



# THEATRE IV

## Classroom

### Connections

## Teacher

## Resources

# Beatrix Potter's

# The Tailor of Gloucester

Book, Lyrics, and Music by Paul Deiss



### In the Classroom

#### For Teachers & Students

#### Grades K - 5

*The Tailor of Gloucester* and the Classroom Connections Study

Guide are produced in support of the teaching of: Language Arts, Music, and History and Social Sciences. *The Tailor of Gloucester* supports the following Virginia SOLs: English: K.1, K.2, K.3, K.4, K.6, K.8, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.7, 1.9, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.6; History: K.1-4, K.6 - 8, 1.1, 1.4, 1.7, 1.8, 1.10, 2.3, 2.5, 2.7 - 2.9, 3.5, 3.7- 3.9



### At the Library



[Beatrix Potter: The Complete Tales](#) by Beatrix Potter

[The Tale of Peter Rabbit](#) by Beatrix Potter

[The Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies](#) by Beatrix Potter

[The Tale of Timmy Tiptoes](#) by Beatrix Potter



### On the Web

Beatrix Potter Museum:  
[www.tailor-of-gloucester.org.uk/](http://www.tailor-of-gloucester.org.uk/)

Wikipedia Entry:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The Tailor of Gloucester](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tailor_of_Gloucester)

The Tailor of Gloucester at Project Gutenberg: [www.gutenberg.org/etext/14868](http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/14868)

Theatre IV:  
[www.theatreiv.org](http://www.theatreiv.org)

In the play, *The Tailor of Gloucester*, Theatre IV brings the world of Beatrix Potter to life. The poor tailor in Gloucester finally sees his opportunity to gain wealth when the mayor asks him to sew a cherry-colored coat for his Christmas wedding. The poor tailor works his fingers to the bone. But, he realizes he is missing a single piece of twisted silk with which to sew on the final button. His mischievous cat, Simpkin, has hidden the silk. The mice that live in the tailor's shop, and have benefitted from the scraps of the tailor's trade, do him a great favor. They finish the coat, please the mayor and the tailor, and become fast friends - just in time for a very happy holiday ending! In keeping with Beatrix Potter's use of *anthropomorphism*, the animals in the play not only have human characteristics, but on Christmas Eve, they magically are able to speak!

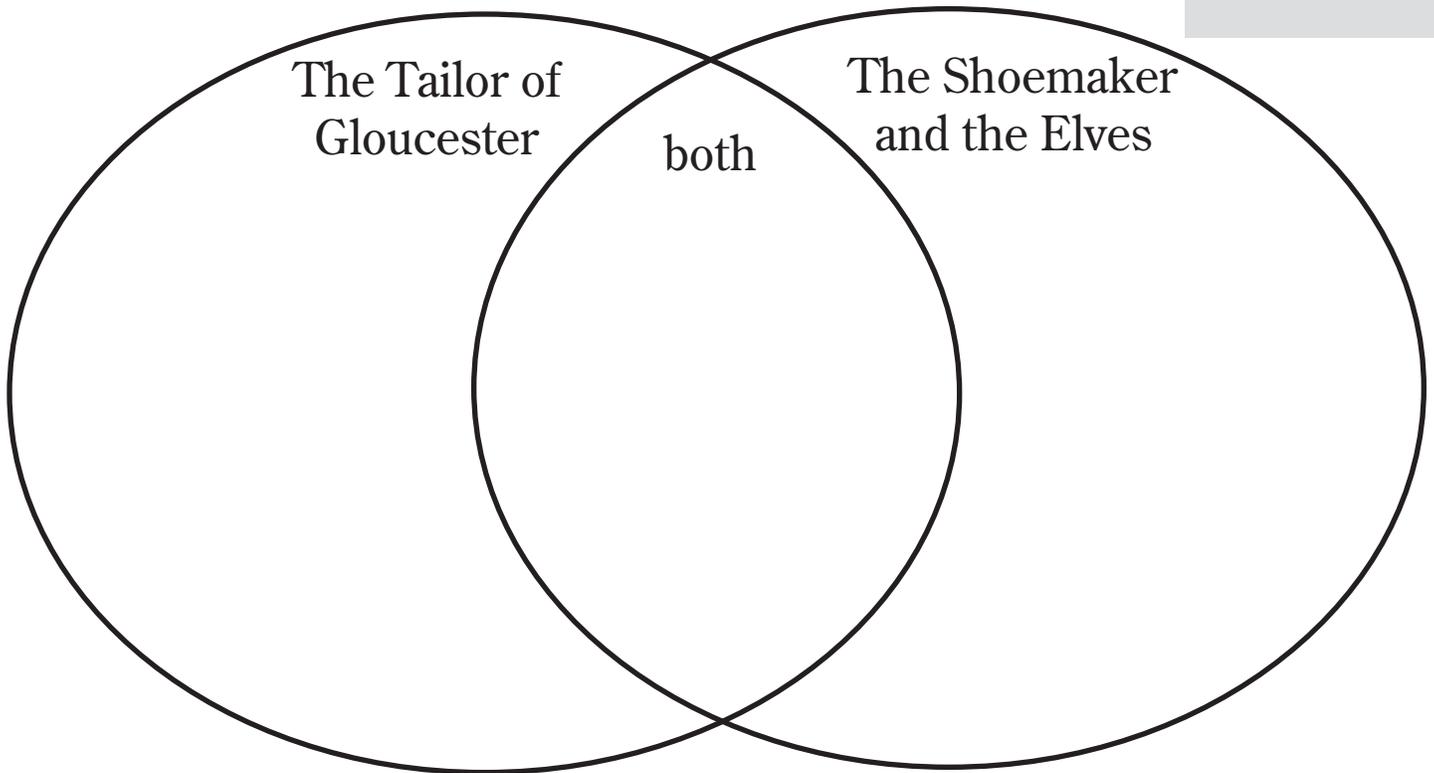
On Christmas Eve  
The animals do believe  
In miracles filled with love from up above;  
They speak on Christmas Eve

