



***billy goats gruff
& other tales***

teacher resource guide

about the performance

Billy Goats Gruff & Other Tales offers an invigorating twist on three tales about bravery, persistence and courage. In *Billy Goats Gruff*, three starving goats are craving a rest in a meadow. The goats must cross a taunting troll, face their fears and pinpoint their inner strength. In *Wolves vs. Pigs*, the pigs attempt to ward off a scheming wolf, hoping the wolf's breath won't crush their homes! In *Goldilocks*, Goldilocks allows the porridge's scent to overtake her, busting into a stranger's home. After licking a few bowls and shattering a chair, Goldilocks must await her fate at the doorstep ... three angry bears!



cultural connections

The earliest version of *Goldilocks* was written in 1831 by author Eleanor Mure. The original tale did not have a blonde, curly-haired girl at its center. Instead, Goldilocks was an older woman. It was not until later, in 1850, that Goldilocks would be replaced by a curly-haired girl in a retelling by author Joseph Cundall.

The earliest published form of *The Three Little Pigs* was produced in England during the 1840s, with the tale set in Dartmoor, England. Instead of pigs, the characters were pixies, with a fox serving as the antagonist of the tale. The version we currently know was published in *English Fairy Tales* by Joseph Jacobs in the 1890s.

The Three Billy Goats Gruff was first published as a Norwegian fairy tale by children's authors Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe in their collection *Norske Folkeeventyr*. It is estimated that this work debuted between 1841 and 1844. The English version, which inspired the onstage work, was a translation by George Webbe Dasent in 1859, under the title *Popular Tales from the Norse*.

These tales, though written in different regions and times, continue to resonate because of the universal themes they explore: bravery in the face of danger, the value of cleverness and persistence, and the consequences of one's actions. By revisiting and retelling them across generations, cultures reaffirm the importance of moral lessons embedded in folklore. When performed on stage, these stories connect with diverse audiences worldwide, reminding us that the challenges faced by goats, pigs or curious children are mirrors of human resilience, fear and growth.

vocabulary

Conflict

A problem that a story's characters face

Dialogue

Lines said by two or more characters in a story

Gobble

To swallow up quickly

Hard

Firm to the touch

Hooves

A goat's feet

Meadow

A field of grass and flowers

Porridge

A food made of grains like oatmeal, served warm

Predict

To use clues to say what you think will happen next

Rank

To put in an order

Resolution

A solution to a character's problems

Soft

Gentle to the touch

Setting

The location/place where a story takes place

Stomp

To step down hard with your foot

Trampling

To walk with heavy steps

Troll

An imaginary and mythical creature

Weight

How heavy an object is



inspired learning for the classroom

P

Prepare

Discover what your students already know about this art form, topic or type of performance. Then explain more fully what they will see at the theater and why it's important. This can be accomplished by sharing images, vocabulary, videos or context that might help them appreciate the performance more fully.

Student Activity

For an introduction to the show, watch the read-aloud videos for *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, *The Three Little Pigs*, *Goldilocks & The Three Bears* and answer the following questions below.

1. Which of the pigs' materials is strong or weak?
2. If the wolf tried to spook you, what emotions might you feel?
3. If you were a bear, how would you react to an intruder?
4. What does it mean to be brave?
5. When was a time when you were brave in the face of fear?

NJ Student Learning Standards

English Language Arts
SL.II.K.2., SL.AS.K.6.

E

Experience

For some students, this may be their first time in a theater. Review audience etiquette and go over expectations for arrival and departure from the theater. Before watching the show, provide a discussion question for them to consider during the performance.
Optional: At school, let students share a one-word answer to a prompt about how they feel (eg, which TV character do you feel like today? If you were a texture, what texture would you be?). After the field trip, ask students the same question and let them explain why they feel the same or why they feel differently.

Before attending the performance, review and engage in a full class discussion.

1. How is watching a play different from watching TV or a film?
2. How can we show our focus and a listening body to live actors onstage?

English Language Arts
SL.PE.K.1., SL.PI.K.4.

