



Parent /Teachers Study & Activity Guide

The Emperor's New Clothes

A Musical For Children
Based on "The Emperor's New Clothes"
by Hans Christian Andersen

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The Emperor's New Clothes Synopsis

Act I

As the play begins, Emperor Voorhees the Vain is parading down the village street in his new clothes. Everyone admires the beautiful attire. Tom and Madeline, two villagers, are unhappily talking about how their tax money is used to buy new clothes for the Emperor. As they leave, two swindlers, Sid and Sam arrive. They talk about how good they are as con artists. They meet Tom and Madeline and ask where they can stay for the night. Tom and Madeline tell them about the inn, but warn them they may have to pay extra money in taxes for the Emperor's clothes. After Tom and Madeline leave, Sid and Sam decide to teach the Emperor a lesson about greed and vanity, make a large profit for themselves and maybe help the villagers too. They decide to pose as weavers and create beautiful clothes for the Emperor. They go to the Emperor's palace and convince him that they can weave clothing that is invisible to any man or woman who is unfit office. Only the clever can see these beautiful garments, not the stupid. After taking the Emperor's measurements and his gold, Sid and Sam leave to begin their task. The Emperor then tells the Prime Minister that because he is the most respected and intelligent minister he should go see the weaver's work in one week's time and report back on the beauty of the clothes. End of Act I.

Act II

As the Act begins, the Prime Minister is about to arrive to inspect the beautiful new clothes for the Emperor. Even though there is nothing to see, the Prime Minister tells the swindlers he can see the clothes, because he doesn't want to appear unfit or stupid. Then the Finance Minister arrives. Again, rather than appear stupid or unfit, she also lies and says she can see the clothes even though she can't. Sid and Sam confuse her even more when they trick her into feeling a piece of cloth with her eyes shut and then take the cloth away when she opens her eye. After a short time, the Ministers return to the weavers with the Emperor. The Emperor is worried that he might not be able to see the clothes. When he is shown the invisible fabric he doesn't know what to say. Rather than admit the problem he states that a procession will be

held through the village. Anyone who can't see the beautiful clothes will be proclaimed the village idiot. The swindlers are persuaded to join the Emperor and his ministers for the procession. The day of the procession arrives. Tom and Madeline are waiting anxiously to see the new clothes, but worried that they will not be able to do so. The ministers appear leading the way for the Emperor. Tom tells Madeline that the Emperor is only wearing his underwear and then hides so as not to be called the village idiot. When the Emperor asks the village audience what they think, they tell him he is only wearing his underwear too. The Emperor is embarrassed by this situation. Sid and Sam are caught trying to sneak away and brought to the Emperor. They tell him that because of his vanity he couldn't see what was important. The Emperor realizes that he is important because of who he is, not because of the clothes he wears. He invites Sid and Sam to be his advisors because of their honesty and proclaims he will lower the taxes and try to be wiser and less vain. Everyone proclaims him to be Voorhees the Jolly Good Fellow. The end.

For Parents, Teachers, and Counselors

The following common core aligned* activity ideas & questions may be beneficial to share with your student(s) before & after the play.

1. Read the original story by Hans Christian Andersen. Talk with your students about the different characters and their feelings. Discuss how they might be different in the play and how they might look when they come to life on stage. Share the Play Synopsis with them. How is it different from the story you read? How is it the same? Pose the questions, "What would happen it ..." Have the children use their imaginations to create their own versions of the story.
2. Have you ever wanted something, particularly clothing, just because it was expensive or a particular brand or had a special design? Did you think you would be better than other people because you had something that other people didn't? What are some things special about you other than the way you dress or look?
3. Have you ever told someone a lie just because you wanted them to like you? Wouldn't it be better to tell the truth and have people like you for being honest? Do you feel pressure to do something because all your friends are doing the same thing?

4. In the play, Sid and Sam describe the invisible fabric. Have your students draw a picture of the fabric based on those descriptions.
5. Sid and Sam always speak in rhyme in the play. Have your students try to write some rhymes that tell a story. After they finish, have them read them to the class.
6. Fabric can be woven on a loom. Show pictures of looms and talk about the weaving process. Do a demonstration of weaving strips of construction paper together to create paper fabric or placemats. Students can make placemats as well.
7. All the characters in the play, except the Emperor, have a special friend or partner. Do you have a special friend? What makes them special? Do you ever tell them they are special to you.
8. Have your child(ren) write a descriptive sentence about one of their favorite characters in the play. Have them draw a picture of their characters or let them write a letter to their favorite character.
9. Choose a favorite fairy tale or story and have your child(ren) dictate or write their own version. Afterwards use colored paper, crayons, markers, or paint to make a picture of parts of the story or make a small diorama of the setting.
10. The music and lyrics tell the audience several important things about the action and characters. Talk to your child(ren) about what they felt when they heard certain kinds of music in the play. Did the music make you feel happy? Sad? Excited?