



## Performance Notes for The Ogre's Feathers

### THREE WAYS THAT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS CAN UTILIZE THIS PLAY

- 1.** Students can read the play aloud while sitting in the classroom. Ask the readers to skip all bracketed stage directions. You may prefer to rotate your actors to give all students a chance to read the speaking parts.
- 2.** Students can perform the play in the classroom. Clear an area that can be used as the stage. Have the audience sit on the floor in front of the stage. Students in the play can make simple costumes and/or sets as described below. When the scene change, the characters "on stage" simply walk to the back of the room where they wait until their next appearance "on stage."
- 3.** Students can perform the play on stage. Refer to the production notes that follow. Ask the actors to enter from the back of the room and move through the audience as they approach the stage.



### COSTUMES

- NARRATOR– Simple, nice clothing.
- KING– Black pants, dark-colored long sleeved shirt, long red or purple robe, and a beret or brimmed hat with a feather. Feather can be attached to hat with hot glue, tape, or thread. Black boots or shoes.



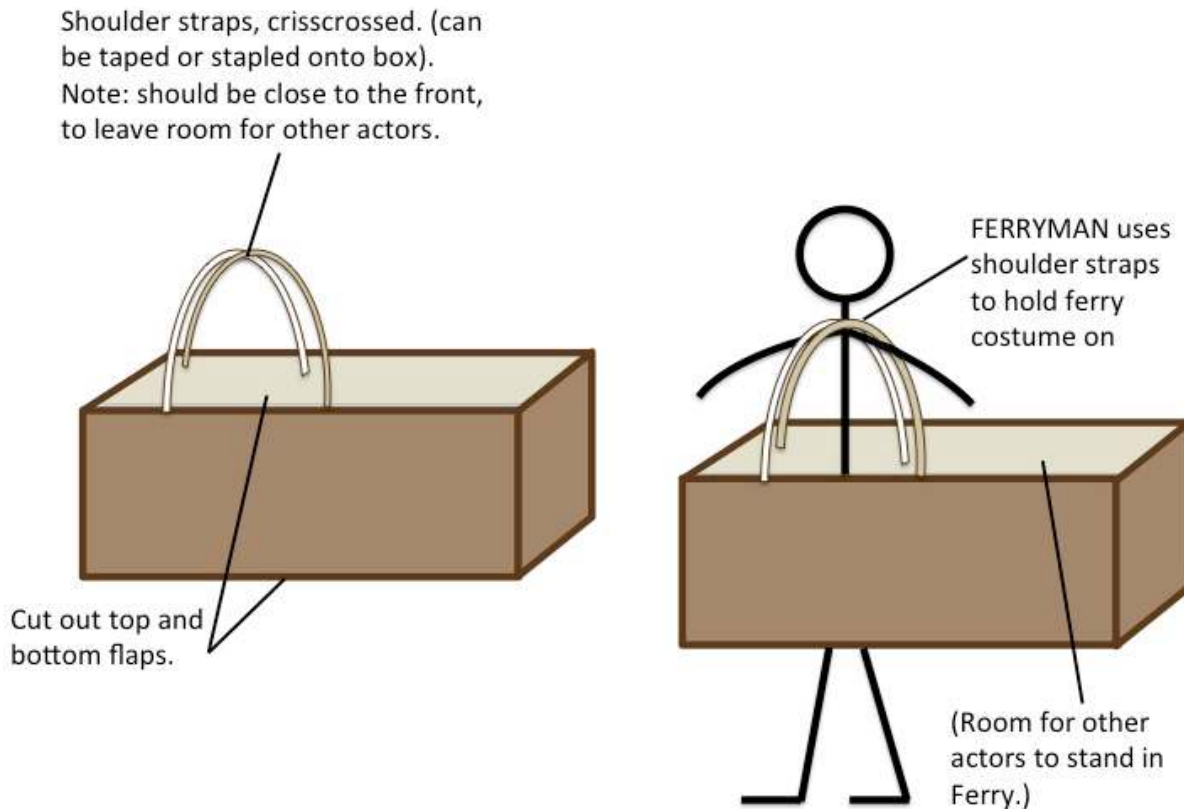
- COURT ATTENDANT #1 and #2/VILLAGER #1 and #2— Tan or brown pants, a long-sleeved light-colored buttoned shirt. Brown boots or shoes. Note: for COURT ATTENDANT character, add a tan or brown buttoned vest and a beret or brimmed hat with a feather.
- MEDICO— Black pants, dark-colored long sleeved shirt, a long black robe or cape and a beret or brimmed hat with a feather. Black boots or shoes.
- COURT ADVISOR #1— Black pants, a long-sleeved light colored buttoned shirt, and dark buttoned vest, black boots or shoes. He wears a sword at his waist, which can be tucked into a belt or sash. Sword can be plastic or made from cardboard and painted. A fake beard is optional.
- COURT ADVISOR #2— Black pants, a long-sleeved light colored buttoned shirt, and dark buttoned vest, black boots or shoes. He wears a sword at his waist, which can be tucked into a belt or sash. Sword can be plastic or made from cardboard and painted. A fake beard is optional.
- EROE— Black pants, a long-sleeved light colored shirt, and dark buttoned vest, black boots or shoes. He wears a sword at his waist, which can be tucked into a belt or sash. Sword can be plastic or made from cardboard and painted.
- INNKEEPER— A long light-colored dress, apron, and black or brown boots or shoes.
- FERRYMAN— Tan or brown pants, a long-sleeved light-colored buttoned shirt. Brown boots or shoes.

