

THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD

Cast:

Narrator

Happy little train

Shiny new passenger engine

Big strong freight engine

Rusty old engine

Tiny blue engine

Toys: doll, teddy bear, car, (add...as needed)

Good things to eat: Orange, apple, broccoli, bottle of milk (add as needed...)

Nar: Once upon a time, there was a Happy Little Train.

(Enter HLT. One person at the head, carrying a cut out of a Happy Little Train engine. The rest of the cast is lined up behind it. Each person has a hand on the shoulder of the person in front of him. The other hand facing the audience is bent at the elbow, hand clenched. The arms of the cast move back and forth in unison as they come to center stage, winding down from the top left. (If possible, have the cast switch arms as they turn so the "wheels" are always in view of the audience. HLT stops Center stage. As the train comes down, cast chants)

Cast TOG: Chug, chug, chug, puff, puff, puff (etc...till train arrives at CS)

Cast TOG: I am the Happy Little Train. I am carrying good things to the children on the other side of the mountain. I am carrying toys...(The "toys" sound off, one by one...) (Depending on number of members in cast, add toys and comments as needed....)

Doll: DOLLS for little girls to play momma with. Imitate doll) Momma...

Teddy Bear: TEDDY BEARS for babies to cuddle with when they go to sleep. (Sing and rock, "Rock a bye, baby" (just those three words)

Car: CARS for little boys to play with. (takes hand and makes a car noise with it)

Cast TOG: and I am carrying good things to eat. ("Things to eat" sound off one by one) Again, depending on number of members in cast, add good things to eat as needed....)

Orange: ORANGES with Vitamin C to keep them from getting colds!

Apples: APPLES that help keep the doctor away!

Broccoli: BROCCOLI to help them have good eyesight!

Bottle of milk: MILK for strong bones so they can jump and play!

Nar: So the Happy little train started off. (train winds up and down the stage...)

Cast TOG: Chug, chug, chug, Puff, puff, puff....(etc.)

Nar: Then ALL OF A Sudden, the Happy Little Train broke down! Her wheels stopped turning and she stopped!

Cast TOG: (slowing down) Chug...chug...chug. Puuuuufff, puuuf...sssssssss. (When the train slows down and stops, have the rest of the train slightly bump each other, as a train down as it stops. They might go ...from the front to the back...."clunk"

HLT Engine: Ohhhh, I am broken. My wheels will not go. What shall I do?

Doll: How will I get to the little girl so she can play house? ("maamma" and droop)

Car: How will I get to the little boy to make me zoom?

TB: The little baby will cry himself to sleep! ("wahhhh!")

FOODS: And nobody will eat us and grow strong and healthy!

Nar: And then they all saw another train approaching. It was the Shiny New Passenger Engine.

(SNPE approaches. He can chug and puff, too, in a merry way, as he winds his way down to center stage)

Cast: Help! Stop! Please stop!

SNPE: (chug and puff down to a stop)

Cast TOG: Shiny New Passenger Engine...won't you please pull our train to the other side of the mountain? Our Engine (all point to the engine) has broken down and cannot move.

Doll: If we cannot get to the other side of the mountain, the girls and boys won't have their toys or good things to eat! Please help us!

SNPE: I pull YOU! "I" am a Shiny New Passenger Engine. "I" have just carried a big train of passenger cars to the other side of the mountain. MY train had dining cars where hungry people could eat, parlor cars so they

could sit and read or look out at the scenery, and sleeping cars where they could sleep when they got tired. "I" pull the likes of YOU! Indeed NOT!

Nar: And the Shiny New Passenger Engine chugged off to the roundhouse, where train engines live when they are not working.
The little train engine and its train was very sad. (Cast looks sad.)

Nar: Then they saw another engine approaching!

Cast TOG: Help! Help! Oh, please stop! Please!
(Big Strong Freight Engine approaches. He, too, chugs and puffs down to the HLT. Try to have him chug in a "manly" deep voice! He chugs to a stop in front of the HLT)

Cast TOG: Oh, Mr. Big Strong Freight Engine...won't you please pull our train to the other side of the mountain? Our Engine (all point to the engine) has broken down and cannot move.

