

Study Guide



The Stories of Peter and the Wolf & Hansel and Gretel

**HANOVER THEATRE
& CONSERVATORY**

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Curriculum Standards Covered:

ELA: SL.2, SL.4, SL.5

Science: PreK-LS2-2(MA), K-LS1-1, 2-LS2-3(MA), 3-LS1-1, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 5-LS2-1.

Mathematics: 2.MD.D.10, 3.MD.B.3, 3.NF.1, 3.NF.3, 4.NF.B, 4.MD.2, 5.NF.A, 5.NF.B, 5.OA.B.3

Music: PK-K.M.P.04, 3-4.M.R.07, 5-6.M.R.07

Theatre and Dance: PK-K.D.R.08, PK-K.D.R.09, 1-2.D.P.04, 1-2.D.R.07, 1-2.D.Co.10, 1-2.T.Cr.03.a, 5-6.D.R.07, 1-2.T.Co.10

SEL: CASEL-Social Awareness

Credits

**Staged by The Hanover Theatre Conservatory
Youth Ballet Company Faculty**

**Peter & the Wolf Music by Sergei Prokofiev with
Narration by David Bowie**

Hansel & Gretel Music & Narration by Larry Bell

Artistic Director

Jennifer Agbay

Choreography

Mark Harootian with assistance from the Artistic Staff of the
Youth Ballet Company of Worcester

Producer

Meghan Montaner

Set Design & Assembly

Nathan Colby (SD), Bill Costa, Karen Duby, Erin Kearney, Gabrielle
Maher, Jenna Pierce, Tiffany Poplawski, Deb & Ralph Thibodeau,
Kirsten Tselios

Props

Tiffany Poplawski & Kirsten Tselios

Stage Manager: Kim Pheymannicie

Lighting Designer: Brenda Shepard

Audio Engineer: Nick Joyce

Costumes: Freda Bromberg & Beth Laperle

Videography*: MPD Video

* This production was filmed in March 2021 as part of the
virtual student matinee series

Peter and the Wolf Cast

Peter Teddy Grillo

Wolf Maia Beaudry

Bird Leland Pierce

Duck Annabelle Thibodeau

Cat Sydney Duby

Grandfather Lou Tselios

Cats Jack Greene, Fayelinn Poplawski, Morgan Soule, Ava Tselios

Woodland Animals Noel DeRosa, Denali Herbert, Emma Jalbert,
Veronica Maher, Casey Reid



Hansel and Gretel Cast

Hansel Maia Beaudry

Gretel Leland Pierce

Father Teddy Grillo

Mother/Witch Sydney Duby

Cats Jack Greene, Fayelinn Poplawski, Ava Tselios

White Cat Morgan Soule

Birds Noel DeRosa, Denali Herbert, Emma Jalbert, Veronica Maher,
Casey Reid

Snow Bird Morgan Soule

White Duck Annabelle Thibodeau

About the Show

Peter and the Wolf

Subtitled a “symphonic fairy tale” by composer Sergei Prokofiev, *Peter and the Wolf* was written in 1936. Performed with a narrator, the musical work serves as an introduction to the instruments of the orchestra as well as the basis of a delightful ballet. Each character in the story is personified by its own instruments and melody.

The story is set in the European countryside. The main character is a young boy called Peter who lives with his Grandfather in a small country house surrounded by meadows, a pond and woods. Peter’s three best friends are a bird who has a nest near Peter’s home, a duck who likes to splash in the nearby pond at the edge of the woods, and a playful cat.

The story unfolds as Peter, Cat, Bird and Duck are playing in the meadow and pond on the edge of the woods. Enjoying the lovely day in the sun, Cat eyes Bird. Bird quickly flutters to the nearby tree and stays there safely as Cat struts and circles below.

Grandfather appears and scolds Peter for going outside of the garden gate as he has warned Peter before that wolves live in the woods. Peter is told to go back home where he will be safe. As he is walking home, a wolf appears and chases Cat, Bird and Duck. Cat escapes up a tree but Wolf swallows Duck.

