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Ozma of Oz: A Tale of Time

Rebecca Hixson

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Zeder, Susan. *Ozma of Oz: A Tale of Time*. Anchorage Press, 1981. \$35 for the first performance, \$30 for the second, and \$25 for each subsequent performance. 68 pp.

Reviewer: Rebecca Hixson

Reading Level: Preschool; Primary; Intermediate;

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Plays; Fantasy plays;

Subject: Family--Juvenile drama; Friendship--Juvenile drama; Imagination--Juvenile drama; Oz (Imaginary Place)--Juvenile drama;

Theme: Intergenerational caring and understanding.

Production Requirements: Simple set, suggestive of Oz: allow the imagination of the audience to work for you.

Acts: One

Run Time: 45 min.

Characters: Nine female, nine male; many of the roles may be double and triple cast to reduce the size of the company. This show may be done with a minimum of twelve actors to a maximum of eighteen to twenty depending on the number of gnomes.

Cast: Can be performed by adults for children, or by children for children

Time Period: Contemporary

Ozma of Oz: A Tale in Time is an adaptation of the story of *Ozma of Oz* by L. Frank Baum. It takes Dorothy (a contemporary teenager) and her elderly Uncle Henry (who is in a wheelchair) on an adventure to Oz. They encounter many disasters, but by working together, they are able to overcome the disasters and save Oz from the evil Roquat of the Rock.

Zeder took the story by L. Frank Baum and added something to it—a theme or central idea that everyone could care deeply about. The theme of intergenerational caring and understanding between Dorothy and Uncle Henry is developed throughout the adventure in Oz. Dorothy and Uncle Henry are believable, and it is easy to relate to them. The characters of Oz are deliberately more absurd to spotlight Dorothy and Uncle Henry. Their relationship is crucial to the play.

The set should be simple, allowing the audience to use their imagination. This play tends to invite over-production. The temptation to pull out all the stops should be resisted. The staging and costumes should show the world of Oz as a wild and dazzling place, but overdoing the theatricality of these elements could obscure the focus on Dorothy and her personal voyage to discover her equally dazzling uncle.