

The Brave Little Costumer

Featuring long vowels

About The Author



Laura St. John is the creator of the *Act It Read It* series for young readers and President of *Play In A Book*. She has worked for nearly 20 years as a Teaching Artist in the Chicago Public Schools, utilizing drama as a framework to help young readers gain basic skills on their way to becoming lifelong readers. Laura's writing is currently used in classrooms throughout Chicago and has been performed and enjoyed by thousands of students. In addition to her *Act It Read It* series, Laura collaborated on the educational reform book, *Through the Cracks* (Davis Publications). Laura is a member of Actors' Equity Association and lives with her husband and two daughters in Chicago, Illinois.



Suggestions for Actors

- Begin by reading the script at least two times without any action, just focusing on the text.
- Discuss simple actions or gestures that can be incorporated to help show the action of the script.
- Designate a stage area and an audience area.
- Try acting it out multiple times on stage, incorporating the actions and gestures.
- While acting it out, make sure to hold books at chest level so that faces can be seen and make sure to always face the audience.
- Use a loud, strong voice that can be heard by everyone on stage and in the audience.
- Repetition is the key to a successful performance. The more rehearsal, the better the performance will be. Rehearse as many times as possible!
- Remind the audience that they should be quiet and respectful.
- When performing, remember to tell the story and have a great time.

ACT IT

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Level 1

Act I

(featuring long ā sounds)



Hey there flies, have a taste of jam - it's grape.



Hey there flies, I will swat you with my cape.



Please, no, no, please wait. Mr. Lane, please wait!



Seven in one blow. I am so, so great!



The Great Blade Lane is not so great today.



Little costumer, you be on your way.

Act I

(featuring long ā sounds)

Backstage at the Key Palace Theatre.



Soon the Great Blade Lane will come backstage for his eighth costume change of the play.



On stage. To be or not to be—that is the question...



While I'm waiting, I'll have a snack—a warm crust of homemade bread with grape jam.



To sleep—perchance to dream...



To the flies buzzing about his snack. Here, I'll place a taste for you on the props table.



Rushing backstage. What? Flies on my props table?



Wait, Mr. Lane, please wait!

The Great Blade Lane yanks off his cape and swats the flies.



Take that you villains! Ha ha! Seven in one blow!



How could you do such a thing, Mr. Lane?
Those flies were not hurting you and yet
you killed seven in one blow.



How dare you speak to the Great Blade
Lane in such a way!



I think the Great Blade Lane is not so great
today!



Little costumer, you are fired!

*In the costume shop, the brave little costumer
stitches something on the front of his t-shirt.
He looks in the mirror.*



Seven in one blow. I will never forget this
day!

Act I

(featuring long ā sounds)

Backstage at the Key Palace Theatre. The brave little costumer finishes singing “Don’t Rain On My Parade” while he waits for the Great Blade Lane.



Soon the Great Blade Lane, star of stage and screen and the main character in today’s play, will trample backstage for his eighth costume change of this Sunday matinee.



On stage. To be or not to be—that is the question...



While I’m waiting, I’ll have a snack—a warm crust of homemade bread smothered with the sweetest, tastiest grape jam.



To sleep—perchance to dream: ay, there’s the rub...



To the flies buzzing about his snack. I promise I’ll give you a taste when I am finished. Here, I’ll place your taste on the props table.

There is a burst of applause and then the Great Blade Lane rushes backstage.



Shakespeare himself would admire my portrayal of... What? Flies on my props table?



Wait, Mr. Lane, please wait!

The Great Blade Lane yanks off his pale blue cape.



Swatting at the flies with his cape. Take that you villains! Ha ha! Seven in one blow!



How could you do such a thing, Mr. Lane?

You have stained a cape that took me hours to make, but that is okay. What is not okay is how you smashed those flies. They were not hurting you and yet you killed seven in one blow.



How dare you speak to the Great Blade Lane in such a way! Where is the stage manager?



I think the Great Blade Lane is not so great today!



Little costumer, you are to be fired at once and replaced with someone who has nothing to say!

