

# The Three Bully Goats Griff



## NEW MEXICO YOUNG ACTORS THE THREE BULLY GOATS GRIFF STUDY GUIDE

### SUMMARY

#### **THE THREE BULLY GOATS GRIFF**

by Patrick Rainville Dorn

The play is set in a mountain meadow. The smallest of a trio of goats, Billy, decides to become a bully, preventing anyone from crossing his bridge and pushing anyone who dares to try over the edge. The story is based on the fairy tale, "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." The silly characters and active scenes make this a fun play with an important anti-bullying message.

### CLASSROOM DISCUSSION (PRE-PERFORMANCE)

1. *How many of you have experienced a live dramatic performance? What did you see?*

2. *What are some of the differences between seeing a live performance and watching television or going to a movie?*

- Theater features live actors on-stage. They have spent many weeks rehearsing for the performance.
- The audience is a very important part of the performance. Appreciation and enthusiasm for the performers is shown by close attention and participation and applause at the proper times. The success of the play often depends on the audience.
- The atmosphere of a live performance is entirely different from your home, where the television is always available.
- It is easy to identify with live actors. You can see how they use their bodies and voices to convey different emotions.
- Actors wear costumes and make-up to help create the impression of the characters they play.

- There is much more to most live performances than actors. Special sets, effects, lighting, music, costumes, and of course, the audience add to the total experience.

3. *Introduce your students to the following theatrical terms:*

Box Office • Reserved Seats • Acts & Scenes • Producer • Program • Overture  
 • Costumes • Props • Director • Stage • Curtain Call • Stagehand • Lobby •  
 Usher • Musical Theater • Orchestra Pit • Playwright • Scenery • Makeup •  
 Actor • Balcony • Play

4. *Introduce your students to the following terminology found in our comedy:*

comeuppance, suburbs, representative democracy, election, taxes,  
 government, task forces, posterity, restoration, constituent, deplorable, zeitgeist,  
 smorgasbord, lame duck

## **THEATER ETIQUETTE**

*Discuss the role of the audience and proper theater etiquette.*

- Arrive on time so that you do not miss anything and so that you will not disturb the rest of the audience while trying to get comfortable. Lights may go out before the performance begins and seating is very difficult after that time.
- It is easier for you (and the rest of the audience) to see and hear the performance if you stay in your seat and listen very carefully.
- Try your best to remain in your seat once the performance has begun. There is no intermission during the performance of *The Three Bully Goats Griff*, which is 40 minutes in length.
- Although you may wish to say something to the actors, you need to hold your thoughts, as you will disturb their concentration.
- Sing or participate *if and only if* you are invited to do so. Your participation is often very important.
- Listen to how the music sets the moods and affects your own feelings.
- Show the cast and crew your appreciation for their hard work with applause. Do this when you like a song, dance, or joke.

## **CLASSROOM DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES (POST- PERFORMANCE)**

1. *Write an Epilogue:* Predict what happened next in the story. Write an article in which you tell the readers what happened after the character, Billy, is knocked off the

bridge. What happened to the other characters in the story? Be as specific as possible and keep with the spirit of the original story.

2. *Discuss real life situations that reflect the moral in The Three Bully Goats Griff.*

a) Ask the children what stories they can come up with that illustrate how important it is to be kind and respectful in all situations. Discuss how being a bully not only harms other people, but can eventually harm the bully emotionally and spiritually as well.

b) *The Three Bully Goats Griff* presents a strong anti-bullying message. Discuss how “Billy” became a bully. What attracted her to becoming a bully? Did she learn any valuable lessons while picking on other people? What kind of conclusion did she reach by the end of the story?

c) “Billy” makes poor choices regardless of the advice of those closest to her. What could have enabled “Billy” to make better choices? Challenge the students to consider how they take advice from others, especially parents, teachers, older siblings, and friends.

d) Our story presents several characters that address current issues. For example, “Dee Veloper” seems to be ignoring the environmental impact of her plans, and “Polly Titian” shows the pros and cons of government regulation. Create a group activity around these characters and the responsibilities they have in their respective jobs. How can development occur in an environmentally responsible way? Introduce the students to the structure of our government, how democracy works, and why controversies may arise when it comes to the decisions of our leaders.

3. *Music:* Was music used in the performance? Was it live or recorded? How could you tell? When was the music used? Why? Did it help develop the plot? What types of music were used, or were different types used? Can you describe how different kinds of music would make you have different kinds of feelings? When a play is a musical, an actor must have additional skills. Can you name some? A musical costs much more to produce. Can you name some additional expenses? (e.g., orchestra, a practice piano, a score, a choreographer, etc.)

4. *Sets:* Describe the sets used in the play you just saw. What props or details were used to suggest specific times or settings? How could lighting be changed to create a mood, season, time of day, etc.? What materials might have been used in building the sets? How were the sets and props moved on and off the stage? Describe a simple scene (a day in school, a trip to the mall, a ride in the car or on the bus) and ask students to describe a basic set for the scene.

5. *Costumes:* What would you need to know to create costumes for a play (research, sewing, theatrical effects, etc.)? Why is the right costume important to the character in the play?

6. *Dance*: Describe the kind of dancing in the play. How is it different from the kinds of dancing you might know? What purposes could dance have in a play?

7. *Art activities*:

- Draw a picture of a favorite scene or character.
- Draw a picture of what the audience might look like from on-stage.
- Re-create a scene from the play using clay forms in a box.
- Design a program cover for the play using the title, date, and an illustration inspired by the play.
- Draw an advertisement or program cover for the play.

8. *Language arts*:

- Choose a character that you liked and write a one-day's diary for that character. Write a letter to a cast member telling what you liked about her or his character.
- Discuss the play. Was there a hero or heroine? A villain? The setting? Was there a moral to the story?
- In 25 words or fewer, describe the plot of the play.
- Discuss the work of a movie/theater critic. Write a newspaper-type review of the play
- Discuss live theater. Are the actors aware of the audience? Why might an actor change his presentation because of audience reaction? Would it be easy to be an actor? Conduct an interview with a classmate pretending to be one of the actors and find out the actor's feelings about being on stage, memorization, rehearsals, costumes, audience, etc.
- Make a list of all the personnel needed for a play (director, actors, musicians, author, designers—set, costumes, lights, sound—stagehands, choreographer, producer, etc).

## THE THREE BULLY GOATS GRIFF – INTERNET ACTIVITIES

<http://www.worldstories.org.uk/stories/story/79-three-billy-goats-gruff>

The story of The Three Billy Goats Gruff

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three\\_Billy\\_Goats\\_Gruff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Billy_Goats_Gruff)

A great place to find information on the history of the fairy tale and other resources.

Much of this material is contributed with the kind permission of the *Cincinnati Children's Theater*, *Pioneer Drama Service*, and *Plays for Young Audiences*. This study guide was compiled by Billie J. Little, a former member of the Board of Directors for New Mexico Young Actors, Inc., and Paul Bower, Executive Director of NMYA.