Wolf circles the tree eager to make Bird and Cat his next meal. Peter watches this from a distance, fetches a rope and scrambles up the tree; he has a plan to catch Wolf! Encouraging Bird to fly and distract Wolf, he knots the rope into a lasso and Bird lures Wolf to the tree. Using all of his strength, Peter captures Wolf with the rope. Hunters arrive just as Peter has caught Wolf. Peter proudly tells them that he has captured the wolf and a triumphant procession begins with Peter, Bird, Cat and the hunters. At the end of the ballet, a strange sound is heard from Wolf’s belly and suddenly he spits out Duck who happily reappears!

About the Show

Meet the Composer of *Peter and the Wolf*

Sergei Prokofiev, Russian composer and pianist, was born April 23, 1891 in Sontsovka, a small village in Ukraine. Early on, it was clear that he had musical talent. His mother, who was a very good pianist, encouraged him, and taught him to play the piano. Sergei began composing at the age of five. When he got a bit older, he and his mother moved to St. Petersburg, so that he could study music there.

After Prokofiev graduated from school, he traveled around Europe to learn more about music. World War I and the Russian Revolution made living and working in Russia very difficult, so Prokofiev left the country in 1918. Paris eventually became his

home, but he also spent time in the United States and the Bavarian Alps. The whole time he was away from Russia, Prokofiev longed for his homeland. In 1936, he made the unusual decision to move back to the Soviet Union.

Prokofiev was a master at using music to tell a story. One of his most famous musical stories is *Peter and the Wolf*, which was written for Russia's Central Children's Theatre. In addition to symphonic music, Prokofiev wrote ballets, operas, and music for films. He died on March 5, 1953.



About the Show

Hansel and Gretel

The story is set in medieval Germany. Hansel and Gretel are the young children of a poor woodcutter. When a great famine settles over the land, the woodcutter's wife decides to take the children into the woods and leave them there to fend for themselves. The woodcutter opposes the plan but finally, and reluctantly, submits to his wife's scheme. Hansel and Gretel have overheard them and make a plan to outsmart their stepmother.

The following morning, the family treks into the woods. Hansel takes a slice of bread and leaves a trail of bread crumbs for them to follow home. However, after they are abandoned, they find that birds have eaten the crumbs and they are lost in the woods. After days of wandering, they follow a beautiful white bird to a clearing in the woods, and discover a large cottage built of gingerbread, cakes, candy and window panes of clear sugar. Hungry and tired, the children begin to eat the sweets, when suddenly the door opens and a very old woman emerges and lures the children inside with the promise of soft beds and delicious food. They enter without realizing that the old woman is a witch who built the gingerbread house to capture children to cook and eat them.

The witch quickly locks Hansel in an iron cage and enslaves Gretel. The witch feeds Hansel regularly to fatten him up planning to eventually cook him and eat him. The witch tries to touch Hansel's finger to see how fat he has become, but Hansel cleverly offers a thin bone he found to trick her. As the witch's eyes are too weak to notice, she is fooled into thinking Hansel is still too thin to eat. After weeks of this, the witch grows impatient and decides to eat Hansel anyway.

She prepares the oven for Hansel, but decides she is hungry enough to eat Gretel, too. She coaxes Gretel to the open oven and asks her to lean over in front of it to see if the fire is hot enough. Gretel, sensing the witch's intent, pretends she does not understand what the witch means. Infuriated, the witch demonstrates, and Gretel instantly shoves the witch into the hot oven, slams and bolts the door shut.

(continued on next page)

About the Show

Hansel and Gretel (continued)

Gretel frees Hansel from the cage and the pair discover a chest full of treasures. Gathering the treasure, the children set off for home. A swan carries them across an expanse of water, and at home they find only their father – their stepmother has died. Their father had spent all his days lamenting the loss of his children and is delighted to see them safe and sound. With the witch's wealth, they all live happily ever after.

Meet The Brothers Grimm

Jacob (1785–1863) and **Wilhelm** (1786–1859) **Grimm**, often referred to as “The Brothers Grimm,” were German academics, linguists and writers. The brothers were born in the town of Hanau in Germany and spent most of their childhood in the nearby town of Steinau. They studied German folklore, oral traditions, and language, publishing a collection of stories eventually known as “Grimms’ Fairy Tales” which includes popular stories like “Briar Rose,” “Little Red Riding Hood,” and “Hansel & Gretel.”

