

Playstage
Junior
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OLD KING COLE



A comedy play with songs



Written by
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Auty

OLD KING COLE

Cast in order of appearance:

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Co-ell

Bayleaf

Tealeaf

Father of the Bride

Bride

Groom

Wedding Guests (unlimited number)

Lady Mayoress

Deputy Mayor

Town Clerk

Prime Minister

Chancellor

Librarian

Messenger

Townspeople (unlimited number)

Farmer 1

Farmer 2

Rich Man 1

Rich Man 2

Florist

Florist's Assistant (non-speaking)

Bumblebee (non-speaking)

21 speaking parts. Unlimited number of chorus to sing and be wedding guests and townspeople. Two featured non-speaking parts of Florist's Assistant and Bumblebee.

Running time approximately 40 minutes.

MUSIC

Backing tracks can be purchased and downloaded for a modest fee from various sources, as shown below. Or, you could source the original artiste's recording from amongst parents/grandparents and just have the children sing along to it, as many schools do. If you cannot source them from amongst the school community, then Amazon sell very cheap downloadable MP3 tracks for hundreds of thousands of songs. These can be purchased, downloaded on to a computer and then burnt on to a CD for performance. Below we give the song title and source of backing tracks. Where it says "Traditional" or "Disney", this means there is no backing track we know of, but it may be in sheet music form in your school or on a children's school music compilation CD.

Suggested songs:

Fix You (Coldplay)	www.ameritz.co.uk
Bridge Over Troubled Water (Simon and Garfunkel)	www.ameritz.co.uk
The Wedding Song (Captain & Tennille)	www.ameritz.co.uk
Dancing Queen (Abba)	www.ameritz.co.uk
Land of Make Believe (Bucks Fizz)	www.ameritz.co.uk
The Promise of A New Day (Paula Abdul)	www.ameritz.co.uk
Making your mind up (Bucks Fizz)	www.ameritz.co.uk
Money, Money, Money (Abba)	www.ameritz.co.uk
Rock Around The Clock (Bill Haley)	www.ameritz.co.uk

OLD KING COLE

SCENE 1.

Outside CO-ELL'S house (SEE PRODUCTION NOTES)

The whole cast appear on stage in either school uniform or ordinary clothes.

OPENING SONG - FIX YOU (Cold Play)

*When you try your best, but you don't succeed
When you get what you want, but not what you need
When you feel so tired, but you can't sleep
Stuck in reverse
And the tears come streaming down your face
When you lose something you can't replace
When you love someone, but it goes to waste
Could it be worse?*

*Lights will guide you home
And ignite your bones
I will try to fix you*

*High up above or down below
When you're too in love to let it go
But if you never try you'll never know
Just what you're worth*

*Lights will guide you home
And ignite your bones
I will try to fix you*

*Tears stream down your face
When you lose something you cannot replace
Tears stream down your face and I
Tears stream down your face
I promise you I will learn from my mistakes
Tears stream down your face and I*

Lights will guide you home

And ignite your bones

And I will try to fix you

(Everyone leaves. Enter two NARRATORS)

NARRATOR 1 *(to audience)*

Good afternoon/evening everybody!

(Audience responds, with a bit of prompting)

NARRATOR 2 *(to NARRATOR 1)*

That was a beautiful song to open our show, don't you think?

NARRATOR 1

But it's so sad. Yes, I agree it's beautiful, but why choose that particular song?

NARRATOR 2

Well, apart from being a particular favourite of (name a member of staff), and apart from everyone just loves singing it, the song was chosen because our story has a very sad beginning.

NARRATOR 1

I don't like sad stories. Tell me it does get better later on?

NARRATOR 2

I promise you it will.

NARRATOR 1

Good. Because everyone is expecting this to be the story of Old King Cole. Who, as we know, was a merry old soul.

NARRATOR 2 *(Increasing excitement)*

Let's remind ourselves, shall we?

