

Novel Resource #4

The Giant and the Beanstalk

Author and Illustrator: Diane Stanley

Copyright date: 2004

Publisher: Harper Collins Publishing

About the Author:

1. Interesting facts: Diane Stanley was born in Abilene Texas where her father was a navy pilot. Shortly after her birth, her parents were divorced, and she lived with her mother in New York. There she was exposed to Broadway shows, theater, and books. Her mother, Fay, was also a writer. Diane's first written work, The Conversation Club, was dedicated to her mother, who she later illustrated for. Diane lived with her aunt and uncle for a time in Texas due to her mother's illness. She later returned to Texas to attend Trinity University in San Antonio. Diane chose social sciences because she was unable to pick just one major. After taking a figure drawing class, Diane discovered her talent as an artist. She decided to become a medical illustrator, in which she would need additional medical and art training. While in school, Diane traveled to Russia, where she was inspired to write her series of biographies for children beginning with Peter the Great. Little, Brown and Company was the first publisher to print Diane's version of Farmer in the Dell. Her second husband is currently listed as Co-editor because he does the initial research and editing for the biography series.
2. Author's webpage: www.dianestanley.com
3. Other address: authorvisits@harpercollins.com for author visit



4. Picture:

5. Other facts: After 15 years of researching, writing and illustrating picture book biographies, Diane decided a change of pace was in order. She thought it would be fun to illustrate fairytales. Diane wrote Rumpelstiltskin's Daughter. It was so enjoyable; she sought out other fairytales that needed retelling. This led to the creation of The Giant and the Beanstalk.
6. Other books written by author: Biographies and History: The Last Princess and Leonardo Da Vinci. Fiction; Bella at Midnight, The Mysteries of I.M. Fine, and Moe the Dog in Tropical Paradise.

Annotation: In this fractured fairytale picture book, illustrated and authored by Diane Stanley, the reader is given a different point of view. Otto, the once hunted, terrible ogre in the original tale, is misunderstood. He is given an opportunity to show his true self as he searches for his stolen pet. Along the way, Otto meets many fairytale "Jacks" looking for the one who climbed the beanstalk. This book will keep the reader on their toes as he or she recalls who the "Jack" might be and the rhyme that he belongs too. This book would be an excellent part of a collection of retold tales. The illustrations are bright, colorful and pair nicely with the fairy tale setting.

Book talk: "Fee Fi Fo Fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman. Be he alive or be he dead, I'll grind his bones to make his bread". Who said these famous lines? In the book The Giant and the Beanstalk, you will hear many parts of nursery rhymes or fairy tales. Do you know them well enough to match the character with the tale? Test yourself as you read how the mean, old giant isn't really mean or old at all.

Characters: Otto, the giant. He is the main character in the story, bucking the usual giant demeanor for a mild-mannered, pet loving one. He must summon all of his courage to go down the beanstalk and find Jack. If he ever wants to see his beloved pet again that is.

Jack (from Jack and the Beanstalk) He was really not the foolish boy everyone thinks of him. Jack sold his cow only because she stopped giving milk. Now he is bothering the giant as his only solution to get Milky White back.

Many other Jack's from well-known nursery rhymes appear and act out their typical persona from the tale.

Conflict and Conflict resolution: The conflict is between the Giant and Jack but not in the traditional sense. The Giant so loves his hen named Clara that he risks life and limb and climbs down the stalk after Jack. Jack is the antagonist but his actions are for understandable reasons. He turns out not to have the heart to sell the Giant's hen, and all is well when the two main character make an exchange of animals.

Genre: Fractured Fairytale

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If you like: The Giant and the Beanstalk, you will love:

Goldie and the Three Bears, written and illustrated by Diane Stanley

Rumplestiltskin's Daughter, written and illustrated by Diane Stanley

Sleeping Ugly by Jane Yolen and illustrated by Diane Stanley

Jim and the Beanstalk by Raymond Briggs

Snow White in New York by Fiona French

Once Upon a Golden Apple by Jean Little and Maggie Vries.

Interest level: k-3

Reading level: 3.9

Setting: The setting is in two parts. First there is the magical kingdom where giants live. Then, the story takes place in the village where Jack lives.

Point of View: Third Person Omniscient

Theme: The overall theme is that things may not seem as they appear. Otto, the giant is not a mean ogre but a concerned pet owner after his beloved hen. Jack is also not the irresponsible boy who sold his cow for beans. He was distraught over having to sell his cow that no longer gives milk, and was doing what he could to buy her back. The title The Giant and the Beanstalk leads the reader to know that this is the story of Otto, the giant, and what happens when he climbs down the beanstalk.

Art Medium used: colored pencil, collage, and water colors are techniques used in Diane Stanley's illustrations. Although not specified in this book, the medium of water colors or colored pencils seems logical. Her drawings are detailed, bold and colorful.

Students can understand how the art medium is created by: Students may understand Diane Stanley's work better if they were to take an object and consider how they could use more than one color to create a feeling of depth in ordinary objects such as a grass lawn or thatched roof.