In the costume shop, the brave little costumer removes his black "crew" t-shirt and furiously stitches something on the front. He looks in the mirror.



Seven in one blow. I will never forget this day!

Act II

(featuring long ē sounds)



I will eat you, wee wimpy little man.



Giant lady, I do not think you can.



Seven in one blow? Did you do this deed?



Seven in one blow is how my tee reads.



Then let us be friends costumer so wee.



Let us be friends, the giantess and me.

Act II*(featuring long ē sounds)**Sitting near "The Bean" talking to the pigeons.*

It is time for some cheese and wheat bread.



Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!

*Unbelievable! He watches as a giant woman comes out of the screen and over to him.*

You'll make a delicious snack.

I am SO much more than that. *Standing tall.**Seeing his t-shirt. WHAT? Seven in one blow? Did you kill seven giantesses such as myself? Seven in one blow?*

Seven in one blow is indeed how my tee reads.

*Maybe you killed seven in one blow, but can you do this? She squeezes a piece of concrete until it is just bits of gravel.*



I can do SO much more than that. *He squeezes his piece of cheese into tiny pieces and eats them.*



But can you do this? *She grabs another piece of concrete and throws it.*



I can do SO much more than that. *He picks up a pigeon and throws it. It flies away.*



Gee.



Maybe I would be a better friend than a snack.



Ripping a tree from the ground. Help me carry this back to my lair?



I'd be delighted to. *He crawls into the branches and rides in the tree.*

Act II

(featuring long ē sounds)

Sitting near "The Bean" at Millenium Park, talking to the pigeons.



I dared to be myself even though it cost me my sweet gig at the Key Palace Theatre.

Now, for some cheese and wheat bread.



Shrieking. Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!



Unbelievable. *He watches as a giant woman peels herself right off and out of the screen on the fountain. She steps toward him.*



You'll make a delicious snack.



I am SO much more than that, good lady. *Standing tall.* If I am to be eaten, let me be eaten with dignity.



Seeing the brave little costumer's t-shirt.

WHAT? Seven in one blow? Maybe I have mistaken you for a wee, wimpy snack when

you are actually the famed killer of seven giantesses such as myself? Seven in one blow?



To himself. She is not the smartest cookie in the jar. *To the giantess.* Why yes, good lady, seven in one blow is indeed how my tee reads.



Maybe you have killed seven in one blow, but can you do this? *She squeezes a column of concrete in her hand until it is just bits of gravel.*



I can do SO much more than that good lady. *He squeezes his piece of cheese into tiny pieces and eats them.*



But can you do this? *She grabs another concrete column and throws it thirty-three feet.*



I can do SO much more than that. *He picks up a pigeon and throws it high into the sky. It flies away.*



To herself. Not only can he crush a stone, he can eat it too! That would give me a tummy

ache. And he can throw a stone so high that it never falls back to earth. Gee.



Maybe I would be a better friend than a snack.

The giantess rips a tree from the ground.



Help me carry this back to my lair?



I'd be delighted to. *He crawls into the branches and rides in the tree. He doesn't see the Channel Three News Team arriving on the scene.*

Level 1

Act III

(featuring long ī sounds)

III



Oh my my! Is that the mayor I spy?



Seven in one blow? Hey, who is this guy?



Mr. Mayor, you are such a nice guy.



I must get rid of this guy. He must die.



Pardon, Mr. Mayor. Are you alright?



Get rid of the giants. Do it tonight!

Act III

(featuring long *ī* sounds)

The mayor arrives at the Cultural Center. The brave little costumer leaves the lair of the giantesses.



Oh my! Is that the mayor I spy? *He dashes to the mayor's side.* How do you do, Mr. Mayor?



Why, I am fine. *To himself.* Oh my. This is the guy from the news. Seven in one blow? YIKES!



I really admire you and your work. I am delighted to meet you.



To himself. How can I get rid of this tiny but mighty man?



Mr. Mayor? Are you alright?



I would like to ask for your assistance.



I would be happy to oblige.



Giantesses are destroying our roads and sidewalks. For the good of the city, I'd like you to get rid of them.



I am flattered that you would want my assistance, but...