While the brothers are often credited as the authors of many famous fairytales, they did not actually write them but rather adapted the stories that had been passed down through many generations. While many of these tales have been adapted into popular fairytales for children as books or movies, most of these stories had dark and disturbing origins and were not originally intended for children.



Ballet Basics

While it may look like everything the dancers are doing on stage is easy for them, it actually takes lots of practice to be a ballet dancer! Ballet is a very special type of dance that began as early as the year 1500. In ballet, there are 5 basic positions of the feet that every dancer learns when they are just starting out. Check them out below!



First Position



Second Position



Third Position



Fourth Position



Fifth Position

Ballet Terms

Many of the terms used in ballet are French words. Check out some of them below and impress your friends and family with this fancy vocabulary!



Ballerina (*ba ler ee na*) - a female dancer in a ballet company.

Choreography (*kor ee o graf ee*) - describes the steps, combinations, and patterns of a ballet or dance.

Pointe Shoes (*pynt shoos*) - The satin ballet shoes used by dancers when dancing on their pointes (toes). Pointe shoes are reinforced with a box constructed of numerous layers of strong glue in between layers of material. Pointe shoes are not made of cement or wood.

Tutu (*too too*) - the short classical ballet skirt made of many layers of net. A romantic tutu is a long net skirt reaching below the calf.

Pas de Deux (*pah duh dur*) - a dance for two.

Barre (*bar*) - a horizontal bar (usually made of wood) along a studio wall for class exercises. Every ballet class begins with barre exercises.

Arabesque (*ah rah besk*) - a position on one leg with the other leg raised behind the body and extended in a straight line.

Plié (*plee ay*) - bent, bending - of the knee or knees.

Turn-out (*turn-owt*) - The dancer turns his or her feet and legs out from the hip joints to a 90-degree position.

Pirouette (*peer o wet*) - a rotation or spin - a complete turn of the body on one foot, on point or demi-pointe (half-pointe).

Pantomime

In ballet, dancers do not use their voices to communicate what is happening on stage. Because of this, they have to communicate using their movements. Communicating through movement is often referred to as **pantomime**.

Since the 18th century, choreographers have used pantomime to help tell stories. Ballets like *Giselle*, *La Sylphide* and *The Sleeping Beauty* have iconic pantomime scenes, where rather than dancing full-out, characters communicate through a balletic sign language. These gestures are just as integral to the ballet as the dances themselves; the interactions help **advance the plot** and **define characters**.

Speaking without words may appear straightforward, but it requires precision and skill. If the dancers' body language is not clear, a ballet could fall apart as audiences may get distracted or confused if the storytelling is not understandable—and believable. Dancers need patience and a good imagination to work through these scenes.

Try out these simple pantomime gestures!

Marriage: Point to your left ring finger.

To Dance: Raise your arms over your head and circle your hands.

Love: Cross your hands over your heart.

Beautiful: Circle your face with your hand.

Death: Thrust your arms in front of you; cross them at the wrists with your hands in fists.

Try It!* Check out *Teachable* for an instructional video lesson about pantomime taught by the show's Artistic Director, Jennifer Agbay!

* For virtual showing only

Discussion Questions

Peter and the Wolf

1. What kind of warnings do the adults in your life give you? Do you think it's important to listen to those warnings? Why or why not?
2. Peter spends a lot of time protecting his friends and making sure they are ok. How are some ways you make sure your friends are ok and safe?
3. Each character is portrayed by a musical instrument. What musical instrument do you think represents you best? Would your music be slow or fast?



© 2019 Emily Fortin Photography

Hansel and Gretel



© 2019 Emily Fortin Photography

1. Compare Hansel and Gretel's time at home with their Mother and Father with their time at the Witch's house. Why is this important to the story?
2. If you came across a candy house like the one Hansel and Gretel found, and the owner invited you in, what would you do?
3. The characters make many decisions in this story. What is one decision a character makes that you would change? Why? How would it change the story?

Match the Instruments

In *Peter and the Wolf*, each character is represented by an instrument. Draw lines connecting the characters to their instruments.

WOLF



GRAND FATHER



BIRD



PETER



FLUTE



VIOLIN



BASSOON



FRENCH HORN



ANSWERS: Wolf-French Horn; Grandfather-Bassoon; Bird-Flute; Peter-Violin

Match the Instruments

In *Hansel and Gretel*, each character is represented by an instrument. Draw lines connecting the characters to their instruments.