Enjoy this lighthearted, musical rendition of the magic of Beatrix Potter!

# Comparison

Compare the story of *The Tailor of Gloucester* to the Brothers' Grimm story of *The Shoemaker and the Elves*. Use the graphic organizer below to record your comparisons.

*The Shoemaker and the Elves* was first published in a collection of German origin fairy tales in 1812 by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, the Brothers Grimm. The collection is commonly known today as *Grimm's Fairy Tales*.



## What do you think?

1. Which of these is your favorite? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Why do you think the authors chose mice and elves as helpers? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. If you were to write your own version of the story, what kinds of characters, settings, or events would you include that might be different than both of these?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Discovering Beatrix Potter



Beatrix Potter and her dog, Kep, circa 1913.

Helen Beatrix Potter was an English author and illustrator, best known for her children's books. Beatrix Potter's family was wealthy and had her educated by governesses. As a result, she grew up isolated from other children. She had numerous pets and spent holidays in Scotland and the Lake District.

In her thirties, Potter published the highly successful children's book, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Around that time, she became secretly engaged to her publisher. Her parents did not think he was suitable for her, and this caused trouble between Beatrix and her parents. Beatrix' fiance died before the wedding could take place.

Potter began writing and illustrating children's books full time. With proceeds from the books, she became financially in-

dependent of her parents and was eventually able to buy Hill Top Farm in the Lake District. Later, she did marry. She published twenty-three books before passing away in December of 1943. Her books continue to be popular the world over. Her stories have been retold in various formats including a ballet, films, plays, and in animation.

## Vocabulary

### *anthropomorphism:*

Beatrix Potter used this technique in her writing. It simply means that she assigned human personality traits to animals.

What are some animals in the play that are anthropomorphic?

1. Do you think Beatrix Potter's own childhood influenced her choice to write books for children? Why or why not?

2. Use the space below to draw a picture of what you imagine her farm at Hill Top to look like:



## Challenge

Explore Hill Top Farm at the following web sites:

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-hilltop](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-hilltop)

[www.visitcumbria.com/amb/hill-top.htm](http://www.visitcumbria.com/amb/hill-top.htm)

# Using Maps

In the play, *The Tailor of Gloucester*, the setting is a real place, Gloucester, England. Use the map below and Social Studies' resources to answer the following:

1. To travel to Gloucester from Scotland, in which direction would you travel?
2. What types of landforms are found in England?
3. How did the setting of the play affect the characters in the play?

