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## Study Guide

For

# Jack and The Beanstalk

A Musical for Children

Based on an Old English Folk Tale

Book by

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Storybook Musical Theatre is a non-profit professional children's theater company operating under a Theater for Young Audiences Contract with Actors' Equity Association, the union for professional actors and stage managers in the USA. Member of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance.



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## Jack and The Beanstalk Play Synopsis

### Act I

As the play begins, Jack's mother asks him to sell their cow at the market to get money for food. On the way to market, Jack meets a stranger who tricks him into exchanging the cow for five magic beans. When Jack returns without any money, his mother throws the beans away and sends Jack to bed without supper. The next morning, when Jack and his mother awaken, the beans have grown into a giant beanstalk reaching all the way up into the sky. Jack's mother tells him of the Ogre who lives at the top of the beanstalk. The Ogre, many years before, had taken all their farm animals and ruined their crops. Despite his mother's wishes, Jack starts to climb the beanstalk to retrieve the animals that were taken. Soon, Jack arrives at the Ogre's house where he confronts the Ogre's wife, Gertrude. Jack explains that he has come to get back the animals that were stolen and money for the crops the Ogre had destroyed. As they talk the Ogre returns home. Jack hides under the table until the Ogre falls asleep while counting his gold. Jack then takes the Ogre's bags of gold and returns home down the beanstalk. His mother, thankful for the gold, makes Jack promise not to climb the beanstalk again as the Act ends.

### Act II

As the Act begins Jack's mother asks him to buy some chicken and sausage from the market with the gold coins he got from the Ogre. But, Jack decides to climb the beanstalk another time to get the chicken from the Ogre. While searching for them, Jack is discovered by Gertrude who tries to get him to leave before the Ogre's return. It's too late. Jack hides under the table again while the Ogre calls for his goose to lay a golden egg. After the Ogre falls asleep, Jack takes the goose and leaves some gold coins in exchange. When Jack returns home, his mother is delighted with their good fortune. After the Ogre wakes up, he becomes suspicious of his missing gold and lost goose, but Gertrude convinces him to calm down by listening to his singing harp. As the harp sings, Jack sneaks back into the Ogre's house. Just as he thinks the Ogre is asleep, the Ogre smells Jack and grabs him before he can escape. Jack tells him that he took the Ogre's things as repayment for the damage the Ogre did to the family's crops and

animals. Jack kicks the Ogre in the shins, grabs the harp, runs out of the house and down the beanstalk. At the bottom of the beanstalk, Jack grabs an axe and chops it down. The beanstalk and the Ogre come crashing to earth. The Ogre is sore from his fall and realizes he needs to rethink what he is doing to others. Jack and his mother return home to listening to the beautiful music of the harp and Jack promises never to climb anything again. The End

### FOR TEACHERS and PARENTS

*Jack and the Beanstalk* is part of a cultural heritage employing storytelling in the oral tradition established first by English immigrants and embellished by Scottish and German immigrants settling throughout the Appalachia and Blue Ridge Mountains. Richard Case's collection, *Jack Tales, Grandfather Tales* is one of the most complete chronicles of this rich oral history.

The following common core aligned questions and ideas may be beneficial for you in facilitating discussion, formulating creative reading and writing activities and creating art in response to the play.

#### Activities Before the Play

1. Read one of the versions of the Jack tales and talk with your child(ren) about the different characters and their feelings. Discuss how they might be different in the play. Share the play synopsis with them. How is it different from the story you read? How is it the same? Pose the question, "What would happen if...?" Have the child(ren) use their imagination(s) to create their own versions of the story. (RL 2.9, SL 2.2)
2. Have a discussion with your child(ren)/students. What does it mean to need something? What does it mean to want something? How do we decide what to spend our money on? (SL 2.1)
3. Encourage the child(ren)/students to put themselves in Jack's shoes. Jack is tricked into trading his cow for five beans. The beans are really magic, so everything works out in the end. Is there anything that you would trade for magic beans of your own? (RL 2.3)
4. Explain to your student(s) that being an actor takes a lot of practice. Ask the children to discuss what they think the actors had to do to get this play ready for an audience. Do they think that there are others besides actors who work to put on the show? (SL 2.1)
5. Tell your student(s) that, in a play, the story is told just once. It's important to listen and watch. Discuss ways that everyone in the audience can have a great experience. (SL 2.1) Let the children know that they will have the opportunity to meet the actors after the show!