FERRYMAN wears a ferry costume as well. This can be constructed from a wide cardboard box painted brown. The top and bottom lids can be cut off, so that there is a long opening in which the FERRYMAN can stand.

The box can be held onto his shoulders with two straps. Straps can be made from strips of cloth or rope, which can be attached to the cardboard box by pushing through holes cut into the side and knotted into place.

Note: When EROE and BELLAFORE get into the ferry, there are two ways it can happen. They can either duck underneath or FERRYMAN can crouch down and they can step into it.

See images:



- **DUKE**— Black pants, long-sleeved richly colored (to match **DUTCHESS**) shirt, a dark buttoned vest, black boots or shoes, and a beret or brimmed hat with a feather.
- **DUCHESS**—Long richly colored (to match **DUKE**) gown or dress with long sleeves, and black flat shoes. Another option is to wear a long-sleeved light colored blouse and a sleeveless dress over top. A smaller beret or brimmed hat with a feather.
- **BELAFLORE**— A long dress, an apron, a hooded cloak, and black or brown boots or shoes. A hooded cloak can be simulated by taking a blanket, sheet, or long piece of fabric, hanging it over the actor's head, and safety-pinning it together at the collar. This creates a "hood" and allows the piece to be worn as a cloak.



- **OGRE**— All brown clothing and covered in feathers. You can either sew feathers to brown clothes or attach with hot glue. Another option is to cover a long cloak with feathers and the **OGRE** can wear the cloak over the brown clothes.

Note: Three feathers have to be loose, so that **BELLAFORE** can “pluck” them. These three feathers can be attached with Velcro, so they are easy to detach.

Optional: **OGRE** can also have any or all of the following to look scary: painted green face, a mane, fangs, claws (these can be made by attaching triangular pieces of cardboard to gloves).



## PROPS

### Scene 1

- Optional: A map of Italy for **NARRATOR** to hold up. Students can draw a map with markers or cut one out of construction paper.
- Large old-looking book for **MEDICO**.
- Swords for **COURT ATTENDANT #1**, **COURT ATTENDANT #2** and **EROE**. These can be made from cardboard.
- A bowl and a few plastic jars/cups/vials on the table.
- Plastic cup or vial that holds potion for **KING**.
- A cape or blanket for **COURT ADVISOR #1** to put around **KING**'s shoulders.
- Cloth for **COURT ADVISOR #2** to put on **KING**'S forehead.

### Scene 2

- Broom for **INNKEEPER**.

### Scene 3

- Blue cloth or fabric for **STAGE HANDS** to hold up.



## Scene 4

- A long roll for EROE.
- Crutch or long walking stick for DUKE. This can be real or made from cardboard, as the actor won't actually need to lean on it.
- Sword for DUKE. This can be made from cardboard.
- Candle for DUCHESS to give to EROE. To provide actual light, you can use a battery-operated plastic candle, or a flashlight covered in paper, to look like a candle. Another option is to make a candle out of cardboard and paper, with a paper flame.

