

RAPPIN' STILTSKIN

By Donna Wilson

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SYNOPSIS

Here is a humorous, fractured version of the fairy tale, Rumpelstiltskin, with some of the traditional aspects of the story but with a few modern day conveniences thrown in.

In this version all the characters are likeable; the greedy king is now a kind ruler looking for money to save endangered species without raising taxes, and the passive young woman who must spin straw into gold is now vocal, resourceful and self-reliant.

Even the funny little character, whose name has been changed to reflect his rap style speech, is likeable, just lonely!

Luckily for everyone in this modern day kingdom, the ultra-cool dudes, Hunters-of-the-Perfect Wave, help this play have a happy ending.

Kids from 5th grade to senior high will have fun with this one! RAPPIN' STILTSKIN has a large, flexible cast, requires minimal settings, and no costumes. And the "rappin" is just plain fun. Whoever thought a teacher was so cool as to bring an outrageous play like this to school?

NOTE: Although well received by young people, the "rap" concept may cause stress in some adults. RAPPIN' STILTSKIN can be adapted into rhyme (RHYMINGSTILTSKIN) with little effort.

PLAYING TIME: About 45 minutes.

TIME: Present day.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 main characters)

BLANCHE *(female)*

KING GEORGE *(male)*

ADVISER *(flexible)*

RAPPIN' STILTSKIN *(flexible)*

*(Additional flexible cast of 13 or more.
Change pronouns where necessary.)*

NARRATOR

CHORUS (3 to 5)

MILLER

BUTCHER

MERCHANTS and SHOPPERS (5 to 8 walk-ons)

HUNTERS-OF-THE-PERFECT-WAVE (2)

Additional cast mentioned:

Mr. Teacher (Substitute a popular staff member's name.)

**Students and/or staff members #1 - 6 (Substitute names
of persons familiar to audience.)**

SETTING

Marketplace in Fairy Tale Land. Baskets of vegetables and fruit are on a table or two, USC. Exit SR leads to KING GEORGE'S castle. The castle room consists of a table and two chairs.

PROPS

Orange for Butcher; scroll for King; basket filled with yellow yarn and a sign which reads STRAW on one side and GOLD on the other for Blanche; checkbook, pen and stack of papers for King; letter for Adviser; ring, gold chain necklace, doll with booties, and box of disposable diapers for Blanche; surfboards, skateboards or swim fins for Hunters.

COSTUMES

None required. If desired, parts may be highlighted with a single item as white aprons for Butcher and Miller, crown for King, scarf or headband for Blanche, then a crown for Queen Blanche, etc.

Scene 1

(AT RISE: MILLER and BUTCHER stand CS. NARRATOR and CHORUS stand SL. Walk-on MERCHANTS and SHOPPERS enter and exit SL and SR.)

NARRATOR: Welcome to our presentation of RAPPIN' STILTSKIN. We ask you to join us for a time in a land where state-of-the-art conveniences, giants, unicorns and ... a strange, little man, come together to re-tell an old story. Once upon a time ...

(In CHORUS' dialogue of two sentences or more, have each member read individual sentences, rather than chorally.)

CHORUS:

- (1) "Once upon a time"?
- (2) Listen, Jack. This is (current year).
- (3) Get real.

NARRATOR: What do you mean?

CHORUS:

- (1) We are not talkin' pre-school here.
- (2) Once upon a time? Fairy tales?
- (3) Those are for babies, man.

NARRATOR: Oh, yeah? Well, I was just about to start a story that definitely is not for babies. It has a father who is a liar, a king who threatens a young woman, and a little man who tries to steal a King and Queen's baby.

CHORUS:

- (1) Oooo, gruesome!
- (2) You have our attention.
- (3) What happens?

NARRATOR: Once upon a time ... there was a Miller who ground whole grains into flour. He was a good man, and he did his work well. People trusted him, and his reputation grew across the land. But, he had an annoying friend, the Butcher. The Butcher made more money than the Miller, and everyday, the Butcher would brag about his good fortunes. One day at the marketplace ...

CHORUS: "The marketplace"?

NARRATOR: Just think of it as a mall. Anyway, the Butcher and Miller were talking ...

BUTCHER: *(Peeling an orange.)* I bought a bird yesterday. Oh! You should hear its song! Like the angels singing at daybreak!

MILLER: *(Groaning to SELF.)* Here we go again! *(Aloud.)* Did I ever tell you how my daughter can sing like a bird?

(SHOPPERS and MERCHANTS continue to do business in the background. Shoppers are gradually buying all fruits and vegetables, and leaving tables bare. When KING GEORGE enters, all walk-ons with market props have exited.)

BUTCHER: *(Eats a piece of orange.)* Ah! You should meet my new helper! I tell you, the kid is brilliant! Already, he knows more about being a butcher than I do! He can trick my customers into buying cheap meat for expensive prices!

MILLER: *(A little exasperated.)* Well, talk about smart ... my daughter is always reading the newspaper, and she has great ideas on how to save money. Unlike you, Butcher, we must be very careful with what little money we have.

BUTCHER: Ah, money, my favorite subject. Do you know how much wealth my new cows will bring me? They are so fat I will be able to sell them for a fortune! It's such a pity you are so poor.

(KING GEORGE and ADVISER enter SR, and stand behind MILLER.)

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MILLER: (*Loses patience.*) Oh, yeah? Well, we're not so poor! My daughter can ... uh, spin straw into gold! Yes, that's exactly what she can do!

NARRATOR: Disgusted, the Miller turned to go home and saw the King. He was certain the King had heard his foolish boast, but he felt very embarrassed.

CHORUS:

Ummmmm. Shame, shame.

Nothin'll ever be the same.

NARRATOR: Well, King George wasn't all bad. In fact, he had a kind heart, and ruled a gentle kingdom. And, he was very generous to others in trouble. Unfortunately, that meant his kingdom was almost always bankrupt.

CHORUS: Bankrupt?

NARRATOR: That means when you've spent all your money, and your parents don't give your allowance until next week.

CHORUS: Oh. We know all about that!

NARRATOR: So, the King was constantly looking for new ways to earn money for his kingdom. But since he has promised the kingdom he would not raise taxes, he had a very hard time.

KING GEORGE: (*To ADVISER.*) Ummm. That man is the Miller, and he has always been known to be truthful. Here is my chance to pay off the kingdom's bills without raising taxes.

MILLER and BUTCHER: Good Morning, Your Highness!

KING GEORGE: (*Looks up.*) Well, yes. I guess it is a good morning. I should notice things like that, but I've been so worried with all the money going out to the schools, and for cleaning up the forest, not to mention, rehabilitating the Giants!

End of Freeview

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