



2013

The BFG

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Author: Wood, David; Dahl, Roald

Title: The BFG

Year of Publication: 1991

Publisher: Samuel French

ISBN: 9780573050947

of pages: 46

Rating: Outstanding

Reading/Interest Level: Preschool; Primary; Intermediate

Keywords: Young Audiences; Literary Adaptations; Roald Dahl; Adventure Plays; Fantasy Plays; Humorous Plays

Production Requirements: Some effects. Quick change costumes

of Acts: 2

Estimated Runtime: 75 minutes

of Characters: 30

Cast Requirements: 4M+, 4F+

Time Period: Late 1990s

Review:

A faithful adaptation of Roald Dahl's classic book, the story is acted out by guests at a child's birthday party. Young Sophie lives in an orphanage and late one night sees a giant walking through the streets of London. When the giant sees her awake he kidnaps her and takes her to the land of the giants. Upon arrival Sophie discovers that her kidnapper – the BFG

(big friendly giant,) – is the one kind giant in a land filled with monsters that leave each night to feast on humans. Using the BFG's cache of stored dreams that he nightly blows into the windows of children they hatch a plan to meet the Queen of England and save the world from the evil giants. They are happily successful and Sophie is adopted by the Queen. Puppets are used to convey the actor's different sizes.

The children's theatre technique of bookending a story with actor's telling a story has been overdone and is often not useful and distracting. In this production though, the technique is well suited to the story and introduces the use of puppets well. The "child actor" sections are short and energetic and help to move the story along. The adaptation stays true to the heart and comedy of the original story and mirrors Roald Dahl's humorous style in the dialogue. Children and adults alike will be entertained by the antics of the giants, the subtle and not so subtle humor, and the just right amount of scary in the play. Wood's knowledge of what children enjoy and need in a show is evident in the script. The original production called for several large set pieces that would make touring difficult but some creative staging could make a tour possible.

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