NARRATOR 1

Here we go! *(To audience)* And if you know any of the words, please join in!

(Sings) Old King Cole was a merry old soul and a merry old soul was he

NARRATOR 2

(Sings) He called for his pipe and he called for his bowl

NARRATOR 1

And he called for his fiddlers three

NARRATOR 2

Now every fiddler had a fine fiddle and a very fine fiddle had he

NARRATORS (*In unison, laughing*)

Fiddle fiddle dee fiddle dee went the fiddlers "Very fine men are we!"

There's none so rare as can compare to the King's fine fiddlers three!

Fiddle fiddle dee fiddle dee went the fiddlers "Very fine men are we!"

There's none so rare as can compare to the King's fine fiddlers three!

NARRATOR 1

Ah, nursery rhymes! Such lovely images from bygone times.

NARRATOR 2

I love the rhyme and the rhythm of the words, and the chorus is a bit of a tongue twister.

NARRATOR 1

And it sounds such a lively and happy song. (*To audience*) You couldn't help smiling as we sang it together – I know, because we were watching your faces!

NARRATOR 2

Now very often there's a story hidden behind the rhyme.

NARRATOR 1

Some of these stories are very obscure and have been lost in the mists of time.

NARRATOR 2

There's often a dark and gloomy tale to be told.

NARRATOR 1

Many of the stories have been long forgotten, so this afternoon/tonight we're going to tell you the real story of Old King Cole.

NARRATOR 1

These stories often have a grim start, and there's no getting away from it – this story of Old King Cole is no different.

NARRATOR 2

And that's why we chose our opening song to put you in the mood for the way in which our story begins.

NARRATOR 2

So this is the true story of Old King Cole.

NARRATOR 1

You might be surprised to know that he wasn't always a king!

NARRATOR 2

And he wasn't old either, well, not to begin with. Look here he is now!

(Enter CO-ELL, looking very sad)

NARRATOR 2

He looks really unhappy too. What's the matter Cole?

CO-ELL

I've told you before, I'm not called Cole, that's not my name. It's Welsh you see, and should be pronounced Co-ell.

NARRATOR 1

Your first name isn't Simon by any chance, because if it was, you'd be Simon Co-ell!

CO-ELL

Very funny, but I'm not in the mood for jokes at the moment. You see, I've just become an orphan.

NARRATOR 2

Your parents have died? Both of them?

CO-ELL

I know - I can hardly believe it myself.

NARRATOR 1

This is terrible news. What are you going to do?

CO-ELL

That's the big question, and I don't know the answer.

NARRATOR 2

You've still got a home, somewhere to live, haven't you?

CO-ELL

I suppose so, but I can't help feeling that this is just the beginning, that there's more trouble ahead.

NARRATOR 2

They say bad luck comes in threes.

NARRATOR 1

Well, you're a right little bundle of sunshine, aren't you? Co-ell needs lifting right now, not depressing even more.

NARRATOR 2

I'm just trying to be realistic, that's all. I didn't mean any harm.

NARRATOR 1

Well you're not helping.

(Enter two (Jack the Lad) Bailiffs - BAYLEAF and TEALEAF, pulling a trailer between them. SEE PRODUCTION NOTES.)

NARRATOR 2

Oh, I wonder who these are, and what they want.

(BAYLEAF and TEALEAF set down the trailer.)

BAYLEAF

Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Bayleaf, and this is my colleague Tealeaf.

CO-ELL

Pleased to meet you both, but this is a very sad day for me.

BAYLEAF

Now Tealeaf, note how polite the young gentleman is. Such good manners, but will it make any difference, Tealeaf?

TEALEAF

Not the slightest bit of difference, Bayleaf. We've heard it all before.

BAYLEAF

And he said it was a sad day. Did you hear that Tealeaf?

TEALEAF

I most certainly did, Bayleaf. And will that make any difference, the fact that this is a sad day?

BAYLEAF

No difference at all, Tealeaf. It might be a sad day, but we're about to make it worse.

