



THE LONELY GIANT: J.K. - GR. 3 TEACHER PACKAGE

The Travelling Troubadours

This package includes some suggestions for preparing students for the presentation they will enjoy, including some optional puppet making, additional reading and listening as well as tips on being a good audience for live musicians.

The Lonely Giant is a Scottish folk tale about a surprisingly gentle giant who is lonely. He decides to ask for some help from his friends and goes on a big adventure...but will he be brave enough? But what could possibly frighten a giant?

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What we do

The Travelling Troubadours bring a wealth of experience to Children's performances. A passion for music & storytelling led to the creation of a musical drama program that incorporates folklore and traditional stories. These interactive, educational, and curriculum-based performances are perfect for elementary classrooms!

It's hugely important that young children have the opportunity to hear live music. Many young children—toddlers, for example—may not understand that the music they hear from a radio, CD player, or MP3 player was originally created by a live person—that music doesn't just come out of a box, that there's not a small person in there. Live music is a living, breathing, and wonderful thing. When children experience a live performance, they will begin to understand that it takes a person and an instrument or a voice to create music. Another important part of hearing live music is the value in just listening. Listening is doing something, and listening to live music can help young children build that skill.¹



There's also a value in music for music's sake and art for art's sake. With the pressure to focus on academics, music sometimes gets overlooked. There's plenty of research that shows that music supports the curriculum, but the real bonus is that we are honoring the emotional side of the child. It's time to breathe. It's time to say there is some beautiful music out there. There are beautiful sounds, instruments, voices, and words. When you hear someone create music, something special happens. Music evokes emotions. When children hear live music, it resonates with them emotionally. There's an old song called "Bread and Roses" in which the lyrics describe that workers need their bread, but they need their roses too. Music is like the roses. It brings beauty into our lives, and we all need that.

Listening to live music is also a community-building event, and there are many benefits to being part of a community. We experience something together. We can talk about it. We share that experience. Even for young children, when the community is their classroom, there's something valuable about experiencing and enjoying music together.

Preparing for our visit

Young students are accustomed to watching television or videos on computer screen that can often be a) paused for a bathroom break b) restarted if they missed something or c) can be played at high or low volume as the viewer desires. The experience of a live concert or

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Interview with Cathy Fink from "Conversations About Young Audiences" by Susan Friedman in *Young Children*, March 2010

stage presentation is of course very different. Here are some tips to help students have a good experience with a live show:

- A group trip to the bathroom beforehand.
- Let the students know that listening quietly during the presentation is important, so that they don't miss anything. We can't stop and rewind! And of course, it's good manners, too.
- If a child needs to go to the bathroom or ask a question of the teacher, have them raise a hand and wait for permission to approach the teacher and ask quietly.
- Give them an idea of what they'll be hearing and seeing ahead of time.
- After the music is finished, a good way to show you enjoyed it is to clap. How do you when it is finished? The musicians may turn and look at the audience, they may also be smiling at you, or they may have dropped their hands away from their instruments, or even stand up to take a bow.

What will the students experience?

1. As outlined with our introductory letter, we will begin with an "introduction" which begins with us performing a song.
2. We will introduce ourselves and demonstrate our instruments. We might even pretend to make a bagpipe sound if the students can help us!
3. With the help of a slide show, we will talk about the story we will present, about magical water creatures that are part of the fairy tales of Scotland.
4. In preparation for participating in the story, we will do a short movement game, (can be done with their optional *pre-made puppets of magical water creatures*) and teach them a short song they will sing with us during the story.
5. We will share the story of The Lonely Giant, which includes some music and some dialogue with the students, and some song and movement participation.
6. After the story, we will ask questions about the story they heard (e.g. Was there a lesson? Who was the hero? What was the hero's problem?)

Class Participation: Magical Water Creatures

During the story of The Lonely Giant, students will be asked to participate as one of our suggested magical water creatures: **Nessie**, a **Kelpie**, a **mermaid** and a **Selkie**. Feel free to read these descriptions of the creatures to the class, so they might imagine how to move like them during the story.

