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Product Code Y900-NR

Why Does the Sun Move Across the Sky?

A Short Play for Creative Kids
by R. J. Ryland

Loosely based on the classical fairy tale,
Little Red Riding Hood.

Each performance individualized
with kids' creative responses to the question
“Why does the sun move across the sky?”

Why Does the Sun Move Across the Sky?

A Short Play for Creative Kids by R. J. Ryland

SETTING: *A child's bedroom, the wallpaper sporting a woodland theme*

CHARACTERS:

The Child

The Big Sister

Little Red Riding Hood

Her Mother

The Skunk

The Big Bad Wolf

The Flower

The Bird

The Woodcutter

The Grandmother

+ Additional Wildflowers and Birds as needed

ETC: A NOTE TO EDUCATORS/DIRECTORS:

Before you begin rehearsal, have each student/actor write his or her creative, response to the question, "Why does the Sun Move Across the Sky?" Encourage the children to use their imaginations. The more creative and interesting the better! These responses are then inserted into the script as indicated and become part of the story. Please note that THE CHILD in the script gives the "correct" or scientific response and therefore his or her creative response will not be used in the story. As an alternative, you may elect to have your entire classroom answer the question and then select the responses you wish to use in the story.

Why Does the Sun Move Across the Sky?

A Short Play for Creative Kids

by R. J. Ryland

(AT RISE: A child's bedroom sporting a colorful outdoor décor scheme made up of flowers, trees, and the sun. Two children in the room getting ready for bed, THE BIG SISTER very tired, wanting to go to sleep; THE CHILD jumping up and down on the bed, laughing and playing. THE BIG SISTER pleads with the THE CHILD to lie down, finally agreeing to read a story if THE CHILD will lie down and go to sleep. As SHE tells the story THE FAIRY TALE CHARACTERS enter and bring the tale to life. However, every time THE CHILD interrupts the story, THE FAIRY TALE CHARACTERS freeze.)

THE BIG SISTER

(As THE CHILD jumps on the bed.) Will you please stop! I am so tired. I want to go to bed!

THE CHILD

Not until you read me a story. Read me a story! Read me a story!

THE BIG SISTER

All right! All right! If you promise to lie down and go to sleep after.

THE CHILD

I promise!

THE BIG SISTER

All right. *(She finds a book, sits next to THE CHILD, and begins to read.)* Once upon a time there was a little girl by the name of Little Red Riding Hood—

(LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD skips into the room.)

THE CHILD

(Interrupting.) Why is she called “Little Red Riding Hood?” *(LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD freezes in place.)*

THE BIG SISTER

Because she wears a long red cape with a hood.

THE CHILD

Oh.

THE BIG SISTER

(Continuing.) One day Little Red Riding Hood's Mother called her to her side. *(THE MOTHER enters with a basket. THE MOTHER and LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD pantomime the action.)* She held a basket of goodies covered with a bright red and white checked cloth. She told Little Red Riding Hood to take the basket of goodies to her Grandmother's house. Her Grandmother had been under the weather and she hoped it would make her feel better.

THE CHILD

(Interrupting.) What kind of goodies?

(The action freezes as it will continue to do whenever THE CHILD interrupts the story.)

THE BIG SISTER

I don't know. Pies and cookies, I guess.

THE CHILD

I like fudge with chocolate icing.

THE BIG SISTER

Fine. Fudge. Be quiet and listen to the story.

THE CHILD

Okay.

THE BIG SISTER

(Continuing. Again, as THE BIG SISTER tells the story, LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD and HER MOTHER pantomime the action.) Little Red Riding Hood's mother told her to go straight to her Grandmother's house and to stay on the path that leads through the woods and not to talk to strangers. So Little Red Riding Hood set out for her Grandmother's house. *(THE SKUNK enters.)* As she skipped along the path, a skunk suddenly appeared from the other direction.

THE CHILD

(Interrupting. LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD, HER MOTHER and THE SKUNK freeze.) There's no skunk in Little Red Riding Hood.

THE BIG SISTER

In this story there's a skunk. Stop interrupting me! *(Continuing. THE BIG BAD WOLF enters.)* Little Red Riding Hood skipped in a big circle around the skunk through some tall pines and then continued down the path. She didn't see that a Big Bad Wolf was watching her from the trees.

(At this point, the CHARACTERS begins to speak as well as bring the action to life.)

THE BIG BAD WOLF

Where are you going on such a fine day, Little Red Riding Hood?

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

I'm on my way to Grandmother's house. She lives at the other end of the woods. I'm taking her this basket of goodies because she isn't feeling very well.

THE BIG BAD WOLF

(THE BIG BAD WOLF points to THE FLOWERS entering.) Look at the beautiful flowers over there. Why don't you pick your Grandmother some wildflowers? That would make her feel better, too.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

My mother told me to stay on the path.

THE BIG BAD WOLF

But the best flowers are over there.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Yes, I see. I'll take some flowers to Grandmother. She can place them over the mantle to brighten up the house. Thank you.

THE BIG SISTER

As Little Red Riding Hood stopped to pick flowers—

THE FLOWER

Hey, don't pick me!

THE CHILD

(Interrupting.) I didn't know flowers could talk.

THE BIG SISTER

Some can and most do. *(Continuing. THE BIRD enters.)* Just then a lovely bird flew out of one of the tall pine trees.

THE CHILD

(Interrupting.) What color bird?