## Geography Terms:

*map*: a drawing or picture showing selected features of an area, usually drawn to scale

*globe*: a round model of the earth

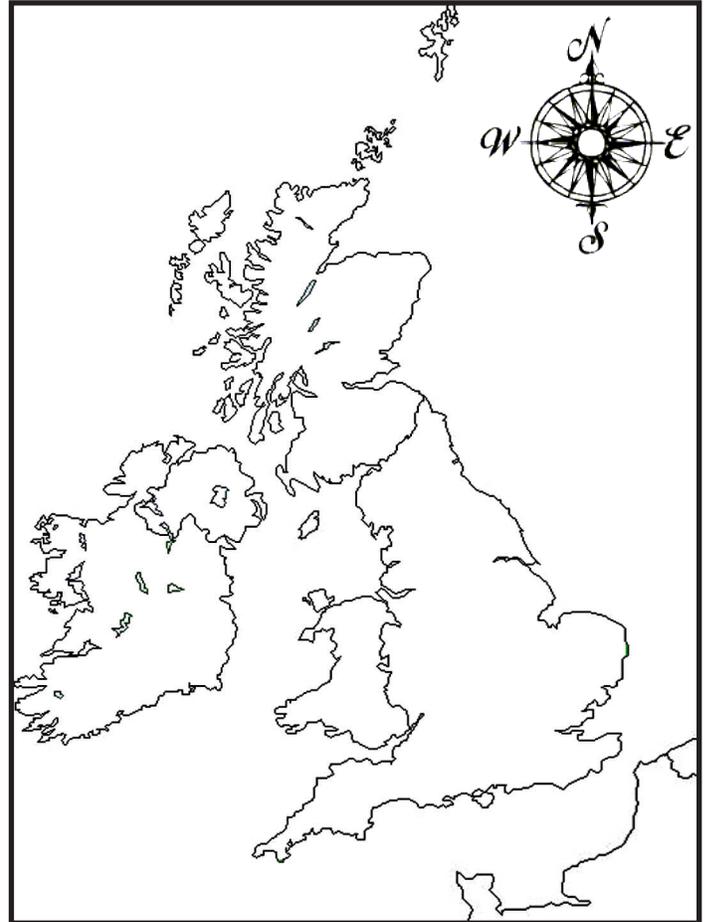
*compass rose*: a figure displaying the cardinal directions, north, south, east and west on a map

*key*: also called a 'legend,' a map key identifies the symbols used on a map

*cartography*: the making of maps

*latitude / longitude*: distance measured in degrees north or south of the Equator; distance measured in degrees east or west of the Prime Meridian

*archipelago*: a group or a chain of islands



Using an atlas or the internet, color code the countries in the British Isles. Add rivers, lakes, oceans, major cities, and mountain ranges to your map. Use symbols and create a map key below:

Visit the U.S. Department of State website at [www.state.gov/countries/](http://www.state.gov/countries/) to learn more about any country in the world, and to view maps of them as well!



# The Community of Gloucester, England

Gloucester is a town in England. In May 1903, Beatrix made many sketches of Gloucester while visiting friends in nearby Stroud. The street scenes in her story, particularly that of the tailor's shop in College Court, depict actual places in the city. Back when Beatrix Potter wrote her story, *The Tailor of Gloucester*, life was much different than it is today. Below there is a list of occupations, or jobs people do. Some of them were done over 100 years ago, while others are jobs that did not exist back then. Match each occupation to its description. Highlight one that does not exist *at all* in today's world.

tailor	a person who cuts hair, usually men's hair
computer programmer	a young man who delivers goods for a store or company
baker	someone who navigates and flies an airplane
merchant	someone who sells things, usually in a store (now can be online)
butcher	a person who repairs fiber optic cable lines that run through out towns and cities
delivery boy	a person elected to be in charge of a city; the 'head' city official
miller	person who makes bread, pastries, and rolls for customers to buy
airline pilot	someone who spreads the news in a town by calling it out
mayor	person who cuts meat into sections for different cooking purposes
town crier	a person who uses a special language to instruct computers to perform tasks
barber	a person who sews or alters clothing for others
cable repairman	someone who works at a mill to grind wheat, for example, into flour

## Are You a Keen Observer? Tools of the Trade

What tools does the tailor need in the play, *The Tailor of Gloucester*? List as many as you notice in the play!

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_



114 West Broad St.  
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www.TheatreIV.org

Theatre IV Presents...

## *The Tailor of Gloucester*

book, lyrics, and music  
by Paul Deiss. Based  
on the Beatrix Potter  
tale.