GRETEL



FATHER



HANSEL



MOTHER



CELLO



TRUMPET



VIOLIN



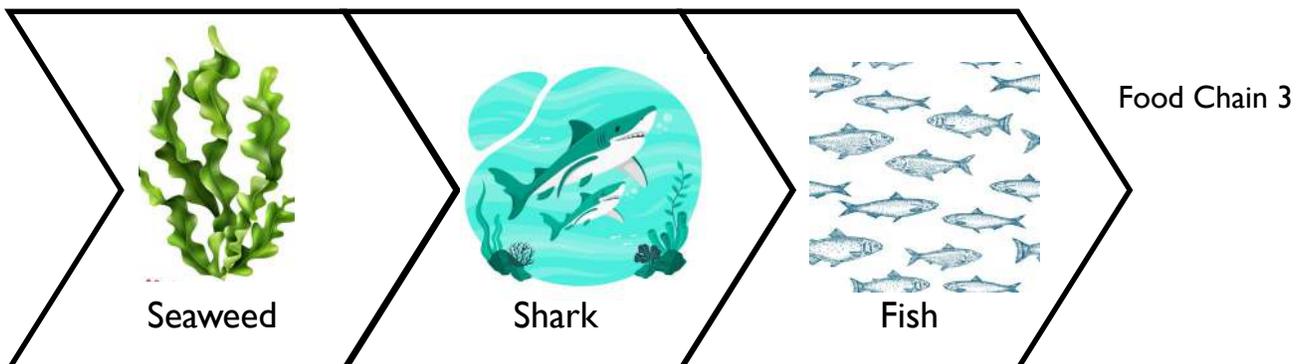
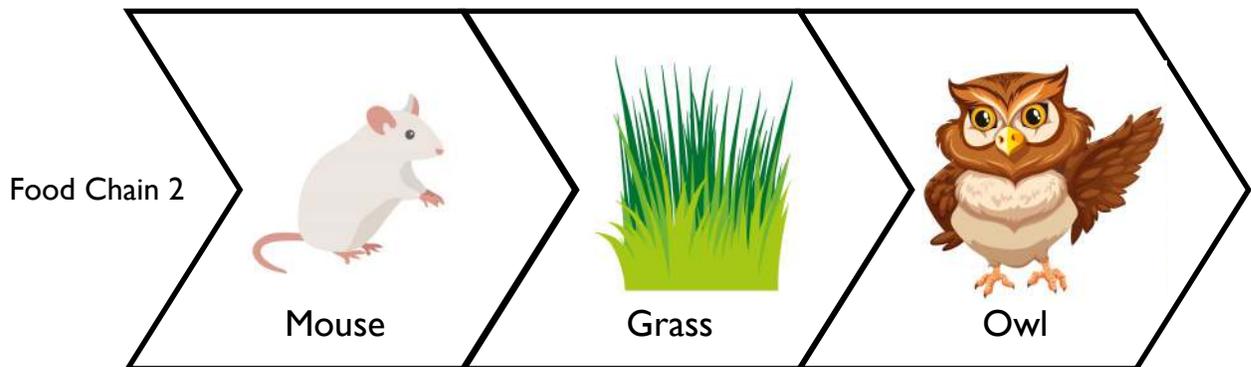
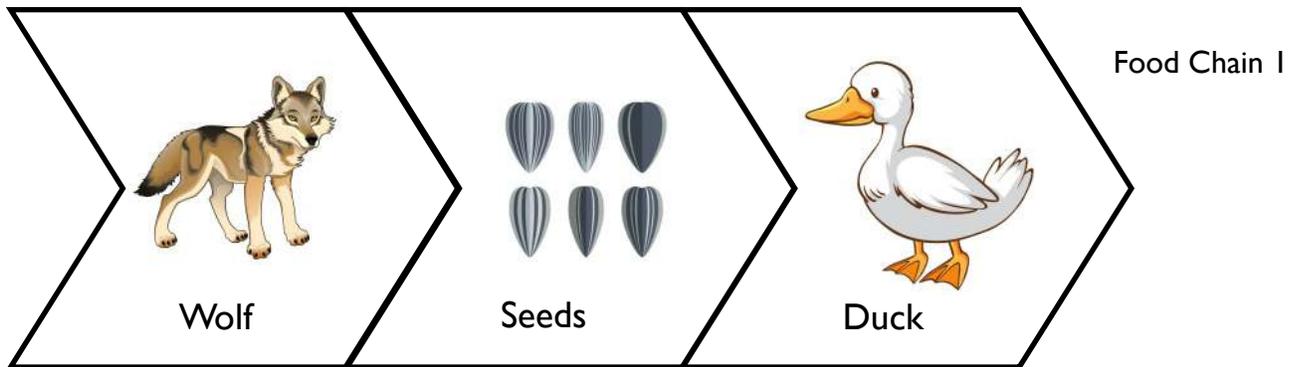
FRENCH HORN