The word **Kelpie** comes from an old Scottish word meaning colt, which is a young horse. Kelpies are magical creatures which usually live in rivers or lakes. They look like a tame pony, but are actually very tricky, and they have a magical sticky hide which will keep you on their back. The sound of a Kelpie's tail entering the water sounds like thunder and they say a tamed kelpie has the strength of 10 horses! It is said a Kelpie can be captured and tamed if you can get its bridle.

Selkies are a kind of Scottish mermaid, or merman, who are seals in the ocean and people on land. They are thought to be a kind of fairy race that live in beautiful palaces under the sea, and their palaces are made of coral and sea-shells and silver with gorgeous gardens of sea-weed and ocean plants. They sometimes come on to land during a full moon and shed their seal skins to dance in the moonlight. If a human finds a Selkie pelt, or sealskin, they can stop the Selkie from returning to the ocean and in some stories they courted the selkie when they were human and married them. It is said that Selkies can even have children with a human, but their hands and feet will be delicately webbed. There are people in northern Scotland with slightly webbed hands and people believe they are descended from Selkies. Selkies are not real, but some people believe that long ago the people in Scotland may have seen some Inuit who rode in seal-skin kayaks and dressed in seal-skins.

In world folklore, not all **mermaids** are beautiful or have fish tails. There have been stories about mermaids for thousands of years and in every part of the world. They even have different names in different parts of the world, like Rusalka in Russia, Iara in Brazil, Marahihau in New Zealand, Siren in Greece or Water Nix in Switzerland. They are usually part human and part fish, and can be good or bad. They are often said to have enchanted singing voices, and a famous Greek sailor called Odysseus made his sailors put wax in their ears so they could not hear them and he managed to get by them safely.

In folklore, the Loch Ness Monster, or **Nessie**, is an aquatic creature which reputedly inhabits Loch Ness in the Scottish Highlands. It is similar to other supposed lake monsters in Scotland and elsewhere, and is often described as being large in size, with a long neck and one or more humps protruding from the water. Popular interest and belief in the creature has varied since it was brought to worldwide attention in 1933. It has been described as resembling a dragon or a dinosaur, and interestingly the earliest written record of a sighting is by the Irish monk Saint Columba, about 1,500 years ago! The earliest photo of it is the famous "Surgeon's Photo" from 1934 which you will see in our slideshow but you can find easily online. Some have even it is actually a Plesiosaur, hiding in secret since prehistoric times!

Other Sources

Students can learn more from sources such as these:

- Movie: The Secret of Roan Inish (1995)
- Movie: The Waterhorse: Legend of the Deep (2007)
- Movie: Song of the Sea (2014)
- Movie: The Little Mermaid (1989)
- Book: The Selkie Girl (Susan Cooper)
- Book: The Seal Mother (Mordecai Gerstein)
- Book: The Merbaby (Teresa Bateman)
- Book: Scottish Folk and Fairy Tales (Theresa Breslin)

The Travelling Troubadours, 2016

APPENDIX: Optional Puppet-making

Your class has the option of preparing puppets in advance of the day to use during the story. Please see attached some **printable templates** of four magical water creatures:

A simple puppet can be made by following our suggested “recipe” or a similar one described in these Youtube videos: How to Make Stick Puppets (<https://youtu.be/zU3O7CahPg4>) or Popsicle Stick Puppets (<https://youtu.be/rtmX-POTy9I>)

Paper Plate Puppets:

1. photocopy the attached templates and have students choose one for themselves to colour.
2. Have them cut out the drawing using the “circle frame” (quicker) or the true outline of the creature as preferred
3. Glue to some thicker paper to give it some strength, or a thin paper plate. (Option: cut out **after** gluing)
4. Tape or glue a Popsicle stick to the back OR between the photocopy page and the backing.

If you decide to include this activity, it would be helpful if the students could leave their puppets at their desks until we are ready for them to try the Listen to the Water song and movement exercise with them.

A Kelpie



The Loch Ness Monster (“Nessie”)



Mermaid



The Selkie