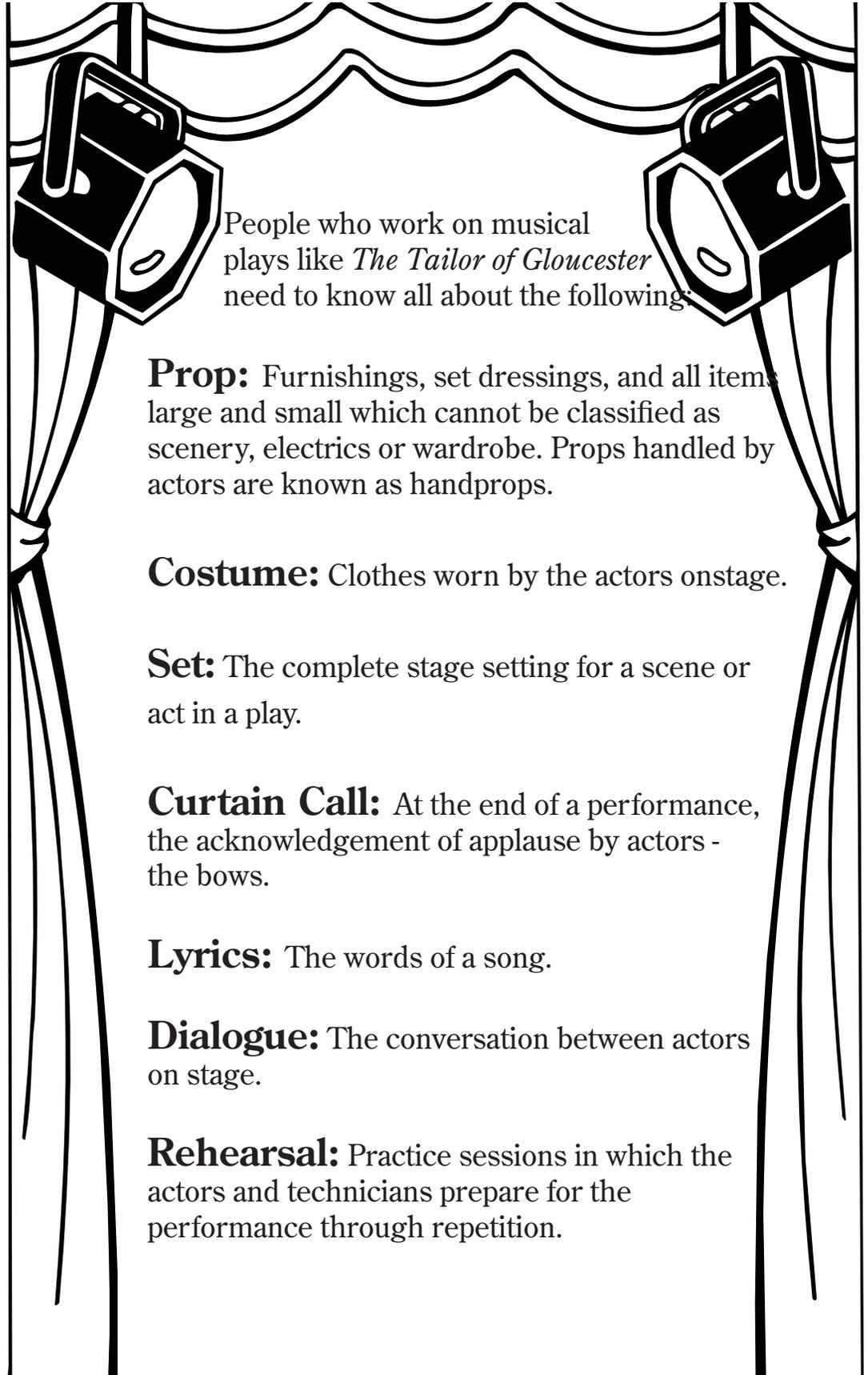
Theatre IV...  
Bruce C. Miller,  
Artistic Director

Phil Whiteway,  
Managing Director

Classroom Connections  
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# Play with Words!



People who work on musical plays like *The Tailor of Gloucester* need to know all about the following:

**Prop:** Furnishings, set dressings, and all items large and small which cannot be classified as scenery, electrics or wardrobe. Props handled by actors are known as handprops.

**Costume:** Clothes worn by the actors onstage.

**Set:** The complete stage setting for a scene or act in a play.

**Curtain Call:** At the end of a performance, the acknowledgement of applause by actors - the bows.

**Lyrics:** The words of a song.

**Dialogue:** The conversation between actors on stage.

**Rehearsal:** Practice sessions in which the actors and technicians prepare for the performance through repetition.