

Study Guide prepared by
Catherine Bush
Barter Playwright-in-Residence

The Princess and the Pea

Adapted by Catherine Bush from the story by Hans Christian Andersen

*Especially for Grades K-6

The Barter Players – Barter on Demand

(NOTE: Standards listed below include those for reading the story *The Princess and the Pea*, seeing a performance of the play, and completing the study guide.)



Virginia SOLs

English – K.1, K.5, K.8, K.9, K.12, 1.1, 1.5, 1.8, 1.9, 1.13, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.12, 3.4, 3.5, 3.9, 3.11, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, 5.9

Tennessee /North Carolina Common Core State Standards

English/Language Arts - Reading Literacy: K.1, K.3, K.5, K.7, K.9, 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.9, 1.10, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.10, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.9, 3.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.7, 4.9, 4.10, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 5.9, 5.10

English Language Arts – Writing: K.1, K.5, K.7, K.8, 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.8, 2.1, 2.3, 2.5, 2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9

Tennessee Fine Arts Curriculum Standards

Theatre – K.1, K.3, K.4, K.5, K.6, 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 5.1, 5.3, 5.6, 5.7

North Carolina Essential Standards

Theatre Arts – K.A.1, K.AE.1, 1.A.1, 1.AE.1, 1.CU.2, 2.C.2, 2.A.1, 2.AE.1, 3.C.1, 3.C.2, 3.A.1, 3.CU.1, 3.CU.2, 4.C.1, 4.A.1, 4.AE.1, 5.C.1, 5.A.1, 5.AE.1, 5.CU.2

Setting

A kingdom plagued by marauding bandits...



Characters

Mother Hubbard – a beggar woman

Little Boy Blue – shepherd boy

Peter Piper – farmer

Marigold – a fierce amnesiac mistaken for a princess

Ned Kelly – a bandit

Billy – a bandit who carries a club

Queen Margaret – the wife of the late King Baldric

Lord Ellington – the Minister of State

Baker – town baker, confirmed bachelor, avid wrestler

Prince Harold – King Baldric's son, loves wrestling

Gerry – Harold's squire

El Gigantico – a brutish wrestler

Baldric – the late king, shown in flashback as a young prince

The Villagers – work around the village green

The Peasants – live in Poor Town

Note: Cast Size and Doubling of Actors

In this production of *The Princess and the Pea*, we will be using only six actors. Some actors will be required to play more than one role. Doubling of actors requires distinction between characters. In this production, characters will be distinguished by costume, voice and other physical character traits.



Synopsis

Since the death of King Baldric, the townsfolk have been attacked on the roads and highways by roving bandits. Peter Piper has a peck of pickled peppers stolen. Boy Blue has a flock of sheep stolen. But none is suffering more than Mother Hubbard, whose cupboards are empty.

She is forced to beg on the streets in order to feed her hungry children. One day, Mother Hubbard encounters a young woman from the Kingdom of Flora who is seeking directions to Baldric's castle. The young woman is moved to pity by Mother Hubbard's desperate situation and gives her money. Just then more bandits attack.



While trying to defend Mother Hubbard, the young woman is knocked unconscious. When she comes to, she has no idea who she is. Mother Hubbard, realizing the young woman has amnesia, leads her to the castle door. Mother Hubbard then departs for her own home in the slums of Poor Town.

Meanwhile, in the castle, Queen Margaret is desperate for her son, Prince Harold, to become King so that he can deal with the bandits and save the kingdom. However, the law states that Harold cannot be made King until he is married, so Queen Margaret has arranged a match for him with Princess Marigold from the Kingdom of Flora across the sea. Marigold is said to be quite beautiful and “as delicate as a pea’s blossom.” But much to his mother’s chagrin, Harold is too busy wrestling on the village green to pay attention to the problems in the kingdom. Harold loves wrestling and won’t quit until he’s beaten the most fearsome wrestler of all, El Gigantico. El Gigantico once wrestled Harold’s father Baldric and defeated him – Harold is determined to avenge that loss.



Queen Margaret, however, hates wrestling and has enacted a law that forbids a married man to wrestle. The Queen sends her minister, Lord Ellington, to fetch Harold from the village green and return him to the castle. Once there, she informs Harold that he is to be married the next day to Princess Marigold. Harold is devastated, but before he can react there is a knock on the door – it is the young woman from Flora. Everyone assumes she is Princess Marigold, and since she is suffering from amnesia, she assumes that she’s Marigold as well. Harold, determined not to get married, devises a test (with the help of his squire Gerry) – a test that Marigold is destined to fail. Harold convinces his mother to place a pea under Marigold’s mattress. If the pea disturbs Marigold’s sleep, than she is a “real” princess and Harold will marry her. If not, the wedding is off.