If you can get rid of the giantesses, I will reward you with one percent of the city. All you have to do is get rid of them.



To himself. That doesn't sound right. But I really want the mayor to like me. I will set my feelings aside. *To the mayor.* I am at your service!



Fine. *The brave little costumer waves goodbye.* *He heads back to the lair of the giantesses.* He'll never make it back alive!



Act III

(featuring long *ī* sounds)

The mayor arrives at the Cultural Center, while the brave little costumer leaves the lair of the giantesses.



It is so nice to make new friends. The giantess and her twin are delightful. And they served such wonderful iced lattes and lime tarts.



I don't think I should have to resign, just because a couple of giantesses are tearing up the city streets. And who is that pint-sized wonder they want to take my place?



Oh my! Is that the mayor I spy? *He dashes to the mayor's side.* How do you do, your Mayoral Highness?



Why, I am fine. *To himself.* Oh my. This is the little guy Channel Three News reported could solve Chicago's problem with the giantesses. Seven in one blow? Why, he must be able to rely on the votes of seven precincts with just one simple phone call. YIKES!



I really admire you and your work and I am delighted to make your acquaintance. Please let me know if I can ever be of assistance to you.



To himself. How can I get rid of this tiny but mighty man?



Mr. Mayor? Are you alright?



I have heard you are a tiny but mighty man, sir. I would like to request your assistance in a matter of great importance to our fair city.



I would be happy to oblige.



Giantesses are destroying our roads, sidewalks, and beautiful medians. I am constantly hiring road crews to make repairs and it is draining our budget. For the good of the city, I'd like you to get rid of the giantesses.



I am flattered that you would want my assistance, but the giantesses...



If you can get rid of them, I will reward with you with one percent of the city. All you have to do is get rid of the giantesses.



To himself. That doesn't sound right. But surely the mayor is a nice guy. And I really want him to like me. I will set my feelings aside. *To the mayor.* Your Mayoral Highness, I am at your service. I will carry out my assignment immediately.



Fine.

III

The brave little costumer waves goodbye and heads back to the lair of the giantesses.



He'll never make it back alive!

Level 1

Act IV

(featuring long ō sounds)



I will throw this stone to hit her big nose.



Sister, you threw a stone and hit my toes.



Sister, you woke me up from a nice doze.



Oh! I will punch you in your giant nose.



No! Not before I smash your ugly toes!



Hold it please! Fighting is not for heroes.

IV

Level 2

Act IV

(featuring long *ō* sounds)



It is a low blow to get rid of the giantess and her twin. How will I ever do it? I know! I will get them to turn on one another. Once I get rid of them, I will own one percent of the city! And I will be a real hero!



Moan....



Groan...



They are dozing. Now to throw this stone.



OH! Olivia! Why did you throw a stone at me? You hit me in the throat.



What are you talking about, Ophelia? I did not throw a stone at you. Go back to sleep.

The giantesses go back to sleep.



Now I'll throw another stone. Oops! Too low. I got her toes.



OH! Ophelia! Why did you throw a stone and hit my toes?



I did not throw a stone at you, Olivia!



From his hiding spot. The tension is growing!



I did not throw a stone. But I will throw this! *She holds up a fist.*



And I'll throw this! *She holds up a fist.*



HOLD IT! I won't do it! I don't want to be a hero if it means that my friends get hurt. I have to dare to be myself. I know what kind of hero I am: I am a hero that won't even hurt a fly!

Level 3

Act IV

(featuring long *ō* sounds)

The brave little costumer heads to the lair of the giantesses. They are dozing.

IV



It is a low blow to get rid of the giantess and her twin. Oh well. When in Rome, do as the Romans do. But how will I ever do it?



Ooooo.



They must be dozing. I know! I will get them to turn on one another. They will end up fighting to the death.



Ooooo.



I am brave and bold and so is my plan. Once I get rid of the giantesses, I will own one percent of the city! And I will be a real hero! Oh, oh, oh! A real hero.



Moan....



Groan...