## Scene 5

- Pot and ladle for BELAFORE.
- Bowl and spoon for BELAFORE to give to OGRE.
- Broom for BELAFORE (can be the same broom used by INNKEEPER).
- Feathers for BELAFORE to take from OGRE. These can be attached to OGRE'S costumes with Velcro (see costume notes.)
- Pillow for BELAFLORE.
- Club, or large stick, for OGRE.

## Scene 6

- Feather for EROE to give to DUKE (This can be one of the feathers that BELAFORE handed to EROE).
- Rubber or stuffed snake for DUKE to pull from fountain.
- Large gold and silver coins for STAGE HAND to toss in air. These can be plastic coins, or circles cut from cardboard and painted yellow and gray, or spray painted to look metallic.
- Piece of blue fabric for STAGE HAND to wave around the fountain.

## Scene 7

- Blue cloth or fabric for STAGE HANDS to hold up.
- Feather for EROE to give to FERRYMAN (This can be one of the feathers that BELAFORE handed to EROE).

## Scene 8

- Broom for INNKEEPER (same as before).
- Feather for EROE to give to INNKEEPER (This can be one of the feathers that BELAFORE handed to EROE).
- Pillow/cloth for INNKEEPER to rest her head on.



## Scene 9

- Feather for EROE to give to KING (The same one that INNKEEPER gave back to EROE).
- A bow for VILLAGER #2.
- An arrow through a hat for VILLAGER #1.
- Blue cloth or fabric for STAGE HANDS to hold up.



## SETS

The stage is divided into two fixed locations- The King's throne room and the Ogre's home. If you want to make a backdrop or backdrops, you can paint it/them to show these two locations.

There are three other locations, which will be "pop-up" locations. Set pieces will be brought on and action takes place at the front of the stage, in front of everything else. If you have enough STAGE HANDS, you can make transitions more seamless, by bringing the next "pop-up" scene on as the previous one is being taken off.

See below for more details on each scene.

Note: This is a "journey" play, where EROE travels through each location to the OGRE'S house, and then travels back the same way. See images at the end of this section for suggestions on how to set the stage.

- **Scene 1**— The King's throne room. If you have a backdrop, this section can show a stone wall, large windows, and tapestries. On stage there is a throne and a table. The table can be small, but should be large enough to hold the various jars and vials. There is also a throne, which can be a regular wooden chairs covered in nice fabric, which can be any bright royal color, such as red, purple, or gold. The table can be covered in a nice fabric, as well.

Optional: If you want to add a little more flare to this set, you can make two tall columns to place behind the throne and table. Columns can be cut from cardboard or foam board. Draw the shape of the column onto the surface and cut it out. Paint the middle white, and you can use a gold





or yellow for the top and the base. If you want to create a look of indentations, use a light gray to paint lines down the length of the column.

Tape or tie the columns to chairs, stools, milk crates, or other sturdy objects to act as bases. The column should stand freely, leaning against the base.

See image for examples of different types of columns:

