



2002

Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*

Elizabeth Moss

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Bennet, Alan and Jeremy Sams. *Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows*. Samuel French, 1991. ISBN 0573019304. Contact publisher regarding price. 68 pp.

Reviewer: Elizabeth Moss

Reading Level: Preschool; Primary; Intermediate

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Folklore; Plays; Fairy tales; Adventure plays

Subject: Drama--Reviews; Animals--Juvenile drama; Friendship--Juvenile drama; Grahame, Kenneth (1859-1932)--Juvenile drama;

Theme: Friendship

Production Requirements: Moderate to elaborate sets and costumes. There are many characters and many sets.

Acts: 2

Run Time: 100 min.

Characters: 35+ characters, gender flexible, doubling possible

Cast: Adults

Time Period: Turn of the century

Mole and Rat become friends and play along the river. They soon meet up with their other friends Toad and Badger. Together, the four have all sorts of adventures in the Wild Wood and even in the Wide Wood while trying to cure Toad of his automobile woes.

This is a delightful adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's classic story. The characters are well developed and endearing in both their actions and speech. The adventures that the characters go through are exciting and fun without being too tense or suspenseful. Like the novel, the play is more a series of vignettes rather than a continuous rising action ending with a climax and denouement. In the latter half of the play when Toad ends up in prison for car theft, the play starts building in a rising action and a continuous plot begins to emerge out of the various scenes. The play moves from location to location in a quick manner which keeps the pace and tempo of the play moving but might require some fanciful tricks with sets and lighting. This is an outstanding play that brings to life the characters of a well-loved and treasured book.