted Jack warmly and she started to get her stew pot ready. This time the High Tall Giant fell asleep counting his hen's golden eggs. When the Giant Woman dipped her head in the kettle to polish it, Jack leapt from the oven, grabbed the hen, and headed for the beanstalk.

The Giant dashed after Jack and his stolen hen. When the Giant almost caught him, Jack begged the wind to blow the Giant away and then scrambled down the beanstalk. When Jack reached the ground, he grabbed his double-bladed axe that could cut comin' and goin'. He chopped down the beanstalk - and that's the end of the beanstalk, the Giant, and our play.



# What to know - before the show!

## Jack vs. Jack

Read the traditional tale to your students. You may use Steven Kellogg, Lorinda Bryan Cauley, or John Howe's versions of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Then read James Still's *Jack and the Wonder Beans*. There are a few differences between the two stories. After your students have heard both versions of the story, discuss the differences between them. For example:

**Traditional Version:** Jack steals a harp as a third item

**James Still Version:** Jack steals only golden coins and a hen.

Allow the students to use their dramatic abilities by creating "frozen images," or tableaux. This exercise requires the students to use their bodies to recreate a moment from the story. A frozen image is created by having the students illustrate a moment by stepping into a picture of what is happening without moving or talking. Ask the students to create two or more tableaux that would illustrate the differences between *Jack and the Beanstalk* and James Still's *Jack and the Wonder Beans*.

TH: Cn 11.2-1, TH: Cn 11.2.3, Reading:2.1, Reading:2.2

## The Tales

LCT's *Jack and the Wonder Beans* is an audience participation play. Participation is encouraged in two forms - both whole audience participation and with individual participation as students join us on stage as Jack's cow or the Giant's chicken. To help prepare for audience participation, read *Jack and the Wonder Beans* by James Still to your class as a narrative pantomime.

A narrative pantomime consists of one voice (you) reading the story aloud and your students acting out the story. Allow time for the students to portray the action, such as Jack traveling with the cow climbing up the beanstalk.



TH: Pr4.1.1.

## Folk Tunes

*Jack and the Wonder Beans* uses Appalachian folk singing as part of the audience participation to help the play progress. Appalachian folk singing is based on Anglo-Celtic folk ballads, but it evolved once the banjo and the African influence of call and response were introduced during the Civil War.

To prepare your students for the call and response that is used in *Jack and the Wonder Beans*, choose a traditional American folk song (preferably Appalachian folk, such as "Wildwood Flower," "Black is the Color of My True Love's Hair," or "Wayfaring Stranger") to sing and have your students repeat after you, line by line. Divide your class into groups and allow them to create a simple dance for each verse to be taught to the rest of the class.

You may also want to assign group projects on the history and importance of specific Appalachian folk music instruments such as: Banjo, Mountain Dulcimer, Cat Paws, Fiddle, or Board Piano.

MU:Re7.2.2., MU:Cn11.1.1

# What to know - before the show!

## Who was James Still?

James Still was a renowned figure in the legacy that is Hindman Settlement School. Hindman was the first and most successful rural social settlement school in America. Settlement schools were social reform institutions established in rural Appalachia in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with the purpose of educating mountain children and improving their isolated communities. Established in 1902 by May Stone and Katherine Pettit at the forks of Troublesome Creek in Knott County, Kentucky, Hindman soon became a model center for education, health care and social services. Earning praise as "the best school in the mountains," it not only transformed the community of Hindman, but also contributed significantly to regional progress. The school has played a vital role in preserving and promoting the literary and cultural heritage of southeastern Kentucky and Central Appalachia.



**James Still**

The following is Still's narrative of how he came to Hindman:

"In Nashville I looked up Don West, a former classmate, at that time preparing for the ministry. He informed me he and his wife would be conducting vacation Bible schools in Knott County, Kentucky, during July and August. He invited me to join his son-in-law, Jack Adams, in organizing a recreational program at three sites, three Boy Scout troops, and three baseball teams. As a volunteer. So it came to be. We camped and played ball all summer and I became enamored with the forested mountains, the valleys and hollows of this backwoods country, and with the independent and forthright folk. I was toying with the notion of moving into an abandoned log house and trying my hand at writing when the Hindman Settlement School at the forks of Troublesome Creek offered the job of librarian, again as a volunteer - room, board, and laundry furnished. At that period the school was in severe financial straits.

I remained at the Hindman Settlement School for six years. The library was excellent, the students eager, the staff highly motivated. Aware that the many one-room schools of the county were without access to a library, I began spending one day a week - my own undertaking - walking from school to school with a carton of children's books on my shoulder, and changing the collection every two weeks. I could serve only four schools in this manner. Often as I approached I would hear the cry, "Here comes the book boy." The first three years at the Hindman Settlement I received no salary. The Depression slackening they paid me a few dollars the next three. Averaging it out I had worked six years for six cents a day."

Still continued to live out the rest of his life in Knott County. Influenced by his surroundings, Still wrote numerous poems, novels, and children's books, including *Jack and the Wonder Beans*. He was the first poet laureate of Kentucky. Still said, "It may be that this book has a chance of greater longevity than any of my other works. All my powers and my gifts, such as they are, came together in those few pages. The news that some children are sleeping with this book and that their elders are reading it with some delight tickles me in a spot that is hard to get to."

