

# BRAVE IRENE

Brave Irene

by William Steig (Farrar)

Themes: Courage, Heroism, Seasons and Nature

Grade Level: K-3

Running Time: 12 minutes, animated

## Summary

BRAVE IRENE is about a young girl, named Irene, who helps her mother deliver a package. The special package is a dress Irene's mother has made for a duchess, who lives in a palace a good distance from Irene's home. When Irene's mother becomes ill, Irene offers to deliver the package on foot, through wind and snow, to the palace.

Irene's journey provides to be very difficult. At one point, the little girl loses the dress and trudges on with the empty box to the palace if only to explain what has happened to the duchess. The end of the story finds Irene, the box, and the dress, safe inside the palace. The next day, Irene is returned, "special delivery", compliments of the duchess' staff, to her home.

## Objectives

- Children will learn about the value of courage and determination
- Children will investigate relationships
- Children will learn about responsibility

## Before Viewing Activities

Talk with children about things they may have done that were difficult for them. Ask: Why did you do this difficult thing? Did anyone help you? How did you feel before doing it? How did you feel afterward? What would you say if you were asked to do this again?

Share the book, Brave Irene, with children. Then ask: How would you feel walking to the palace if you were Irene? How would you feel if you were Irene's mother waiting for Irene to return? What do you think Irene thought about as she struggled through the snow to help her keep going?

## After Viewing Activities

Talk about how the music and sound effects made the viewers experience different from the book...the wind whistled. The flute music made you feel the wind in your bones. Try turning off the sound on the video player or projector and let the children make the sound effects themselves.

Gift wrap an empty box and place it on a table top in the classroom. Have children imagine that the box contains a gift for a special friend or relative. Then have children write short stories about the gift. Encourage children to include the following information:

Who is the gift for?

What is this special gift?

Why will this gift make the person happy?

How do you feel about giving this gift to your special friend or relative?

Later, display children's stories, along with the gift box, in the classroom. Ask the children about other ways that author William Steig could have ended the story. What if the dress really did fly away, or a snow drift blocked Irene's passage to the duchess' house? What could have happened then?

Other book based films and videos about heroism and courage are available from Weston Woods. These include:

DOCTOR DE SOTO by William Steig

FLOSSIE AND THE FOX by Patricia

McKissack; illus. by Rachel Isadora

HERCULES by Hardy Gramatky

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE by

Maurice Sendak

LITTLE TIM AND THE BRAVE SEA CAP-  
TAIN by Edward Ardizzone

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