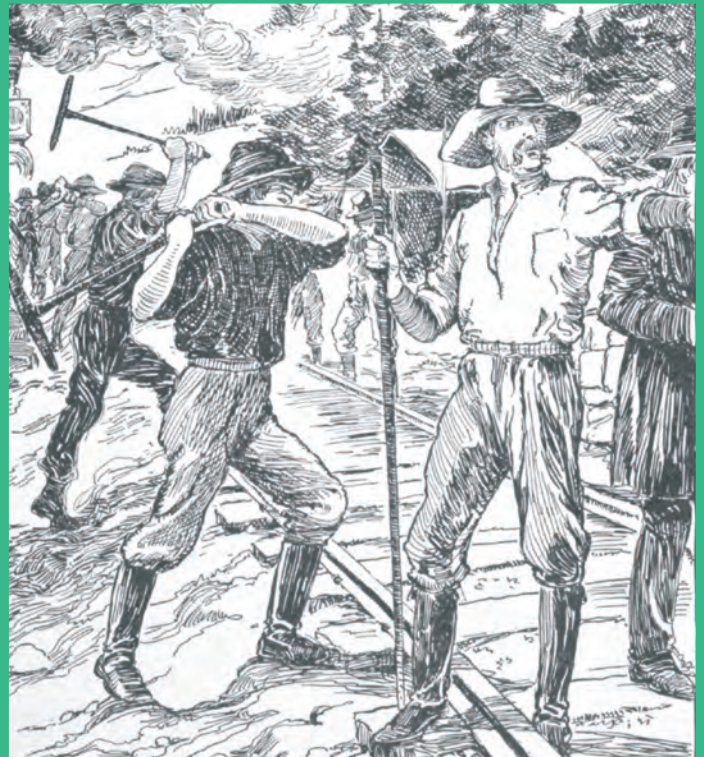
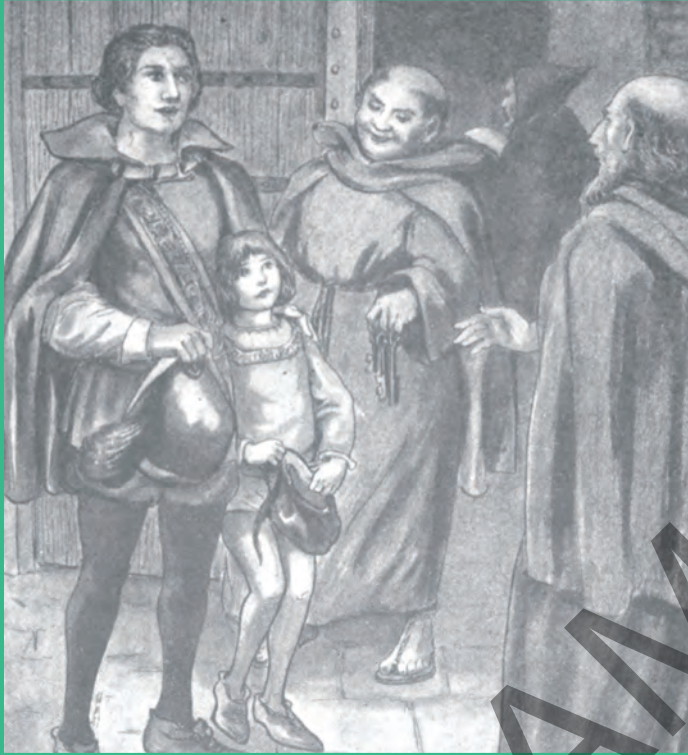


HISTORICAL SKITS

WRITTEN AND COMPILED BY AMY PUETZ



Historical Skits

Written and Compiled by Amy Puetz

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Works Cited:

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Introduction

Do you want to make history come to life? Performing historical skits is a great way to do that! While memorizing the date that Columbus discovered America is important, acting out a skit that shows how he connected with Queen Isabella is quite captivating.

In this book there are nineteen historical plays from the time of Columbus to World War II. Some of the short skits call for only three actors while others call for as many as ten.

This book includes only the skits. For more information about staging, costumes, sets, etc., please check out your local library. Costumes are number 391 and stage presentations are number 792 in the Dewey Decimal System.

For girl costumes, you might find my book *Costumes with Character* helpful. This book shows you how to create costumes for eleven different time periods with one dress. For more information check out www.AmyPuetz.com.

I hope you enjoy the skits in this book!

Pilgrim on a journey,
Amy Puetz

Christopher Columbus

By Grace Electa Bird and Maud Starling

Characters

Prior Juan
Brother Antonio
Diego

Brother Lorenzo
Columbus

Scene 1

A room in the Convent of La Rabida

(Monks occupied with various duties, copying manuscripts, etc.)

Brother Lorenzo: Hark! What is that?

Prior Juan: Nothing but the wind rattling the door.

Brother Antonio: (Gets up and looks out of the window.) It is very dark outside. I can see nothing but the blackness of the night.

Brother Lorenzo: (Follows Brother Antonio to the window.) How the wind howls! Heaven protect those out in this storm.

Prior Juan: Listen! Someone is knocking at the gate.

Brother Antonio: (Takes down his cloak from the wall.) I will go and let the stranger in.

Brother Lorenzo: Hurry! He is rapping again. Do not keep the poor stranger waiting. (Brother Antonio goes out.)

Prior Juan: (Closes the door after Brother Antonio.) Hear the wind roar. Each moment it grows fiercer!

