

PINOCCHIO

Adapted from the Carlo Collodi story

By Sam Kuglen

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STORY OF THE PLAY

This stage adaptation of *Pinocchio* closely follows the original story by Carlo Collodi. Pinocchio is a mischievous puppet who is trying to become a real boy. Once he is carved by Gepetto, his adventures begin. Along the way he almost meets his doom at a puppet show, is waylaid by an evil Cat and Fox, sidetracked by Lampwick who takes him to The Island of the Toys, and is swallowed by a huge whale, where he is reunited with Gepetto. After saving Gepetto, the Blue Fairy helps Pinocchio attain his dream of becoming a real boy. Perfect for touring. About 75 minutes.

MUSIC

There are a few musical opportunities in this play. You may use any music you wish, but it should have an old-time Italian feel. Lyrics can also be done as a choral reading. Songs do not need to be sung well, but should be sung with lots of drama and enthusiasm.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 m, 2 w, 11 flexible. Some doubling possible.)

PINOCCHIO: *(Flexible)* A mischievous wooden puppet who wants nothing more than to be a real boy.

GEPETTO: *(Male)* An old woodcarver who makes Pinocchio.

LAMPWICK: *(Flexible)* Pinocchio's friend who takes him to the puppet show and later to the Island of Toys.

MOTHER: *(Female)* Lampwick's shrewish mother.

POLICEMAN: *(Flexible.)* Slightly befuddled, he arrests Gepetto for letting Pinocchio run outside naked.

NEIGHBOR: *(Flexible)* A person irritated by Pinocchio's yelling.

PUPPET MASTER: *(Male)* Owner of "The World's Greatest Puppet Show" who threatens to burn Pinocchio only to release him and give him gold coins.

PUNCH: *(Flexible)* A real marionette.

JUDY: *(Flexible)* A real marionette.

FOX: *(Flexible)* A rascal who tricks Pinocchio out of his gold and ties him up.

CAT: *(Flexible)* The Fox's partner, equally villainous.

BLUE FAIRY ATTENDANT: *(Flexible)* Releases Pinocchio and does the bidding of the Blue Fairy.

BLUE FAIRY: *(Female)* Pinocchio's benefactress who helps him become a real boy.

DOCTOR: *(Flexible)* A slightly daffy doctor who gives the Blue Fairy medicine to save Pinocchio.

COACHMAN: *(Flexible)* Leads Pinocchio and Lampwick to "The Island of Toys" and then sells them as donkeys.

DOUBLING: Mother, Blue Fairy and Cat can be played by one actress. Gepetto, Puppet Master, and Doctor can be played by one actor. Policeman, Fox, Coachman and Attendant can be played by another actor. The two actors playing Pinocchio and Lampwick should not have any other roles.

ACT I

Scene 1

(AT RISE: Gepetto's room. Upstage there is a door and workshop table and downstage there is a small fireplace. Gepetto's stool is center stage. GEPETTO ENTERS, whistling a tune that is almost instantly recognizable to us. He is carrying a large piece of wood. He moves slowly downstage, puts the piece of wood down and talks to us.)

GEPETTO: "Gepetto," my father would say, for that's my name you see, Gepetto, "sometimes when you carve something with your hands, magic happens!" My family has carved wood for hundreds of years, back twenty or thirty great- grandfathers. Why, to this very day, I will find a piece of wood, pick it up and know right away what I will carve. You might say the wood speaks to me. My only regret is that I don't have a son that I can teach to carve wood, or have supper with or teach the little song my father taught me. It goes like this:

(HE sings the song we heard him whistling when he first entered. This song is to be improvised by the actor.)

Well, a father and his son
They had a lot of fun
They went for a run
In the noonday sun,
They had a cinnamon bun
With Attila the Hun,
They ate one ton
And then they were done,
Were a father and his son.

GEPETTO: This little song will die with me, I suppose. It's a pity, because the ditty is rather pretty. I made a rhyme! Just another one of my many talents. Of course, no one has much use for my talents now.

GEPETTO: *(Cont'd.)* No one believes in the magic of a song handed down from father to son or in the magic of shaping a piece of wood into an object that is practically alive. *(Beat.)* It's a little chilly in here. That's what this log is for. *(He picks up the piece of wood and runs his hand over it.)* I feel this piece of wood will make a rip roaring fire!

PINOCCHIO: *(His voice seems to come from the piece of wood, singing the same song we just heard Gepetto singing.)* Well, a father and his son ...

GEPETTO: What was that?

PINOCCHIO: What?

GEPETTO: That ... that ...voice.

PINOCCHIO: What voice?

GEPETTO: The voice that said "What voice?"

PINOCCHIO: *(Mocking Gepetto.)* "What voice, what voice, what voice?" Gepetto, you are a crazy old man!

GEPETTO: Who said that?

PINOCCHIO: Said what?

GEPETTO: Don't start with me ...

PINOCCHIO: Very well. It was me.

GEPETTO: *(Correcting him.)* It was I.

PINOCCHIO: It wasn't you. It was me.

GEPETTO: I.

PINOCCHIO: Me.

GEPETTO: I.

PINOCCHIO: Me!

GEPETTO: *(Becoming angry.)* I, I, I, I, ... !!

PINOCCHIO: Very well, it was I.

GEPETTO: That's better. Now, who is I?

PINOCCHIO: Me.

(GEPETTO is confused and frustrated.)

PINOCCHIO: The one you're holding, you silly old man.

GEPETTO: *(Speaking to no one in particular.)* This is only a piece of wood.

PINOCCHIO: Correct.

GEPETTO: You mean to tell me that a mere piece of wood has been causing me all these troubles?

PINOCCHIO: Correct.

GEPETTO: Why, I should throw you in the fire!

PINOCCHIO: *(Naively.)* But I'm not cold.

GEPETTO: Then I should make a table leg out of you.

PINOCCHIO: No!

GEPETTO: You must be punished for your impudence.

PINOCCHIO: Don't punish me, please! I promise to be good.

GEPETTO: Very well, I won't punish you. But what can I make of you? I can't very well have a table leg that talks. Let me see ...

PINOCCHIO: *(Singing.)* Well, a father and his son ...

GEPETTO: I know!

PINOCCHIO: What???!!!!

GEPETTO: I shall carve you into a puppet!

PINOCCHIO: A girl puppet or a boy puppet?

GEPETTO: A boy puppet! A son!! *(HE examines the piece of wood.)* Why yes. You would make a splendid puppet.

(HE takes out a small ax and begins to carve at his upstage table. While he is chopping, we hear PINOCCHIO yelling in comic pain and fear.)

GEPETTO: A lovely head, some arms, some legs, hands, feet and we mustn't forget the face.

(PINOCCHIO, in a leotard, is before us as a complete puppet.)

GEPETTO: There, my boy, you are complete.

PINOCCHIO: Not quite complete.

GEPETTO: Don't talk back to your elders.

PINOCCHIO: I'm not talking back.

GEPETTO: And what do you call that?

PINOCCHIO: Talking back. *(Beat.)* But I just wanted to tell you that I didn't have a na ...

GEPETTO: Now you listen here ... why, you don't have name.

PINOCCHIO: Yes. I know. That's what I've been trying to tell you.

End of Freeview

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