Yes! They're dozing. I could not have hoped for better. Now to throw this stone. *He throws a stone at Ophelia's nose, but hits her throat.*



OH! Olivia! Why did you throw a stone at me? You hit me in the throat and woke me up.



What are you talking about, Ophelia? I was sleeping and you woke me up. I did not throw a stone at you. Go back to sleep. *The giantesses go back to sleep.*



Now I'll throw another stone at Olivia's nose. Oops! Too low. I got her toes.



OH! Ophelia! I told you I did not throw a stone at you! Why did you throw a stone and hit my toes?



I did not throw a stone at you, Olivia, even though I know you did throw that stone at me.



From his hiding spot. The tension is growing!



I did not throw a stone. But I will throw this! *She draws back her fist, ready to strike Ophelia.*

IV



And I'll throw this! *She draws back her fist, ready to strike Olivia.*



HOLD IT! I won't do it! I have to dare to be myself even when someone I admire—like the mayor—wants me to be someone else. I don't want to be a hero if it means that my friends get hurt. I know what kind of hero I am: I am a hero that won't even hurt a fly.

Level 1

Act V

(featuring long ū sounds)



To your own self always be true.



Even when it's hard to do.



Even when you think no one likes you—



To your own self always be true.



To your own self always be true,
Even when it's hard to do,
Even when you think no one likes you—
To your own self always be true!

THE END



Level 2

Act V

(featuring long ū sounds)

On the steps of the Art Institute.



I am sad to tell you about the ruin of the brave little costumer...

V



Greetings all. I return with a renewed friendship with the giantesses.



We were accused of destroying your city streets.



True, true, true.



The mayor sent me to get rid of them. I almost did this deed. I wanted the mayor to like me. I wanted to be a hero and wear a cape. I wanted all of you to like me too.



He thought he could make you like him by doing what he knew to be wrong. But that is not who he is.



I am a brave little costumer who would not even hurt a fly.



So you don't want to run me out of office?



And he doesn't want to run us out of town, either.



We will try to be more careful on the streets.



I want us to all get along and live in harmony. And sing in harmony too. *Singing...*

To your own self always be true

Even when it's hard to do

Even when you think no one likes you

To your own self always be true.



Singing...

To your own self always be true

Even when it's hard to do

Even when you think no one likes you

To your own self always be true.



We would like to thank you for making peace with the giantesses and for reminding us how to live in harmony. We like you BECAUSE you are not like everyone else. *He gives him the cape.*



You had it dry cleaned!

THE END



Level 3

Act V

(featuring long ū sounds)

On the steps of the Art Institute, the mayor speaks to the community and news crew.



V

I am sad to announce the ruin of the brave little costumer and pleased to announce my new “Get Tough on Giants” policy... *He is interrupted.*



Greetings fellow community members and news crew. I wish to inform you of the renewed friendship I have found with the giantess, Ophelia, and her twin, Olivia.



We are accused of creating a terrible nuisance by destroying your city streets.



True, true, true.



The mayor sent me to their lair to get rid of the two giantesses. I am ashamed to say that I almost did this deed. I wanted the mayor to like me. I wanted to be a hero and

wear a cape. I wanted all of you to like me too.



He thought he could make this happen by doing something he knew to be wrong. But that is not who he is. He is not a killer of giants. He is not a candidate for mayor.



I am a brave little costumer who would not even hurt a fly.



So you don't want to run me out of office?



And he doesn't want to run us out of town, either.



He suggested that we try to be more careful when we are walking through the city so we don't tear up the streets.



I want us to all get along and live in harmony. And sing in harmony too.

Singing...

To your own self always be true
Even when it's hard to do
Even when you think no one likes you
To your own self always be true.



Singing...

To your own self always be true
Even when it's hard to do
Even when you think no one likes you
To your own self always be true.



V

Excuse me. Pardon me. Coming through.
On behalf of the entire community, I would
like to thank you for making peace with
the giantesses and for reminding us all how
to live in harmony. We want you to know
that we like you BECAUSE you are not like
everyone else. We should all be so brave.
And I'd like to present you with this. *He
gives him the cape.*



Oooo!



You had it dry cleaned!

THE END