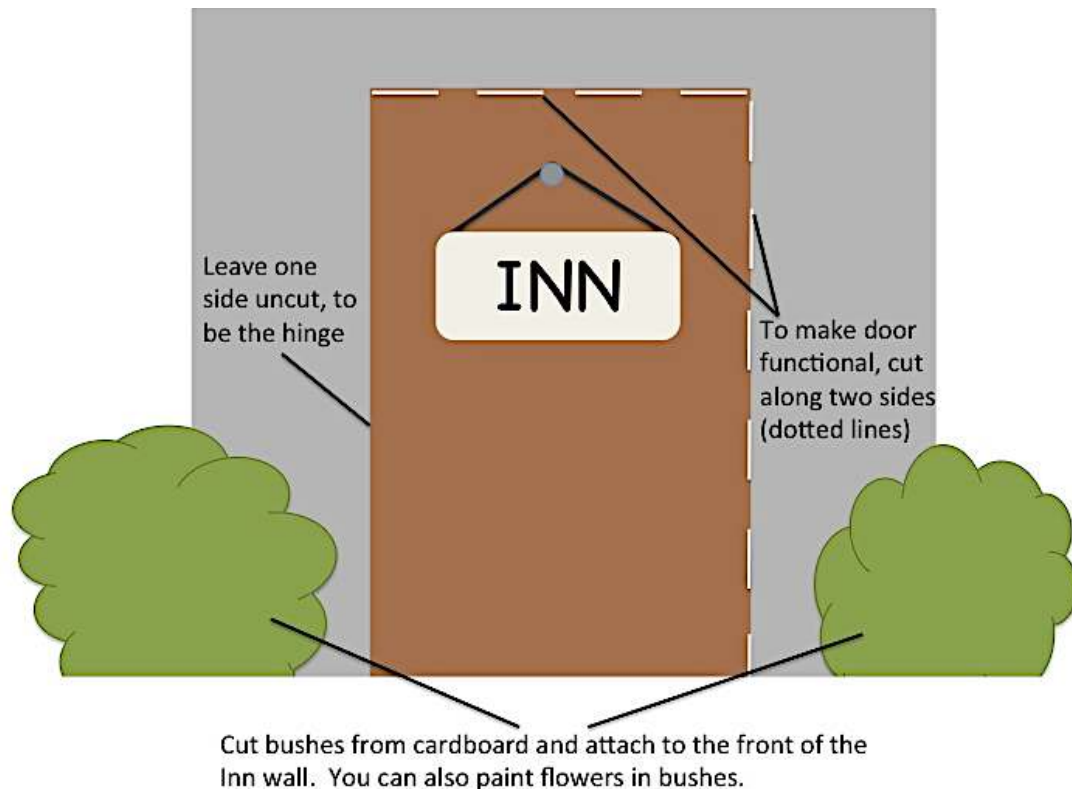


- **Scene 2**— Outside of the Inn. For this scene, STAGE HANDS will bring on the Inn door. This can be made from cardboard. Start with a large piece of square cardboard. Paint the cardboard to be the outside of the inn- maybe a tan or light gray.

In the middle of the cardboard wall, paint a door in a different color. On the door paint a sign for the Inn. You can just write “INN” or you can name the Inn or let the kids name the Inn.

The door does not have to be functional. INNKEEPER can just enter around the cardboard and stand in front of it. But, if you want the INNKEEPER to step through the door, you can make it to open: Cut around the frame of the door on one side and along the top. Leave the other side attached. This will be the hinge, allowing the door to swing open. See image below for example.

You can brace the wall with a sturdy object so it can stand freely, or have STAGE HANDS hold it up for the short scene.



- **Scene 3**— The river. This scene happens at the front of the stage. Two STAGE HANDS being on a long piece of blue fabric, and hold it up about waist high, and wave it back and forth. FERRYMAN and EROE will walk slowly in front of the fabric.

- **Scene 4**— The estate of the Duke and Duchess. STAGE HANDS will bring on the fountain for the scene. The fountain can be made from urethane or Styrofoam blocks carved, painted, and glued together, to resemble a cascade rock fountain.

Another option is to paint a stone fountain onto cardboard. Cut the fountain out and tape or tie it to two chairs, stool, or other sturdy objects to act as braces.

Note: When EROE sits “on” the fountain, he can sit on a small stool covered in gray paper to resemble a rock. The stool can sit in front of the fountain, right up against it.

- **Scene 5**— The Ogre’s home. If you have a backdrop, this section can be painted to show gray cave walls. On stage there is a bed, a fireplace, a





table, and a chair. On the table is a bowl and a spoon.

The fireplace can be painted onto a cardboard box. Use sponges to create the effect of stone, leaving a square in the middle where you can paint the fire on. A black pot, much like a witch's cauldron, can sit on a tripod of three sticks tied together in front of the painted fireplace.

To make the bed: Start by putting two sturdy chair side by side. In front of the chairs you will need to place an ottoman, or something to act as an ottoman. You can use a short bench, or milk crates, or small stools.

Cover the two chairs and the ottoman(s) with a large gray sheet or blanket (to resemble stone). If you want, you can gather the extra fabric and tape or tie it up under the "bed".

Place two pillows against the backs of the chairs. On top of the first sheet or blanket, place another blanket, any color. There should also be a fur or a fuzzy blanket on the bed for BELAFORE to throw over EROE.

OGRE will sit in the chair, with his legs stretched out onto the ottoman, on top of the first blanket and under the second. BELLAFORE can sit next to him, and arrange herself however works best for the action.

- **Scene 6**— The estate of the Duke and Duchess. Same as Scene 2, except in this scene the fountain will be unplugged and water will spring.