Synopsis (cont.)

The Queen agrees to the test and that night, while Marigold is sleeping, Margaret slips a pea under her mattress. Marigold tosses and turns and has a wretched night's sleep. Harold is distraught – but then quickly blames Marigold's lack of sleep on a lumpy mattress. He apologizes to Marigold and promises to put a softer mattress on top of the lumpy one – and then convinces his mother to put Marigold to the test one more time. Margaret agrees – on the



condition that Harold spend the day getting acquainted with Marigold. At first the two seem to have nothing in common. Then Harold receives the news that El Gigantico is on the village green looking for opponents to wrestle. Realizing this may be his last chance, Harold heads down there with Marigold in tow and challenges the brute. Harold is winning the match when El Gigantico head-butts him then pins him. Marigold accuses El Gigantico of cheating, and when El Gigantico responds by calling her a “dumb girl”, Marigold takes him down with wrestling moves that impress everyone, especially Harold. Noting Harold's growing infatuation, Gerry convinces Harold that Marigold must be tested further. That night, Queen Margaret places a pea under two mattresses – still, Marigold can't sleep. Harold is desperate – he talks his mother into one more night of the test, this time with *four* mattresses placed on the bed. Queen Margaret agrees, but insists that Marigold and Harold once again spend the day together. Marigold takes Harold to visit Mother Hubbard in Poor Town, and Harold begins to realize how selfish he's been; instead of leading his people, he's been focusing on wrestling. He vows to change, and that night he confesses to Gerry that he's falling in love with Marigold. Just then, the bandits enter the castle gate. A fight ensues and once more Marigold is rendered unconscious. Queen Margaret is captured and it looks like all hope is lost when suddenly El Gigantico enters and overpowers the thugs. Marigold wakes up and suddenly remembers that she is *not* Princess Marigold – she is instead a servant to the princess who was on her way to the castle with a letter for Harold. In the letter, the real Princess Marigold explains that she is breaking their arranged marriage in order to elope with a slipper salesman. The young woman from Flora's real name is Edwina – her friends call her “Ed.” When asked why she wasn't able to sleep, Ed explains that she has back problems that keep her awake at night, and she learned wrestling in order to strengthen her spine. Harold declare his love for Ed, and they prepare for a future full of love... and wrestling.

Biography of the Author

Hans Christian Andersen was born in Odense, Denmark on April 2, 1805. His mother was a washerwoman and his father was a shoemaker. The family was very poor but Andersen's father took him often to the local playhouse and nurtured his creative side by making him his own toys. After the death of his father in 1816, Andersen moved to Copenhagen where he pursued an acting career at the Royal Theatre. He soon abandoned acting and turned to writing instead, churning out poems, plays and stories. His first poem *The Dying Child* published in 1827. Andersen went on to write some of the most beloved children's fairy tales of all. They include *The Princess and the Pea*, *Thumbelina*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Little Match Girl* and *The Ugly Duckling*. He died August 4, 1875 and is buried in Copenhagen.



Biography of the Playwright

Catherine Bush has been Barter Theatre's playwright-in-residence since 2007. Her produced plays include: *The Other Side of the Mountain*, *The Quiltmaker*, *Comin' Up A Storm*, *Wooden Snowflakes*, *Tradin' Paint*, *Where Trouble Sleeps*, *Walking Across Egypt*, *I'll Never Be Hungry Again* (book & lyrics), *The Three Musketeers*, *The Frankenstein Summer*, *unHINGEd*, *The Executioner's Sons*, *The Controversial Rescue of Fatty the Pig*, *Winter Wheat* (book & lyrics) and *Just a Kiss*, which was a finalist for the 2007 Steinberg Award presented by the American Theatre Critics Association. Plays for Young Audiences: *Cry Wolf!*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Rapunzel*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, *All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth*, *My Imaginary Pirate*, *The Call of the Wild*, *The Princess and the Pea*, *Aesop's Fables*, *The Red Badge of Courage*, *Frosty*, *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*, *Mother Goose: The Musical*, *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, *Jingle All the Way*, *Old Turtle and the Broken Truth*, *Antigone*, *Robin Hood*, *Clementine the Musical*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, and *Great Expectations*. www.catherinebushplays.com



Vocabulary Words

alms	vulgar	postpone	acquaint
flock	brute	fragile	agility
peck	advantage	customary	strategy
reduced	even	curtsy	humiliate
league	pin	accost	reputation
recollection	avenge	amnesia	tangle
dainty	slums	jest	elope

Define each of the vocabulary words listed above then write sentences using them. Remember: anyone reading your sentence should be able to understand the word from the context in which it is used.