(Brother Antonio enters with Christopher Columbus and his little son, Diego. The boy sinks wearily to a bench. The monks remove the travelers' wet cloaks.)

Prior Juan: Come close to the fire, strangers. The night is cold. (They warm their hands at the open blaze.) You are tired and hungry, I warrant you!

Columbus: Yes, good friends, we are both faint for the want of food.

Prior Juan: Lorenzo, bring bread and milk and meat for the weary travelers. (Lorenzo goes out.)

Columbus: Thank you, Father. I knew we should find shelter and kindness at La Rabida. May God reward you!

Prior Juan: How far have you journeyed?

Columbus: Many, many miles. We are on our way to France.

Prior Juan: That is some distance from here. I am surprised that you started on such a trip with a child.

Columbus: His mother is dead and I have no place to leave him. He goes everywhere with me.

Prior Juan: (Pats the boy on the shoulder.) He is a fine brave fellow.

Columbus: When he could walk no farther, I carried him; but the storm overtook us and we needed shelter.

Diego: I am so hungry, Father.

(Brother Lorenzo enters, bringing a tray of food.)

Prior Juan: Eat your supper, child, and you, too, friend, refresh yourself. (Columbus and Diego begin to eat.)

Prior Juan: May I ask why you go to France at this time of year?

Columbus: To beg the king to buy ships for me. I want to cross the Atlantic, but I have no money for the voyage. By trade I am only a poor map-maker.

Brother Lorenzo: No one has ever crossed that terrible ocean. Are you not afraid?

Brother Antonio: People say it is full of fierce monsters and pools of fire.

Prior Juan: Nonsense, no one has ever seen them. That is nothing but idle talk.

Columbus: (Takes a map from his pocket.) I have no fear of imaginary dangers. I am anxious to find a short way to India. I feel sure that it lies on the other side of the Atlantic.

Prior Juan: I have given that subject some thought myself. I have no doubt that you are right.

(Diego begins to nod sleepily.)

Prior Juan: It is time for the boy to go to bed.

Columbus: It is indeed. He is worn out. (To the boy.) Come, Diego, you must go to bed. I shall come to you soon. Good night, my son.

Diego: Good night, Father. Come soon. (Brother Antonio leads the boy out. Brother Lorenzo removes the food.)

Prior Juan: You cannot walk all the way to France with that child.

Columbus: (Walks to the window and looks out into the night.) Oh, yes we must start tomorrow morning. There is no time to lose.

Prior Juan: Why not request the queen of Spain to provide ships for your expedition? Her Majesty is kind and gracious.

Columbus: I have already sought her assistance, but she has refused to help me.

Prior Juan: I know Queen Isabella well. I was at one time her father's confessor. I will write and ask her to give you the ships you need.

Columbus: You are too good, Father, but would she consent after having once refused?

Prior Juan: There is no harm in trying again. (He opens a desk and begins to write.) She has never refused me a favor. (He finishes the letter while Columbus studies a map.)

Prior Juan: (Hands Columbus the letter.) Read that and see if it conveys your wishes.

Columbus: It is better than anything I could have written, Father.

Prior Juan: When the storm dies down I will send it to the queen. In a few days, we may hope for a reply. You and your son are welcome to remain with us until then.

Columbus: I shall not forget your kindness, Father. You have given me new courage.

Scene 2

The court of Ferdinand and Isabella, King and Queen of Spain

Characters

Columbus
Isabella

Ferdinand
Court attendants

(Enter Columbus accompanied by attendants. He kneels at the feet of the king, who motions him to rise.)

Ferdinand: You have come promptly in answer to our message.

Columbus: Yes, your Majesty. I am anxious to begin my voyage across the Atlantic.

Isabella: (Holds a piece of paper.) This letter from Prior Juan of La Rabida has aroused our interest.

Ferdinand: We fear that such an expedition may be a failure. The last explorers who attempted that voyage found nothing but clouds in the ocean.

Isabella: (Turns to Ferdinand.) He is a brave man to face the unknown dangers of the sea of darkness.

Ferdinand: (To Columbus.) Do you really think that you can find a short route to India?

Columbus: I firmly believe so, your Majesty, and I am willing to risk my life to prove it.

Ferdinand: The danger is very great, and the cost of the ships will be considerable. We have spent so much money on war that we have none left to waste.

Isabella: Do not refuse him. I will sell my jewels to provide the money, if need be.

Ferdinand: Indeed, I fear that may be necessary, for Spain is no longer rich.

Columbus: If I go, I can be the means of bringing you wealth. After I find a short way to India, rich silks and spices can be brought here. We can also teach the natives of India about the Christian faith.

Isabella: What you say is good.

Ferdinand: My queen, do as you will, but I have very little faith in the plan.

Isabella: (To Columbus.) How many ships do you need?

Columbus: Three will suffice, your Majesty.

Isabella: You may plan to make the voyage. I will be responsible for the necessary money.

Columbus: I thank your Majesties. Heaven grant you may not regret what you have done.

Ferdinand: When do you wish to start?

Columbus: As soon as possible.

Ferdinand: Then choose your men, and be ready to leave Palos at an early date.

Columbus: I will lose no time. When I return, a trip to India will be an easy journey.

Isabella: Best wishes to you, brave friend. Heaven prosper your undertaking.

Columbus: I thank your Majesty. (He bows and goes out. The rest follow, the king and the queen leading the line of courtiers and ladies.)