CO-ELL

I know who you are, as you introduced yourselves as Bayleaf and Tealeaf. But you didn't say why you were here.

BAYLEAF

Oh, I didn't? I'm most terribly sorry. Here's my card. (*Offers business card*)

CO-ELL

But it's blank.

BAYLEAF

Yes, business is bad, but it's about to pick up very soon!

TEALEAF

That's very good, Bayleaf! Pick up! Sort of describes our line of work, so to speak.

CO-ELL

I still don't follow. What exactly do you do?

BAYLEAF

There's a bit of the clue in my name. Bayleaf - we're bailiffs! Get it?

TEALEAF

Appointed by the County Court, so we have authority to proceed and go about our business.

CO-ELL

Which is...?

BAYLEAF

Evictions! That's what we do, evictions! And we confiscate possessions too!

NARRATOR 1

Oh no! (*To NARRATOR 2*) You were right about there being more bad luck!

TEALEAF

That's really the best bit! We kick people out of their homes, and take all their possessions!

BAYLEAF

They say you should do a job which you enjoy.

TEALEAF

That's why we're bailiffs. No two days the same.

BAYLEAF

And we get a lot of pleasure in bringing misery into people's lives.

CO-ELL

So what's all this got to do with me?

BAYLEAF

Well, a little bird tells me that you've just become an orphan. Is that true?

CO-ELL

Yes. I've only just found out.

TEALEAF

Now this same little bird told us that you used to live with your parents, before the accident?

CO-ELL

Yes, so what is the problem.

BAYLEAF

Well, when they died, I'm sorry to say, you became homeless!

TEALEAF

Your landlord has sent us to lock up the house, and take all your possessions to pay off any unpaid debts.

NARRATOR 1

But you can't do this!

BAYLEAF (*producing an official document*)

I think that you will find that we can!

NARRATOR 1

He's just been made an orphan! Have you no compassion?

NARRATOR 2

At least give him a few days to sort himself out! You owe him that at least!

BAYLEAF

We owe him nothing! But he owes the landlord, and the landlord wants his money!

TEALEAF

Now if it's all the same to you, we'll go inside and do what we have to do. And don't think about obstructing us!

BAYLEAF

Because that would be against the law!

TEALEAF

Getting evicted, and losing all your possessions is bad enough, but you don't want a criminal record, now do you?

CO-ELL

Well, if you put it like that, you'd better go inside.

BAYLEAF

We'll go round the back first, and work our way through.

(Exit BAYLEAF and TEALEAF, pulling trailer behind them.)

NARRATOR 1

You're taking this very calmly, Co-ell.

CO-ELL

What else can I do? The messenger who brought me the bad news about my parents said 'Cheer up, things could be a lot worse.'

NARRATOR 1

And you cheered up, and things got worse. I know. It's terrible.

NARRATOR 2

And they've gone from bad to worse. This is awful, Co-ell. I just wish there was something we could do.

NARRATOR 2

We need a song – a song about changing fortunes. Something that will tell Co-ell that he is not alone, that we will help if we can.

NARRATOR 1

I know just the song!

SONG 2 - BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATER(Simon and Garfunkel)

When you're weary, feeling small

When tears are in your eyes,

I will dry them all

I'm on your side

When times get rough

And friends just can't be found

Like a bridge over troubled water

I will lay me down

Like a bridge over troubled water

I will lay me down

When you're down and out

When you're on the street

When evening falls so hard

I will comfort you

I'll take your part

When darkness comes

And pain is all around

Like a bridge over troubled water

I will lay me down

Like a bridge over troubled water

I will lay me down

Sail on silver girl

Sail on by

Your time has come to shine

All your dreams are on their way

See how they shine

When you need a friend

I'm sailing right behind

Like a bridge over troubled water

I will ease your mind

Like a bridge over troubled water

I will ease your mind

CO-ELL

Thank you, that was a lovely song. It's good to know I've still got friends.