Grown Your Own Peas!

Buy a packet of dried peas from the supermarket. Soak them in water for about 24 hours (make sure they are not split).

Stuff a glass jar with paper towels and water until the paper is damp all over, and then carefully insert peas, at 3/4" intervals, around the side. This way children can watch the germination of the seed take place.

The shoots appear within a week and are ready to harvest 2-3 weeks from sowing.





A Brief History

Barter Theatre was founded during the Great Depression by Robert Porterfield, an enterprising young actor. He and his fellow actors found themselves out of work and hungry in New York City. Porterfield contrasted that to the abundance of food, but lack of live theatre, around his home region in Southwest Virginia. He returned to Washington County with an extraordinary proposition: bartering produce from the farms and gardens of the area to gain admission to see a play.

Barter Theatre opened its doors on June 10, 1933 proclaiming, “With vegetables you cannot sell, you can buy a good laugh.” The price of admission was 40 cents or the equivalent in produce, the concept of trading “ham for Hamlet” caught on quickly. At the end of the first season, the Barter Company cleared \$4.35 in cash, two barrels of jelly and enjoyed a collective weight gain of over 300 pounds.

Playwrights including Noel Coward, Tennessee Williams and Thornton Wilder accepted Virginia ham as payment for royalties. An exception was George Bernard Shaw, a vegetarian, who bartered the rights to his plays for spinach.

Today, Barter Theatre has a reputation as a theatre where many actors performed before going on to achieve fame and fortune. The most recognized of these alumni include Gregory Peck, Patricia Neal, Ernest Borgnine, Hume Cronyn, Ned Beatty, Gary Collins, Larry Linville and Frances Fisher. The list also included James Burrows, creator of *Cheers*, Barry Corbin, and the late Jim Varney.

Robert Porterfield passed away in 1971. His successor, Rex Partington, had been at Barter in the 1950s as an actor and in the 1970s as stage manager. Rex returned as chief administrator from 1972 until his retirement in 1992. In March 2006, he passed away.

Richard Rose was named the Producing Artistic Director in October 1992. During his tenure, attendance grew from 42,000 to more than 163,000 annual patrons. Significant capital improvements were also made, including renovation of the main stage (now Gilliam Stage) in 1995 and the 2006 addition of The Barter Café at Stage II (now the Smith Theatre). Rose retired in December of 2019 and Katy Brown, who had been at Barter since 1998 as the Director of the Barter Players and as an Associate Artistic Director, was named the fourth Producing Artistic Director – and is the first woman to hold the position.

Barter represents two distinct venues of live theatre: Barter Theatre’s Gilliam Stage, and Barter’s Smith Theatre. Gilliam Stage, with over 500 seats, features traditional theatre in a luxurious setting. Barter’s Smith Theatre offers seating for 167 around a thrust stage in an intimate setting and is perfect for more adventurous productions. Barter Theatre is also home to The Barter Players, a talented ensemble who produce plays for young audiences throughout the year.

History is always in the making at Barter Theatre, building on legends of the past; Barter looks forward to the challenge of growth in the future.

Questions/Activities

1. In this play, the young woman from Flora is hit over the head, and when she wakes up she has no memory – a condition called “amnesia.” **Make a list some of your favorite memories** – then imagine if you no longer had access to them. What would it be like to have all your memories erased? **Discuss.** When the young woman wakes up, everyone assumes she is Princess Marigold. Now imagine you woke up tomorrow morning in a palace with people expecting you to behave like royalty. What are some of the things you might like about that? What are some of the things that might be unpleasant? **Discuss.**
2. **Write a critique** of this play, discussing what you liked, didn’t like, and what you would have done differently.
3. When Marigold takes Prince Harold to visit Mother Hubbard in Poor Town, Harold discovers how poverty and crime are affecting his people, and he vows to be a better leader. Do you think our leaders should help those who are less fortunate? If so, how? **Discuss. Make a list of traits you think a good leader should have.** Can you name leaders in your school, your town and this country who have those traits?
4. Prince Harold LOVES to wrestle. Using the internet, **research the history of wrestling.** What is its country of origin? What are the rules? How many different types of wrestling are there? **Present your findings to the class in an oral report.**
5. In this play, the men of the village are very surprised when Marigold turns out to be an excellent wrestler. Why is that? Does society encourage women to be stronger than men? Smarter than men? Have things changed for women since Hans Christian Andersen wrote *The Princess and the Pea* in 1835? **Discuss.**