The medium was chosen to convey the meaning of the story because: This medium gives the drawing depths as the characters have a deeper personality than what is portrayed in the original telling of the story.

Across the Curriculum connections:

Subject area: Literature

Activity: Study of traditional fairy tales and nursery rhymes

Resources/supplies: Books of traditional fairy tales. One can contrast a Disney version with the Brothers Grimm version. (for older students, only)

Subject area: Science and Social Studies

Activity: study farm animals/products given by

Resources: books on farming such as by Gail Gibbons or Where do Chicks Come From? by Amy E. Sklansky

Resources: Teacher resource guide: On the Farm

www.theteachersguide.com/onthefarm.htm

This website gives lesson plans, book resources, printouts and photos all about farming and the animals that are raised there. This resource connects to Clara the hen and Milky White the cow. These two creatures are the catalysis for the Giant and Jack meeting.

Activities: Whole Group or small groupings

A. “Who Am I?” After reading many traditional and fractured fairy tales, each student writes a description of his or her character. She or he reads the description aloud and allows the class or group to guess which character they are. For example: This description is taken from a traditional fairytale. “I am forced to work day and night for my wicked step mother and step sisters. I am the only one not going to the Prince’s ball. Who am I?”

Link to Indiana Academic Standard: See starred standards below*

Individuals recite as group listens

B. Learn and recite a short nursery rhyme. Each student will be given an opportunity to use the microphone to share his or her tale with the class.

Link to Indiana Academic Standard: See starred standards below*

Discussion Questions:

Before: What is your favorite nursery rhyme or fairy tale? Why is it your favorite?

During: pg. 12 Do you think it was o.k. for Jack to steal Clara to get money to buy his cow back? Why or why not?

After: Do you believe that all giants are mean after meeting Otto? Do you think it is fair to call any group of people the same thing such as “All giant are mean” or all people who have red hair have a bad temper?

Language:

Word list to be defined: p. 1 fierce and ferocious: both meaning frightening and scary.

P. 2 Cursing: shouting bad words

p. 6 suspicious: strange, usual
investigate: check out

P. 7 shriek: yell

p. 8 Decrepit: worn down

Assured: comforted

p. 13 scurried: climbed in a hurry

nimbly: easily

p. 15 dawn: occur or seem

wary: nervous or unsure

p. 16 suspiciously: Thought something wasn't right

muttered: said to himself

p.20 benefit: use

p. 22 outskirts: edges

forlorn: sad and hopeless

p. 26 proceeds: money, earnings

p. 27 baritone: a male voice, not high or low

Indiana Academic Standards met by book:

Kindergarten: Reading: k.1.1, k.1.2, k.1.4, k.2.1, k.2.2, k.2.3, k.3.1, k.3.2, k.3.3, k.3.4, k.3.5, k.4.1, *k.4.2 Tell a story that the Teacher or some other person will write, *k.4.3 Write using pictures, letters, and words, *k.5.1 Draw pictures and write words for a specific reason, *k.7.2 Share information and ideas, speaking in complete, coherent sentences, *k.7.4 Recite short poems, rhymes and songs.

Science: k.3.2, k.4.2,

Social Studies: k.4.1, k.5.4, k.3.3

Grade 1: Reading: 1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.2.1, 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 1.3.4, 1.3.5, 1.4.1, *1.5.4 Use descriptive words when writing, *1.5.5 Write for different purpose to a specific person or audience, *1.6.3 Write in complete sentences, 1.6.6, 1.6.7 *1.7.6 Recite poems, rhymes songs, and stories, 1.7.7

Social Studies: 1.4.6, 1.5.2, 1.5.4

Grade 2: Reading: 2.3.1, 2.3.3, 2.3.5, 2.3.6, *2.5.1 Write brief narratives based on experiences that describe the setting, characters, objects and events in detail, *2.5.5 Use descriptive words when writing, *2.5.6 Write for different purposes and to a specific audience or person, 2.6.7, *2.7.13 Recite poems, rhymes, songs and stories

Science: 2.2.5, 2.4.8

Social Studies: 2.2.4, 2.4.7

Grade 3: Reading: 3.1.6, 3.3.1, *3.3.2 Determine what characters are like by what they say or do, and by how the author or illustrator portrays them, 3.3.3, *3.4.1 Find ideas for writing stories and descriptions in conversations with others, in books, magazines, or school text books, or on the internet, *3.5.5 Write for different purposes and to a specific audience or person

Social Studies: 3.4.3, 3.4.4, 3.5.1,

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Bibliography: Books: Webster's Dictionary Plus Thesaurus, 1993
The Giant and the Beanstalk, Diane Stanley, HarperCollins Publisher, 2004.

Websites: www.dianestanley.com Diane Stanley's webpage
www.BarnesandNoble.com Barnes and Noble stores
www.perma-bound.com for IL and RL
www.theteacherguide.com/onthefarm.htm Teacher Resource Guide
<http://www.doe.state.in.us/standards/welcome.html> Indiana Department of Education website