



2009

The Play Called Noah's Flood

Rebeca Wallin

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Zeder, Susan. *The Play Called Noah's Flood*. Anchorage Press, 1984. ISBN 0876022476. Contact publisher regarding price. 62 p.

Reviewer: Rebeca Wallin

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Plays; Historical plays; Humorous plays;

Subject: Mystery plays; Medieval times--Juvenile drama; Religious festivals--Juvenile drama; Drama--Reviews;

Theme: The process of art production can be more rewarding than the end result.

Production Requirements: Large set, several props and movable set pieces, costume changes and sound.

Acts: 1

Run Time: 90 minutes

Characters: 18

Cast: 10 male, 8 female

Time Period: Late 1400s

This play takes place in a small medieval town in England where the citizens are getting ready to do a Mystery Play for a religious festival. The whole town is involved and excited about the play, especially John, the blacksmith who is heading up the play. John goes so far as to place the play's importance above his work and family. When the festival official arrives five days early to judge the play, chaos ensues. Eventually though, the town pulls together to put on the play, Noah's Flood, anyway. John's relationship with his family is somewhat healed through this process. Despite the official's criticisms, the townspeople are happy with the play, proving that creating art together is more rewarding than accolades and fame.

This play serves as an excellent introduction to Medieval Mystery Plays. It shows the process of how they were put together and performed and also includes an adaptation of one of the plays. The large cast of colorful characters (18+) makes it ideal for a high school or teenage acting group to perform. The play within the play creates opportunities for lots of creativity with costumes, set, and performance. The writing, largely based on actor improvisation, is organic and smooth, crafted by the playwright instead of just thrown on the page. Although the play ends happily, it does not tidily wrap up every plot point, which leaves room for thought and discussion following the play.

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