**-The Wolfpen Notes & James Still's bibliography**



# How to grow - after the show!

## Speakin' Appalachian

Jack, Mam, and those High Tall Giants have a very special way of speaking. These words or phrases are called idioms - sayings that mean something. For example, the word "sass" is Appalachian for "vegetables." After watching *Jack & the Wonder Beans*, match the American English words to Appalachian idiom. Write the letter of each idiom word next to its English definition.

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| A. Shaving My Heels      | _____ 1. Bag of Bones   |
| B. Shike-Poke            | _____ 2. Toy whittled from the prong of a tree limb; also, anything of small worth. |
| C. Crumble-In            | _____ 3. Sack or Bag  |
| D. Tom-body              | _____ 4. Garden Vegetables  |
| E. Set a Spell           | _____ 5. Small Child  |
| F. Garden Sass           | _____ 6. Bread crumbled into a bowl of milk and sprinkled with sugar                |
| G. Banty Egg             | _____ 7. A very small egg   |
| H. Poke                  | _____ 8. To Relax   |
| I. Skedaddle             | _____ 9. Catching Up  |
| J. Gee-Haw Whimmy-Diddle | _____ 10. Move Quickly  |
| K. Tadwhacker            | _____ 11. Somebody  |

Can you think of any more idioms that we use in everyday American English? For example, "dough" means "money." Make a list of all the idioms you can think of and compare it to other students' lists. Have fun!

TH:Cn11.2.-1., L.4.3a.



# How to grow - after the show!

## What's Cookin'?

Boy, those giants sure were hungry! The High Tall Giant thought Jack would be a nice addition to her stew sprinkled with dill. Stew is delicious enough without a tadwhacker, but there are numerous ways to cook any dish.

Have your students collect their favorite home recipe from their parents or close relatives. Once collected, ask your students if they were giants, what would they add or reinterpret in their recipe. For example, macaroni and cheese - boomerangs could be substituted for macaroni and cheese could be hot lava from a Hawaiian volcano. Allow them to each create a giant recipe page to be collected and bound together for the whole class to see.

You may also be interested in doing this activity with Appalachian dishes. To learn more about Appalachian recipes, please visit [www.dancingonmountaintops.com](http://www.dancingonmountaintops.com).



**Writing: 1.5, Writing: 1.8**

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jack

Many classic stories are given a fresh twist by being put in a different setting. For example, *The Lion King* was influenced by Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. These new settings often make the story appeal to a whole new audience.

Have your students re-adapt *Jack and the Wonder Beans* into their own lives by using the format of a comic strip. If they were Jack what would they have to sell in order to feed their family? Would they live in New York City or perhaps in the suburbs? Instead of a beanstalk, what would grow? Share these comic strips aloud or display them in your classroom.

**Speaking and Listening: 1.4,1.5 VA: Cr1.2.2**

## Beanstalk Journal

If you were given magical beans to sow, how high do you think they'd go? Now it is your turn to become Jack! You will need enough for each student to have the following:

**Kentucky Wonder Pole Bean Seed (or other climbing bean), Popsicle Stick, Large Solo Cup, Soil, Water, Rulers**

Instruct your students to loosely fill their cups with soil and using a ruler, measure two inches into the soil and dig a small hole with a finger or popsicle stick. Have them stick their seed into the hole and cover it with soil. The popsicle stick will also be placed two inches into the soil alongside the seed to provide support when the plant grows. When the seed and popsicle stick are in place, give the plant enough water to make the soil moist, but not flooded. Once all of your students have watered their seed, place all cups in an area with lots of sunlight.

Have your students keep a journal of the growth by measuring their Wonder Pole Bean. To give the illusion of climbing, your students could create a mini-paper version of themselves to tape to their growing beanstalk.

**Writing: 2.7, VA:Cr1.2.2**



# How to grow - after the show!

## What to Read Next

*Cindy Ellen: A Wild Western Cinderella* by Susan Lowell

Cinderella in the Wild West?! You bet! Cindy Ellen proves that she's the best cowgirl west of the Mississippi and can win the prince's heart.

*The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* by Jon Scieszka

Humorous retelling of many beloved fairy tales, such as *The Ugly Duckling* and *Little Red Riding Hood*.

*The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert N. Munsch  
Princess Elizabeth doesn't give up hope to save her prince after a dragon kidnaps him and burns down her castle.

*Monkey Tales* by Laurel Dee Gugler

This volume contains three classic African, South American, and Asian folktales (*The Pedlar's Caps*, *Big Monkey's Banana Trouble*, and *Cat, Dog and Monkey*) playfully retold in strongly rhythmic, sometimes rhyming, prose. The mischievous primates strut through each tale with wit and saucy charm.

*The Goose Girl* by Shannon Hale

A retelling of the Brothers Grimm fairy tale about a princess with odd powers who is sent away by the Queen to live a lowly life as a goose girl for the king in a neighboring country.

## Answers to Speakin' Appalachian

1. F, 2. J, 3. H, 4. B, 5. K, 6. C, 7. G, 8. E, 9. A, 10. I, 11. D

# LCT teaches in YOUR school!

## Would you like to see some of these play guide activities modeled in your classroom?

Book a workshop for your class with one of LCT's teaching artists! In our pre-show workshops, our teaching artists will engage students in acting skills and themes from the play through drama activities. In our post-show workshops, students will extend their play-going experience by strengthening their personal connection to the play and deepening their understanding of the themes and characters.



Call us at 859-254-4546 x 226 to book a pre or post-show workshop for your class!

To learn more about Lexington Children's Theatre and our programming for your school visit:  
[www.lctonstage.org/for-educators/in-school-experiences/](http://www.lctonstage.org/for-educators/in-school-experiences/)