THE BIG SISTER

What color do you want it to be?

THE CHILD

Blue.

THE BIG SISTER

Fine. The bird is blue. *(Continuing.)* Just then a **blue** bird flew out of one of the tall pine trees. It was so pretty, Little Red Riding Hood tried to catch it. *(THE WOODCUTTER enters.)* As she ran through the forest after the bird, she passed a friendly woodcutter chopping down a tree. The

THE BIG SISTER, *Continues*

woodcutter waved at Little Red Riding Hood and she waved back. Little did she know that the Big Bad Wolf had sneaked over to her Grandmother's house because he wanted to eat her!

THE GRANDMOTHER

(Entering.) Ohhhhhhh!

THE BIG SISTER

So, as the sun moved across the sky—

THE CHILD

(Interrupting. FAIRY TALE CHARACTERS freeze.) Why does the sun move across the sky?

THE BIG SISTER

I don't know! *(Frustrated.)* Why do you think the sun moves across the sky? No, never mind! I'll tell you why the sun moves across the sky. The sun moves across the sky because... *(Insert THE BIG SISTER'S creative response to question.)*

THE CHILD

That's not right!

THE FAIRY TALE CHARACTERS

(FAIRY TALE CHARACTERS break freeze.) Stop Interrupting!

THE CHILDREN

(Startled.) Ohhhh! Who are you?!

THE MOTHER

We're the characters in this story and we're getting tired of your interruptions! Little Red Riding Hood needs to get that basket of goodies to her grandmother!

THE BIG BAD WOLF

And I need to get on with eating Grandmother!

THE GRANDMOTHER

(Hiding behind THE WOODCUTTER.) Ahhhhhh! Help!

THE MOTHER

Besides, you are wrong! The Sun moves across the sky because... *(Insert creative response to question.)*

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Mother, I know I'm always supposed to listen to you and believe everything you say, but I think the sun moves across the sky because... *(Insert creative response to question.)*

THE MOTHER

No, Little Red Riding Hood. I'm sorry it moves across the sky because... *(Repeat THE MOTHER'S response.)*

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Why... *(LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD'S response.)* and not... *(THE MOTHER'S response.)*

THE MOTHER

Because I'm your mother and I said so!

THE SKUNK

You're both wrong. The sun moves across the sky because... *(Insert creative response.)*

THE GRANDMOTHER

I know I'm old and sometimes forgetful, but I am pretty sure I remember that the sun moves across the sky because...because... *(Pause.)* I forget what I was going to say. *(Pause.)* I remember now. *(Pause.)* I forgot again. No, wait! I know what I was going to say, the sun moves across the sky because... *(Insert creative response.)*

THE BIG BAD WOLF

Grrrrr! I should gobble you up right now! *(GRANDMOTHER screams and hides once again behind THE WOODCUTTER.)* Everyone knows the sun moves across the sky because... *(Insert creative response.)*

THE BIRD

What starship did you fly in on? Everyone knows the sun moves across the sky because... *(Insert creative response.)*

THE BIG BAD WOLF

That's the silliest thing I've ever heard, birdbrain!

THE BIRD

Who you calling birdbrain?

THE BIG BAD WOLF

Who do you think?

THE BIRD

Well, I might not know everything, but I guarantee you, I'm smarter than you!

THE FLOWER

Easy, now. There's no need to fight. You're both quite wrong, I'm afraid. The sun moves across the sky because... *(Insert creative response.)*

THE BIRD

That's not true!

THE FLOWER

Is so!

THE BIRD

Is not!

THE FLOWER

Uh-huh!

THE WOODCUTTER

If I could take one moment to speak. The truth of the matter is, the sun moves across the sky because... *(Insert creative response.)*

THE BIRD

No way.

THE FLOWER

Not even close.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Not true.

THE SKUNK

That stinks!

THE WOODCUTTER

You should know!

THE MOTHER

Stop it right this minute or I'll send you all to bed without supper!

THE CHILD

(Yawning.) If you really want to know, the sun doesn't move across the sky at all. The Earth rotates on its axis every 24 hours and as it orbits around the sun it only appears that the sun is moving across the sky.

THE BIG SISTER

You're nuts!

THE BIG BAD WOLF

What do you know? You're just a little kid!

(THE CHARACTERS ad lib; arguing among themselves as to who is right and why.)

THE BIG SISTER

(Finally.) Stop! Stop! I don't care why the sun moves across the sky! I just want to finish the story so I can get some sleep.

GRANDMOTHER

Fine by me. I'm starving!

THE BIG BAD WOLF

So am I! Grrrrrrr.

THE MOTHER

So, let's get on with it already and, *(To THE CHILD)*, no more interruptions!

(All THE CHARACTERS look at THE CHILD who has fallen asleep.)

THE SKUNK

Will you look at that! She's (He's) asleep!

OTHER CHARACTERS

Shhhhhhh!

THE BIG SISTER

(Whispering.) We'll have to finish the story later.

THE GRANDMOTHER

I think that's best.

THE BIG BAD WOLF

(Licking his chops.) I'll be waiting.

THE BIG SISTER

Turn the light off as you leave.

THE FAIRY TALE CHARACTERS

(Ad Lib.) Okay. Goodnight! See you next time. Have a good night. Shhhhh!

THE BIG SISTER

(Closing the book.) The end.

(LIGHTS OUT.)