Cinderella
Wore
Combat Boots

Ideas Packet

Prepared for the Blackfriars of Agnes Scott College
Production of
Cinderella Wore Combat Boots
An Adaptation by Jerry Chase

Directed by
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Scenic, Lighting, and Costume Designs by
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Performance Dates
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A Note To Teachers

Thank you for your interest in the Theatre program at Agnes Scott College. Your participation actively involves you in several facets of life on our campus. Attendance at one of our productions brings you into contact with Blackfriars, the oldest theatrical production organization in the Atlanta area, the production season of the Theatre program, the results of the curricular offerings of the Department of Theatre and Dance, and the grounds and facilities of Agnes Scott College. Providing this packet offers one means of demonstrating our appreciation.

The items in the packet reflect themes drawn from the script (family values, lying, individuality) as well as some ideas related to theatre (art, interpretation, creativity). Whenever possible the items are grouped according to category. However, many items may fall into multiple categories. Teachers should take the categories as representative, not exhaustive. You may wish to shuffle items among categories or create your own.

When reviewing the Ideas Packet for Cinderella Wore Combat Boots, please take the name literally. The collection of questions and statements that follow should serve as a source of ideas to help stimulate the imagination of your students. The ideas generated from the packet could serve as the basis for a wide range of activities including classroom discussions, creative writing opportunities, art projects, and storytelling. You may even elect to stage your own version of our production.

Similarly, please do not feel limited by the items in the Ideas Packet. Our intent involves providing you with material that will expand the world of your classroom not limit it. For example, some items may seem more appropriate for use prior to attending the performance while others may facilitate post-production activities. If a given question or activity suggests a new direction, explore it as you see fit. Feel free to add, subtract or alter items, as you desire.

In short, the Ideas Packet is meant as a beginning, not the end. You remain in the best position to gauge the level and direction of your curriculum. The pages that follow represent a tool. Like any tool, each user must find the appropriate technique for its use.
**Cinderella Wore Combat Boots**

**Character Analysis**

**Storyteller:** The Storyteller wears many hats. She’s a stagehand, changing the setting between the palace and the cottage when needed. She narrates the story, but she also steps into the action of the play as a messenger and as Cinderella’s Fairy Godmother. Last but not least, she’s the intercessor between the audience and the characters, opening up the fourth wall and allowing the audience into the world of the play.

**King:** The King of the kingdom is interested in two things: 1) campaigning for “Most Beloved King” by expounding on his policies and intentions for the kingdom and 2) finding a wife for his son the Prince.

**Prince:** The Prince says in the very beginning of this play that he is only 38 and too young to settle down. He’d rather hunt dragons and play catch than think about one day inheriting the kingdom and all the responsibility that entails. He’s the eternal young boy, even in his hectic love for Cinderella. She changes his view on dragons, changing his outlook on life as well.

**Motherella:** The stepmother is the ringleader of the nasty Ella Household. She takes pride in encouraging the petty insults hurled at Cinderella, as well as exhausting her with cumbersome chores and errands.

**Mazzarella & Godzella:** These stepsisters are the snide soldiers of their stepmother’s selfishness. They enjoy tormenting Cinderella, even though they never receive the satisfaction of riling her. Although their appearance is pretty (if a bit ostentatious), their behavior is ugly. They play wild tricks and games during the ball to try and win the Prince for their husband, but in the end, they fail.

**Cinderella:** Our heroine is light on her feet and quick to do the Ella’s bidding. She runs hither and yon on errands, real and imaginary, primping the stepsisters and stepmother for the ball, hauling coal and tools, picking up dropped items, always with a smile on her face and a spring in her step. Ever sincere and optimistic, she takes joy wherever she can find it, killing the Ellas with kindness.
Cinderella Wore Combat Boots

Story Synopsis

The story of Cinderella is a familiar one to children young and old. Jerry Chase’s adaptation leaves nothing important out of the classic Grimm’s fairytale. However, this adaptation of Cinderella has quite a twist: Cinderella proudly wears combat boots left to her by her father.

The play begins with a storyteller addressing the audience, introducing them to the King, and his son the Prince. The King laments that his son needs to stop dragon hunting and find a wife. The Prince complains that he’s not ready to settle down. The King presses on, however, with his proclamation of a Royal Ball to find the Prince a wife. Cinderella’s stepmother, Motherella, and her stepsisters: Godzella and Mazzerella. Cinderella doesn’t get a formal introduction as she’s running all over the cottage after Godzella’s comb and Mazzerella’s brush.

Magically, the storyteller transforms herself into a Royal Messenger, announcing that all the maidens in the kingdom are invited to a Royal Ball. The King’s agenda is to find the Prince a wife. However, when Cinderella dons a tattered shawl and worn purse, the only clothes left to her by her real mother, she’s scorned, laughed at, and left behind as the Ellas run off without her to the ball.

Once again, the storyteller magically transforms herself into a Fairy Godperson, wanting to be politically correct. With the help of the brilliant audience, she transforms Cinderella’s tattered house-cleaning clothes into a beautiful dress for the ball. However, when she asks to change her combat boots into shoes, the Fairy Godperson reminds her that she’s comfortable in those boots, and Cinderella decides to wear them proudly to the Royal Ball. Cinderella then watches as the Fairy Godperson/Storyteller changes mice and a pumpkin into a carriage and horses, reminds her to be home by midnight, and she’s off to the party.