R

Reflect

Give students a moment to think about their answer to the discussion question you introduced in the experience section. Then allow them to share their response out loud with the class. Next, have students reflect on the skillset of the performers they saw in the show. Go around the class and have each student fill in the following statement: "I can already _____ like the performers did, but I can't _____ yet!" After everyone is done, remind them that with enough time and practice, they can accomplish anything they set their minds to.

Following the production, have the students reflect on their experience using the following questions:

1. Were any characters brave? How do you know?
2. Were any characters afraid? How do you know?
3. If you were to give a kind word to help them, what would you say?
4. Why might the third billy goat feel strong enough to face the troll?
5. Is there a lesson that Goldilocks learned as she ran away?
6. Do you think it would be easy or tough for you to stand up to the wolf?

English Language Arts
RI.CR.K.1, RL.CI.K.2.

F

Focus

Use this time to review the **vocabulary** section and complete the *SchoolTime* activity sheets.

For younger students: introduce the quality of hardness and softness (utilize two examples from your room, ex., a paper weight and a tissue). Ask which things Goldilocks "tests" for hardness and softness. Then complete **Activity Sheet 1**.
For older students: ask the students to recall when the wolf approached the brick house of the Pigs (setting). Allow the students to share what worried the pigs (conflict), and in what way they fixed it (resolution). Then complete **Activity Sheet 2**.
[activity sheet link](#)

English Language Arts
L.RF.K.2., L.VI.K.3.
Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard #1, 2

O

Originate

After reviewing vocabulary, write a class poem about the performance, where each student adds a line. Once the poem is complete, read the poem as a class three times, with each student saying the line they wrote. Before each repetition, give them a prompt to inform how they deliver their line (eg, say it like you're excited, scared, angry, etc.).
Optional: To reinforce learning from the focus section, encourage students to incorporate all the vocabulary words.

Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard #1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 10
Social & Emotional Learning Competencies
Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making

R

Rehearse

Have each student draw their own picture inspired by the show and their class poem. As they are working, use this time to walk around and ask them each about what they are drawing, the materials they are using and what inspired them.

Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard #1, 2, 7, 8, 10
Social & Emotional Learning Competencies
Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making

M

Mix it all together!

Allow each student to present their artwork and discuss why they drew what they did, giving them an opportunity to express themselves visually and verbally.
Between presentations, allow two or three students to describe their reactions to the artwork that was presented. Encourage them to use phrases like "It reminded me of _____" or "It made me feel _____" rather than describing the art as good or bad.
Once everyone is done presenting, put the artwork up on the wall with the class poem to complete your students' poem gallery.

Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard #5, 6, 7, 8, 10
Social & Emotional Learning Competencies
Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making

curriculum standards

English Language Arts

L.RF.K.2.
Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

L.VI.K.3.
With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

RI.CR.K.1
With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in an informational text.

RL.CI.K.2.
With prompting and support, identify the central message and retell familiar literary texts, including key details.

SL.PE.K.1.
Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

SL.PI.K.4.
Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.

SL.II.K.2.
Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.

SL.AS.K.6.
Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

Social & Emotional Learning Competencies

Self-awareness
Integrating personal & social identities; Identifying ones’ emotions; Linking feelings, values & thoughts

Social-awareness
Taking others’ perspectives; Showing concern for the feelings of others; demonstrating empathy & compassion

Responsible decision making
Recognizing how critical thinking skills are useful both inside and outside of school; Identifying solutions for personal and social problems; Learning how to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, and facts; Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness

Relationship skills
Communicating effectively; Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving

Visual & Performing Arts

Anchor Standard 1
Conceptualizing and generating ideas

Anchor Standard 2
Organizing and developing ideas

Anchor Standard 5
Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation

Anchor Standard 6
Convey meaning through presentation of artistic work

Anchor Standard 7
Perceiving and analyzing products

Anchor Standard 8
Applying criteria to evaluate products

Anchor Standard 10
Synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experiences to create products.

additional resources

NJPAC
About NJPAC
njpac.org/about

NJPAC’s Arts Education programs
njpac.org/arts-education

NJPAC’s David G. Berger Master Class Series
njpac.org/berger

Billy Goats Gruff & Other Tales Activity Sheets
njpac.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/BillyGoatsGruff_ActivitySheets-1.pdf