ANSWERS: Gretel-Violin; Father-French Horn; Hansel-Cello; Mother-Trumpet

Prey and Predators

In *Peter and the Wolf*, the wolf comes by Peter's house because it is hungry and wants something to eat. A wolf is called a **predator** because it eats other animals. The animals that are eaten are the **prey**. Cut out the food chain puzzles and put the pieces in the correct order.



Let's Move Around: Predator-Prey Tag

Objectives:

- Students will be able to make observations about the prey and predator relationship.
- Students will be able to track and graph the population of prey and predators over time.

Materials:

Open space (a playground area or gymnasium works best)

Data Table

Writing Utensil

Directions:

1. Create a habitat for the interactions to occur. (A space the size of a basketball court works well.)
2. Line all students up at one end of the habitat. These kids will be the prey (elk) for year 1.
3. Choose 1 or 2 students to be the predators (wolves) for year 1. They should stand in the middle of the habitat.
4. The class will need 1 data recorder. The population of elk and wolves should be recorded at the beginning of each round, or year.
5. This activity is a version of freeze tag. The teacher blows a whistle and the elk try to run from one end to the other without being tagged by a wolf. If a wolf tags an elk, they have been eaten!
6. Any elk tagged must immediately freeze so that any other wolves do not eat them.
7. Once the elk make it to the other side that concludes the year. These are the surviving elk. Any tagged elk now become wolves. A wolf must tag a minimum of 1 elk to survive. If there is a wolf that starves (does not tag any elk) they must stand off to the side for 1 year and then return as elk.
8. It is very important that time is taken before the start of the next round to verify a correct population of wolves and elk. The teacher should decide how many rounds/years to go, but you definitely want the students to experience the oscillating populations at least twice.
9. Upon returning to the classroom students should create a double line or bar graph for the data collected.

Extensions: Reflect on the fact that an ecosystem is an open system with many more factors that affect the populations of organisms. An ecosystem will have animals migrating in/out, there will be more predators/prey species, sickness/diseases, hunting, weather/climate, etc. How do you think this affects the animals and plant populations that live there?

From WolfQuest.org

Predator-Prey Tag Data Table

Directions: After each game (year) of tag, record how many elk and wolves are left. After, use this data and a piece of graph paper to make a graph of your data.

Year	Number of Elk	Number of Wolves
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

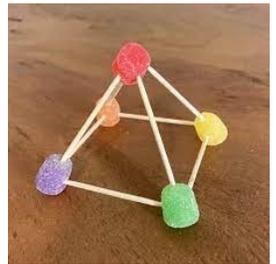
Reflection Questions

1. What do you notice about the data?
2. Why do you think the data came out the way that it did?
3. What do you think would happen to the population of elk and wolves if you played 5 more rounds?

Candy STEM

In *Hansel and Gretel*, the Witch's house is made of all kinds of sweet treats. Try these engineering design challenges that use candy as building materials!

Geometric Shapes: Using toothpicks and various candies (mini marshmallows or gumdrops work best), create different 3D shapes! Can you make a cube? A pyramid with a triangle base? A pyramid with a rectangle base? A triangular prism? See what you can do!



Tallest Tower: Using uncooked spaghetti and various candies (mini marshmallows or gumdrops work best), create the tallest tower you can. Who will have the tallest one! Be sure to measure accurately!