Once all the step-Ellas are at the Ball, each has her chance with the Prince. Godzella tries to win his affections by laughing hysterically at everything he says, but he gets scared and runs away. The King appears, encouraging the Prince not to give up. Just then, Mazzerella tries the “helpless damsel in distress” approach, she tangos and faints, also scaring the Prince offstage as she comes to and chases after him. The King appears again, encouraging the Prince not to give up. Mazzerella appears and chases the Prince again, leaving the King alone. Motherella then appears, mistaking the King for the Prince and attempts to impress him with her strength, offering to wrestle him! She chases the King as he runs for safety.

Cinderella has just arrived, to the amazement of the partygoers. As she enters the ballroom, she bumps into the Prince. They exchange shy hellos, but
then start talking about dragons, the Prince’s favorite subject, and Cinderella’s boots. She takes one off to show the Prince as the clock strikes midnight. The Prince reveals that he loves Cinderella and wants to marry her, she hears the clock and is astonished that she’s been talking to the Prince all this time (she just thought he was the castle’s dragon keeper!). Afraid of what might happen should she stay past midnight, she flees, leaving the Prince with her boot. The Prince tells his father that he had her, but now she’s gone. They arrange a search of all the maidens in the kingdom.

When the search gets to the Ella cottage the next day, it is the last cottage on the list. Each of the step-Ellas try on the boot, wanting to make it fit, but it doesn’t. Just as they are about to give up, Cinderella appears. Staying true to the search of “every maiden” she tries it on. It fits, of course, and Cinderella and the Prince are overjoyed! The step-Ellas are furious and jealous. The Prince decides to make them all move to the palace in order to help out with the chores. They need to learn that being a family is not all about shoveling work off onto someone else. And thus, everyone marches off to the palace.

The End
Imagination & Interpretation

1. What does a prince look like?
   • What does he like to do?
     • Watch TV?
     • Listen to music?
     • Hunt dragons?
     • Draw a picture of the Prince doing something Princely.

2. What does a King look like?
   • What does he like to do?
     • Come up with new laws for the kingdom?
     • Throw parties?
     • Go out with the Queen?
     • Draw a picture of the King doing something kingly.

3. What would you do if you were Cinderella?
   • How would you handle being the maid?
   • What if your stepsisters were mean?
   • Draw a picture of Cinderella at the cottage.

4. If you were in Cinderella’s boots and all of a sudden you were a princess, what is the first thing you would do?
   • Redecorate the palace?
   • Go shopping?
   • Take a nap on your new, soft royal bed?
   • Watch TV on the huge royal TV?
   • Draw a picture of Cinderella doing something royal.

5. If you were in charge of a Royal Ball, what would you include?
   • A magic act?
   • Lots of different music?
   • Draw a picture of the ballroom and be sure to include all your fun activities.
Perceptions & Diversity

1. What does it mean to be pretty or beautiful?
   • Do all beautiful people look the same?
   • What are some different ideas about what is pretty?
   • Do different people think different things are pretty or beautiful?

2. Were Cinderella’s combat boots normal ‘girl shoes’?
   • Does something have to be normal to be important to someone?
   • If Cinderella had worn high heels, would the story be the same?
   • Did you like Cinderella’s boots?

3. Have you ever been mean to or laughed at someone just because he or she was different?
   • How do you think that made him or her feel?
   • How did it make you feel?
   • How would you feel if it happened to you?

4. Do you have brother and sisters? Stepbrothers and stepsisters?
   • How is your family different from Cinderella’s family?
   • If you could give Motherella some advice, what would you tell her?

5. How does it feel to be teased? Do you get angry?
   • How did you feel when Cinderella got teased? Did she get angry?
   • If you were Cinderella, what chores would you give the Ellas when they came to the castle?

6. Why did the stepsisters lie to the Prince, saying the boot was theirs?
   • Is it okay to lie to get your own way?
   • How does being truthful help when figuring things out?
   • How does lying complicate when figuring things out?
What did you think about...

1. Scenic Design

1. How did the set contribute to the show?
   • Which place did you like better? The cottage or the Palace?
   • Did you like watching the storyteller change to scenery?

2. Did you like the colors used on the backdrops?
   • What colors would you have used in the palace?
   • What colors would you have used in the cottage?

2. Costumes/Makeup

1. Whose costume did you like the best?

2. Whose costume did you like the least?

3. Was Cinderella prettier at the cottage or at the palace?

4. Were the Ellas prettier at the cottage or the palace?

3. Acting

1. Did you like it when the actors talked to you?
   • Did you enjoy being part of the story?
   • Did you like helping the Fairy Godperson give Cinderella new things?

2. Did Cinderella seem real to you?
   • Did the Ellas seem real to you?
   • Did you believe our actors when they were telling you the story?
Theatre & Performance

1. Have you ever been to a live performance in a theatre? What was it like?

2. How is theatre different from movies, television, radio, or computers?

3. What do/did you expect when you went to the theatre to see *Cinderella Wore Combat Boots*?
   - How was the performance at Agnes Scott College different from the ideas that you had?
   - Do the differences mean something is better or worse (or just different)?

4. What was your favorite part of the performance?

5. What was your favorite part of the trip?

6. Do you think you could put on a play?
   - How would you do it?
   - What kinds of things must you do before you perform?
   - What would your play be about?
   - What would it look like?

7. Try writing a brief play or scene, then act it out.
   - Is it easy? Hard?
   - Is it fun?