



2003

The Frog Prince

Mindy M. Nelsen

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Marsh, Edward. *The Frog Prince*. Performance Publishing Co., 1973. \$15.00 for 1st performance, and \$10.00 for every subsequent use. 27 pp.

Reviewer: Mindy M. Nelsen

Reading Level: Preschool; Primary;

Rating: Shortcomings;

Genre: Fairy Tales; Plays;

Subject: Drama--Reviews; Fairytales--Juvenile drama; Folklore--Germany--Juvenile drama;

Theme: Good always conquers over bad, and those who are of good and honest hearts, are happy in the end.

Production Requirements: Simple sets. Scene I takes place in a room in the king's palace; scene II takes place in the forest; scenes III and IV take place in the same room in the king's palace. Costumes would be moderate. Few props are needed.

Acts: 1

Run Time: 25 minutes

Characters: 4M, 5W

Cast: All can be children, or all adults, or 2 adults and 7 children (flexible)

Time Period: Some time ago

Based on the traditional fable of the same name by the Brothers Grimm. Differences include the additions of a few characters including: the unruffled Queen Melissa and worrisome King Marcus, the self-absorbed Prince Frederick and two attendants to the principle character, Princess Julietta. Added to the story is the possible outbreak of war and threat of an unwarranted and undesired marriage.

The play is designed to revolve around the life of Princess Julietta. Additional characters have been added in with the hopes of moving the play along. But these characters are predictable, static, and seemingly without purpose in the plot. Therefore, they inhibit the progression of the play and that of the principle character. She is not given the opportunity to develop or grow based on the situations that come her way because there are too many outside distractions. She changes all too suddenly at the end and the audience is left wondering what happened in the last 30 seconds wherein the play is resolved and all of their problems disappear. The plot doesn't have the opportunity to be developed, as there is so much outside distraction. The relationship between the princess and the frog, as well as the possible triangle of human emotions when Prince Frederick joins the picture is not explored.

The play does however, present the director with a variety of options in regards to the costumes and set. It can also be done quite simplistically (as there are only two semi-major scene changes) or with an experimental flare of color and fantastic costumes. The play's main qualities are that it is affordable, flexible, and simplistic.