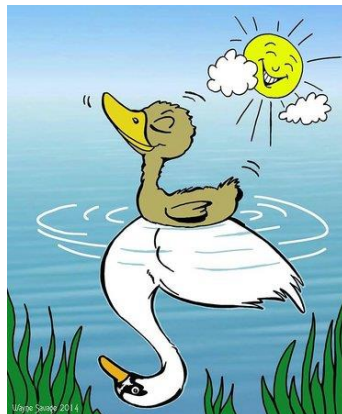
6. After reading *The Princess and the Pea* by Hans Christian Andersen and streaming a performance of the Barter Player's production, how do the two compare? What sort of Princess did Hans Christian Andersen write? How does Prince Harold stack up next to the Prince in the book? Which version did you like better? Why? **Discuss.**

7. Hans Christian Anderson was born in Denmark. Using the internet, research the people of Denmark and their culture. What language do they speak? What foods do they eat? What is their climate? The population of the country? What sort of government does it have? **Present your findings to the class.**



8. What makes a story a fairy tale? Is using a fairy tale a good way to teach a lesson about how one should act toward others? What is your favorite fairy tale? Why is it your favorite? If you were going to write a fairy tale, what would it be about? Where would you set it, and why? **Discuss.**

9. Read these other stories by Hans Christian Andersen: *The Little Mermaid*, *The Ugly Duckling*, and *The Emperor's New Clothes*. **Now write a paper comparing and contrasting them to *The Princess and the Pea*.** What themes do these stories have in common? How are they different? What are these stories trying to tell us?



10. This play, *The Princess and the Pea*, is adapted from a well known children's story. Pick another favorite childhood story: *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, etc. Divide the class into groups and assign each group a scene from the story. **Have each group adapt their scene into the scene for a play.** Try to avoid using a narrator. Instead, tell the story through action and dialogue (conversation between two or more people). Now **have each group present their scene in chronological order.** Is the story told? How different is your play from the fairy tale? How difficult is it to take a piece of literature and turn it into a theatrical event?

11. In this story, it is very important that the Prince marry an actual, real Princess. What determines whether a person is "royal?" Why was it so important to royal families that their children marry royalty? (You may need to use the internet to research the history of this custom.) **Discuss.** How many royal houses exist in Europe today? How has that changed the custom of "royalty must marry royalty?" (Consider the marriage of England's Queen Elizabeth II to Prince Philip with that of her son, Prince Charles, and her grandson, Prince William.) **Discuss.**



12. **Write a letter** to your favorite actors from this production. Tell them what you liked about the play, their performance, etc. Mail your letters to:

The Barter Players
c/o Barter Theatre
P.O. Box 867
Abingdon, VA 24212-0867
ATTN: The Princess and the Pea