Websites

Billy Goats Gruff STEM Challenge
science-sparks.com/a-raft-for-the-billy-goats

A Menagerie of Animal Tales: The Three Billy Goats Gruff
apps.lib.umich.edu/online-exhibits/exhibits/show/animaltales/goats

Different Versions of Goldilocks and the Three Bears
storiesbystorie.com/different-versions-of-goldilocks-and-the-three-bears

Listen and Play: The Billy Goats Gruff
bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/articles/zr3yt39

Fairy Tale STEM project: Goldilocks and the Three Bears
teachbesideme.com/fairy-tale-stem-project-goldilocks-three-bears

A Library of Folktales, Fairytales, and Mythology
sites.pitt.edu/~dash/folktexts.html

“Fingertale Puppets: Goldilocks and the Three Bears”
educationalinsights.com/media/product-instructions/1010%20Goldilocks-G.pdf

Discussion Guide: The Three Billy Goats Gruff
scholastic.com/content/dam/scholastic/educators/discussion-guides/three-billy-goats-gruff-kit.pdf

Three Billy Goats Gruff Lesson Plan
thenational.academy/teachers/programmes/literacy-foundation-early-years-foundation-stage-l/units/the-three-billy-goats-gruff-d801/lessons?sid-f7a8dc=8MiDUgA6qC&sm=1&src=3

The Three Billy Goats Gruff; Preschool/Kindergarten
oercommons.org/courseware/lesson/69694/overview

Goldilocks and the Three Bears Activities
storybus.org/goldilocks_activities.pdf

Storybook Stem: Three Little Pigs
adventuresci.org/diy-science/posts/storybook-stem

Three Billy Goats Gruff Craft
iheartcraftythings.com/three-billy-goats-gruff-craft.html

Wind Science Experiment Three Little Pigs Activity
fantasticfunandlearning.com/three-little-pigs-activity-wind-science-experiment.html

The Three Little Pigs Activities for Preschool Yoga
kidsyogastories.com/three-little-pigs-preschool

Videos

The Three Billy Goats Gruff – Read Aloud
youtube.com/watch?v=VVLf5t8ToRA

The Three Little Pigs – Read Aloud
youtube.com/watch?v=FNyBQsay_Ek

Goldilocks & The Three Bears – Read Aloud
youtube.com/watch?v=96ymij_0zjs

Storytelling with Instruments : The 3 Little Pigs
letsplaykidsmusic.com/storytelling-three-little-pigs

bring the arts to your school

In-School Residencies

NJPAC teaching artists come right to your school to teach the performing arts to your students. Our super-flexible in-person residencies are designed to meet your needs and you'll have a dedicated program manager to help you every step of the way. It's the perfect program to keep your students creating, connecting and expressing themselves through the magic of the arts.

Professional Development

Calling all educators! Expand your teaching skills, deepen your curriculum and give yourself a creative boost in NJPAC's forward-thinking professional development workshops. Our virtual PD programs are for teachers all the way from pre-K to high school and include hip hop, dance, storytelling, theater, music and more. Not only will you learn something... you'll also have fun and be inspired.

NJPAC Arts Education Schooltime team*:

Dr. Sherri-Ann Butterfield

*Senior Vice President,
Social Impact*

Jennifer Tsukayama

Vice President, Arts Education

Rosa Hyde

*Senior Director,
Performances & Initiatives*

Dr. Patricio Molina

*Senior Director,
Faculty & Creative Practice*

Treasure Borde

*Senior Manager,
Performances & Special Initiatives*

April Jeffries

*Manager,
Outreach & Sales Manager*

Andrea Seigal

Teacher Resource Guide Committee

Sarah Mickle

Teacher Resource Guide Committee

Azriel Wallace

Teacher Resource Guide Committee

Rob Reddington

Teacher Resource Guide Committee

*This guide was written by

Rob Reddington and reviewed by
Dr. Patricio Molina

contact us!

For more information or to schedule an appointment,
please email our team at artseducation@njpac.org.
Or visit njpac.org/education

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