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Play Review

Chris Bartlett

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war with others. The area Ranger can not decide what he can do to bring peace. The animals, with Blue’s secretive support and inspiration, call on their Brother Moon. *Moon-Dark* is a delightful and amusing metaphoric story of war and the making of peace. It would make a very satisfying read-aloud. — Carol V. Oaks

### Play Reviews

**A-**


A traveling group of players desires to put on a show for the children. One of the group, Patience, is having a birthday, so she gets to choose the story they will present. The choice is made, parts assigned, and the play begins. *Rumplestiltskin* is the classic story of the Baker’s daughter who married the Prince after turning straw into gold. The little man who performed this feat for her, demands payment of her first born child. He agrees to allow the Princess three guesses at his name, which if correct, he agrees not to take the child. Mr. Goldberg has done a fine job putting this famous tale into a play for adults to perform for children.

This is an audience participation play. The viewers are to participate actively in the production, thus requiring that the actors be experienced and capable of handling children’s responses. The children are encouraged to be involved through verbal responses, creative dramatics, and mime. Notes are included in the back of the script giving suggestions as to how to react to the varied input you might encounter and where these responses are most likely to occur.

The set consists of three nesting boxes with other items being created by the mime character of the group. Costumes and props are in a trunk and are pulled out as needed by the mime. The lyrics of the songs are simple, adding fun and variety to the production.

This script would tour well, but due to the active involvement of the audience, it would be necessary to limit the audience size to 200. Six strong actors are required with a stress on their ability to work one on one with the children. I would recommend presentation of this play for lower to mid-elementary school children. — Chris Bartlett

**B+**


Alpha Ray, a visitor from “Other World,” comes to earth to find the solution to the Four Force Equation by conversing with Albert Einstein in 1955. Something has gone wrong which lands him in the year 1985. He is discovered by Max, the class “dunce” in math, who has a keen interest in outer space. Max decides to help Alpha Ray discover the mathematical solution. Alpha has only 24 hours in which to make his discovery and return to his own world before he self-destructs. Under Max’s direction, Alpha uncovers the solution but erases it from the class blackboard prior to his return home. Max is upset when he finds the solution has been erased, but sees a message left for him that someone in his own century must find it for his world. The viewer is left with the impression that Max will continue the search.
Alien Equation is a simple and light script. The characters tend to be the same stereotyped “students” that we see in countless other plays about secondary school kids. The plot focuses on the changes in Max’s attitude rather than the alien himself. Growth in Max’s ability to think, organize and stay on task is shown through the script, giving us a glimpse of his undeveloped talents.

Scenery is minimal and costumes fairly simple with special effects being created through lighting. The script calls for 13 cast members but as few as 10 could be used. Voice overs are employed both at the beginning and end of the play. This would be a fun class project for Jr. High or lower High School students. — Chris Bartlett