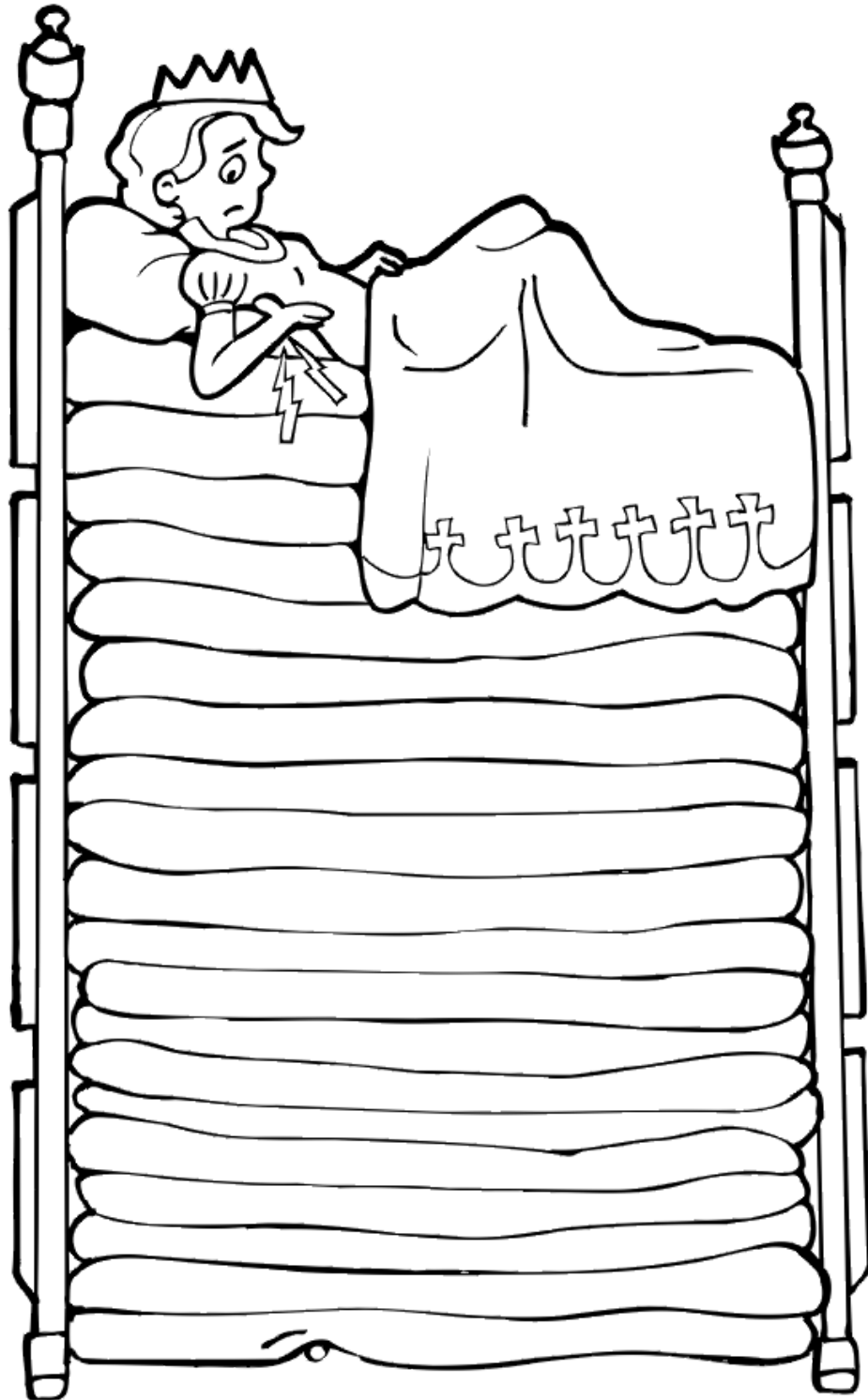
WORD SEARCH

Find the following words below:

Marigold, Prince Harold, wrestling, amnesia, bandits, princess,
Mother Hubbard, El Gigantico, Queen Margaret, pea, Gerry,
kingdom, King Baldric, Lord Ellington, pin, Poor Town, The Test,
mattress, delicate, village green

D U M P M U U S D A U E S T N
S R E A E O S O M I L O N E V
G A A X T E D N R G F O D R I
Q N T B C T E G I G T D L A L
T N I N B S R G N G S E O G L
Z H I L I U A E N I P L G R A
O R E A T N H I S N K I I A G
P W I T T S L R O S K C R M E
G Y C I E L E N E A U A A N G
E M C R E S L R Y H F T M E R
R O E D F D T J W R T E B E E
R T R P O O R T O W N O E U E
Y O S T I D N A B O Q L M Q N
L P R I N C E H A R O L D W H
C I R D L A B G N I K N I P M

Color the picture!



True and False

Write **T** if the statement is **True** and **F** if the statement is **False**.

1. ____ *The Princess and the Pea* is a story written by the Brother's Grimm.
2. ____ Prince Harold loves to wrestle.
3. ____ Hans Christian Andersen was Swedish.
4. ____ Marigold was hit over the head which resulted in amnesia.
5. ____ Mother Hubbard lives in a place called Poor Town.
6. ____ Peter Piper is one of the bandits.
7. ____ Harold puts Marigold to the test in order to avoid marrying her.
8. ____ Marigold has problems sleeping in the castle.
9. ____ El Gigantico defeated King Baldric in a wrestling match.
10. ____ Queen Margaret doesn't want Harold to get married.
11. ____ Marigold is an excellent wrestler.
12. ____ Harold finally determines to help the people of Poor Town.
13. ____ In the end we discover that El Gigantico is one of the bandits.
14. ____ Queen Margaret places a pea under Marigold's mattress.
15. ____ It turns out Marigold is really a young woman named "Charlie."

Matching

Draw a line connecting the person/place in the first column with its corresponding description.

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Peter Piper | a. Harold's father |
| 2. Marigold | b. beggar woman |
| 3. Baldric | c. doesn't want to get married |
| 4. El Gigantico | d. picked a peck of pickled peppers |
| 5. Ellington | e. minister of state |
| 6. Harold | f. has amnesia |
| 7. Mother Hubbard | g. famous wrestler |

Suggested Further Reading/Links

Other stories by Hans Christian Anderson:

The Little Match Girl

The Ugly Duckling

The Emperor's New Clothes

The Little Mermaid

Thumbelina

To find out more about Hans Christian Andersen, his life and his work, go to this link:

<http://www.andersenfairytale.com/en/main>