#### Activities After the Show

1. The most exciting part of a story is often called the climax. When do you think the climax of this play happened? Why was this moment the most exciting for you? (RL 2.1, RL 2.5)
2. Talk to your student(s) about lessons learned from this play. Is it true that size doesn't matter? What in the play or story makes you think so? Climbing a beanstalk is a lot like following your dreams. What "giant" things do you encounter in your life? How did or can you, like Jack, face your "giant" and overcome it? (RL 2.2, RL 2.3)
3. In the play, Jack takes things from the Ogre as repayment for animals and crops that his family lost. The Ogre doesn't think he should have to pay for anything. Talk to the student(s) about the difference in the two characters' perspectives. You may want to read the book, *Giants Have Feelings, Too* by Alvin Granowsky as a way to initiate the discussion. Students should cite examples from the play and the book as evidence. (RL 2.3, RL 2.4, RL 2.6)
4. This play provides a wonderful opportunity for integrating science activities. You may want to discuss the parts of a plant and what they need to grow. Consider having the student(s) grow a bean plant from a seed. The child(ren) can keep a plant growing journal to describe what they observe. (W 2.3)
5. Try integrating measurement activities, too! Read the humorous sequel, *Jim and the Beanstalk* by Raymond Briggs. Like the main character from this story, have students measure everyday objects in an effort to find things to cheer up the Ogre. It might even be fun the measure using a non-standard tool like dried lima beans. (MD. A1, MD. A2, MD. A3)
6. Divide the students into small groups. Each group will do a character analysis of a different character from the play on butcher paper. Trace one child's body onto each group's paper. On the head, students can write/draw what that character wants or thinks about. On the torso, write/draw what or who the character loves. One leg is for an activity that the character likes to do, while the other leg tells about the setting(s) for this character. One arm should list adjectives that the character would use to describe him/herself, and the other arm would list adjectives that others would use to describe him/her. (RL 2.1, RL 2.6, L 2.1E, W 2.7)
7. How did Jack's life change from the beginning of the play to the end? How did his actions cause these changes? (RL 2.1, RL 2.3)

*(the 2nd grade common core standards used can be easily adjusted to meet the needs and levels of your students)*

## The Ogre's Opposites

Find the opposite of each word in the list  
by looking in the word box below

1. in \_\_\_\_\_
2. high \_\_\_\_\_
3. sky \_\_\_\_\_
4. bad \_\_\_\_\_
5. husband \_\_\_\_\_
6. up \_\_\_\_\_
7. lost \_\_\_\_\_
8. rich \_\_\_\_\_
9. walk \_\_\_\_\_

### Word Box

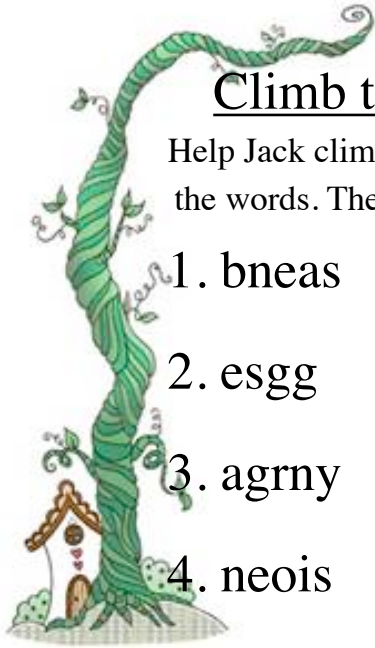
down	found	good
ground	low	out
poor	run	wife

## The Beanstalk Word Search

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

Find these hidden words:

BEANSTALK	CLIMB
COW	EGGS
ENGLISHMAN	GOLDEN
GOOSE	HARP
HIDE	HOUSE
MAGIC	MILK
MOTHER	OGRE
SMELL	STRANGER



## Climb the Beanstalk

Help Jack climb the beanstalk by unscrambling the words. The first letter is there to help you.