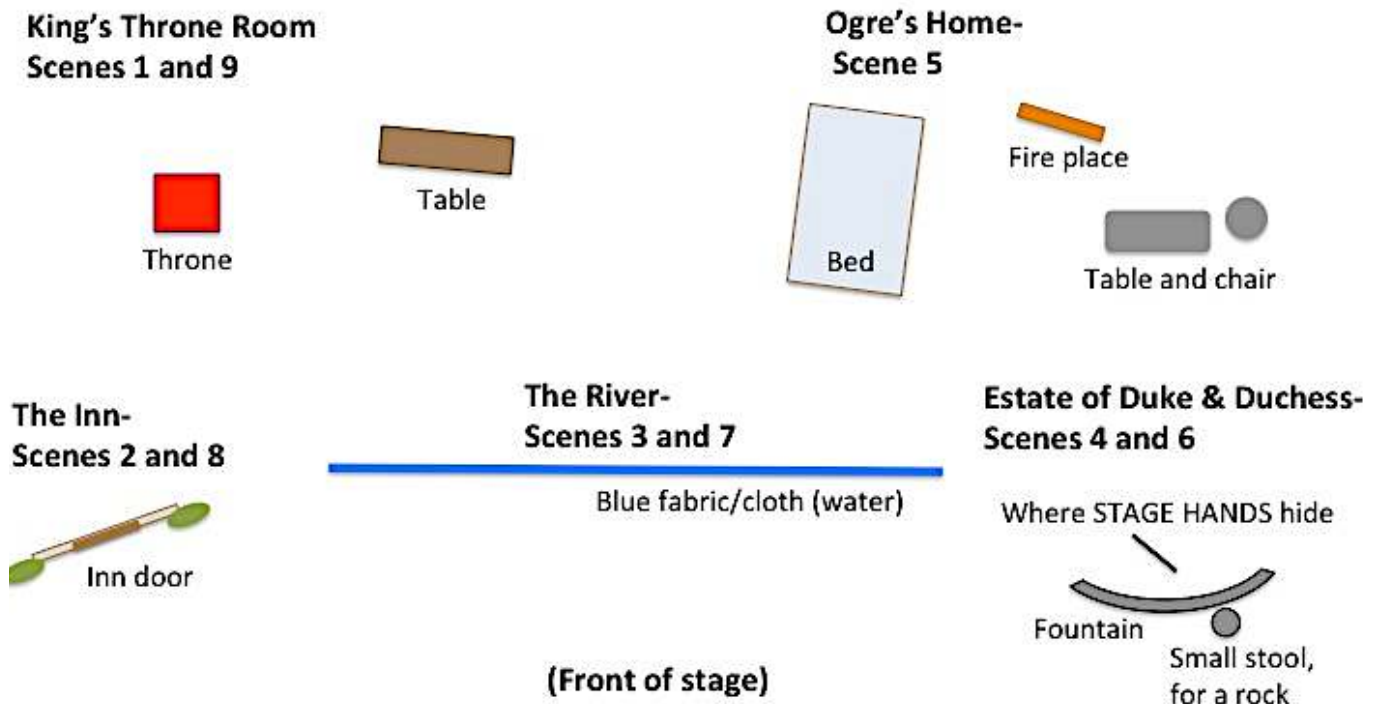
To "unplug" the fountain: When STAGE HANDS being on the fountain they also bring on a toy or stuffed snake. STAGE HANDS hide behind the fountain and place snake near the side of the fountain. DUKE will pull the snake from behind the fountain.

When the snake is removed, water and coins begin to flow from the fountain. One STAGE HAND throws coins (see Prop notes) into the air while the other STAGE HAND waves the blue fabric around and then places it onto the fountain, so that it hangs down in front.

- **Scene 7**— The river. Same as Scene 3.
- **Scene 8**— Outside of the Inn. Same as Scene 2.
- **Scene 9**— The King's throne room. Same as Scene 1.



## Example stage set, aerial view:



## OTHER STAGING NOTES

- **Sound FX** – This play offers an opportunity for Audience Participation. Audience can make sounds, such as rushing water for the river and fountain, stomping for the OGRE, howling in the cave, etc, and you can even have them create an “epic journey song” for EROE, which they can hum as he moved from one location to another. These sound can be directed by NARRATOR, who either holds up signs or takes the lead in making the noises. When OGRE challenges Audience at the end of the play, Audience can even respond by heckling him or booing.