Bonus or alternate goal: Test them on different surfaces, like a pan of jello, trail mix, or brownies to see if they can withstand an earthquake when the pan is moved from side to



Strongest Bridge: Using different candies (mini marshmallows, gumdrops, etc) and building materials (toothpicks, popsicle sticks, etc), but NO tape, create a 6 inch bridge that can hold the most weight!



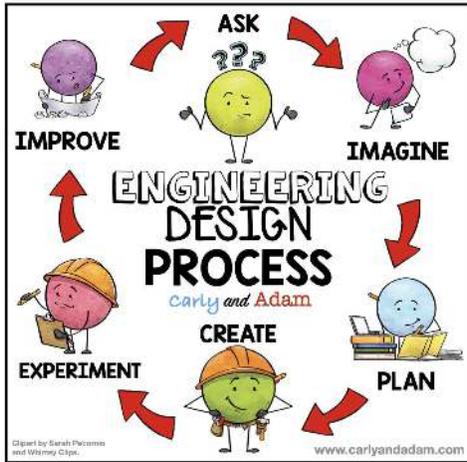
Other Candy STEM Resources:

Candy STEM Activities: <https://www.steamsational.com/candy-stem-activities/>

Candy Science Experiments: <https://www.science-sparks.com/candy-science/>

Candy Math and Science: <https://www.sciencekiddo.com/candy-math-science/>

Engineering Planning Sheet



1. What problem are you trying to solve?

2. Do some research to see how others have solved the problem. Using that, and your own ideas, list 3 ways you could solve this problem.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

3. Choose one of your ideas and draw what it will look like. Be sure to label your drawing so your group and teacher know which supplies you are using and how they are being used!

4. After you build and test your design, reflect upon your it. What is something that worked really well? What is something you could improve to make it even better next time?

Try It!

In *Hansel and Gretel*, the Witch baked all sorts of treats that captured people's attention. Try your hand at making your own irresistible treasures!



Salt Dough Ingredients and Materials

- 1/2 cups all-purpose flour (can use gluten-free flour if there are allergies)
- 1/4 cup salt
- 1/4 cup water
- Tablecloths or sheet pans to contain the fun
- Measuring cups
- Cookie cutters, rolling pin, sculpting tools, etc.



Instructions

1. In a large mixing bowl, stir together the flour and salt.
2. Gradually add water while stirring and mixing to form a dough with a Play-Doh like consistency.
3. Form the dough into a ball and knead for approximately 5 minutes, adding a bit more flour if the dough is too sticky or a bit more water if it's too dry.

Notes

- ***This dough is non-edible. It is for sculpting and cutting only!***
- Makes approximately 5/8 cup of dough
- Dough creations can be air-dried over about a week (be sure to flip and turn them at the end of each day for even drying, or baked in a 150° oven. Drying times will vary based on size and thickness of creations. Dough can be painted when dry.
- Ideas for dough use: making topographical maps, ornaments, or gifts!

Math Connection

Directions: As you prepare to make the salt dough, answer these questions to make sure your teacher has enough ingredients for everyone!

1. How much dough does this recipe make? _____
2. How much flour will you need for *your group* if each person is making the recipe? Show your work below.

3. How much water or salt will you need for *your group* if each person is making the recipe? Show your work below.

4. How much flour will you need for your *whole class* if each person is making the recipe? Show your work below.

5. How much water or salt will you need for your *whole class* if each person is making the recipe? Show your work below.

6. About how much dough will your group make if each person makes the recipe? How much would your whole class make? Show your work for those questions below.

After-the-Show Reflection

We hope you enjoyed this performance of *The Stories of Peter and the Wolf & Hansel and Gretel!* To remember this show, use these spaces to describe your memories of your favorite moments, costumes, characters, and dances.

My Favorite Moments

My Favorite Costumes

My Favorite Characters

My Favorite Dances

Resources

Childsplay. (n.d.). Peter and the Wolf: Resource Guide for Teachers and Parents. Tempe, AZ.

Literacy Central. (n.d.). Lesson Extensions and Activities for Hansel and Gretel. Washington DC; Reading is Fundamental.

Westchester Philharmonic. (2009). Sergei Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf: Study Guide. White Plains, NY.

WolfQuest. (2005). Predator-Prey Tag. Apple Valley, MN.