1. bneas    b\_\_\_\_\_

2. esgg    e\_\_\_\_\_

3. agrny    a\_\_\_\_\_

4. neois    n\_\_\_\_\_

5. seelp    s\_\_\_\_\_

6. tlal    t\_\_\_\_\_

7. amsr    a\_\_\_\_\_

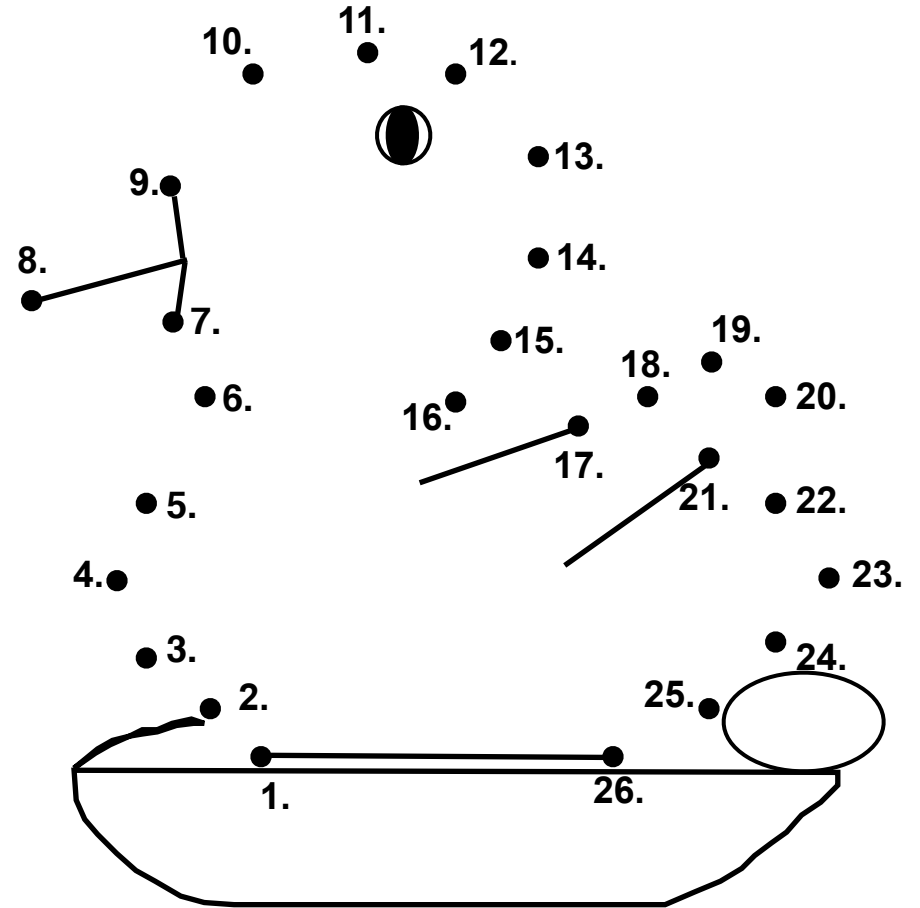
8. llttie    l\_\_\_\_\_

9. kcik    k\_\_\_\_\_

10. sknea    s\_\_\_\_\_

**Answers:** beans, eggs, angry, noise, sleep, tall, arms, little, kick, sneak

## Jack's Dot to Dot



Connect the dots  
to find what  
Jack takes from the Ogre