Car: If we cannot get to the other side of the mountain, the girls and boys won't have their toys or their good things to eat! Please help us!

BSFE: Why...a big strong freight engine like me cannot bother with a little train like YOU! Why, just this day, I have pulled a big train loaded with big machines over to the other side of the mountain. Those machines print books and newspapers for grown-ups to read. They are far more important than YOU! No, I can't be bothered to pull YOU over to the other side of the mountain! Good day!

Nar: And off indignantly puffed the Big Strong Freight Engine to the roundhouse, where train engines live when they are not working. The little train engine and its train was very sad. (Cast looks sad)

TB: Look! Here comes another train engine! Maybe this one will help us!

Cast TOG: Help! Help! Oh, please stop! Please!

Orange: If we cannot get to the other side of the mountain, the girls and boys won't have their toys or their good things to eat! Please help us!

(ROE approaches. He chugs and puffs very tiredly, and makes his winding way to CS very tiredly. He chugs very tiredly to a top, and goes "sssss" and sags He speaks very slowly and tiredly....)

ROE: Me? I am so tired; I can hardly turn my wheels. I must rest. I cannot pull even a little train like yours. I cannot. I cannot.

Nar: And off the Rusty Old Engine tiredly chugged to the roundhouse, where train engines live when they are not working.

The little train engine and its train was very sad. (Cast looks sad.)

Broccoli: We will never get to the other side of the mountain to make the girls and boys healthy and strong.

Apple: And I will never be able to keep the doctor away.....

Nar: Just then the little train heard a cheery sound! (Enter LBE. He is cheerily going "chuffa, chuffa, puff, toodely dooo, (like a whistle), chuffa, etc. (make it a tune...) while he "dances" down to the HLT.)

LBE: What is the matter, my friends? Can I help you?

Cast TOG: Oh, Little Blue Engine!

Milk: Our Engine (all point to the Engine) is broken down....

Doll: And we need to get to the other side of the mountain.....

Broccoli: If we don't, the boys and girls will not grow to be strong and healthy...

TB: And the babies will not go to sleep.....

Car: And the little boys will not make car noises (make car noise)

Apple: And I won't get to keep the doctor away!

Cast TOG: But you are so little! Do you think you can pull our train?

LBE: You are right. I am NOT very big. I am only used for moving the big engines out of the roundhouse. I have never BEEN over the mountain.

Cast TOG: Please, Little Blue Engine. Could you TRY?

Nar: The Little Blue Engine looked up and saw the tears in the little doll's eyes. She saw how sad the Happy Little Engine was because it couldn't pull its train over the mountain. She thought of the girls and boys on the other side of the mountain who wouldn't get their toys or have good things to eat. And then she looked up.

LBE: (This is said very slowly, emphasis on "think". The rest of the "think I cans" come...gradually...faster and faster, as the train winds its way up and across the stage). I think I can. I think I can. I think I can.

Nar: She hitched herself to the Happy Little Engine's train. (Cast staying in order; put their arms on the shoulder of the person in front of them. The first person puts his hand on the LBE's shoulder. Cast's arms come up in the "wheel" position and they start to move slowly, in time to the "I think I can's" Cast continues to move arms faster in time to the "I think I cans" as they maneuver up and around the stage.

Nar: The Little Blue Engine went faster and faster as the little train climbed the mountain. Then, at last the little train reached the top of the mountain (Train is now at the top of the stage) and below lay the other side of the mountain. The Little Blue Engine puffed happily as the little train moved down the mountain.

LBE: I thought I could. I thought I could. I thought I could. (Continues till the train reaches the bottom of the platform.)

Cast TOG: Hooray for the Little Blue Engine! She has made us very happy!

Orange: Now the children will grow healthy!

Doll: And the little girls will be able to play house!

TB: And the little babies will go to sleep without crying!

Broccoli: And they will have **WONDERFUL** eyesight!

Car: And the little boys can go **ZOOM** all they want!

Milk: And their bones will be strong so they can jump and play!

Apple: And "I" will be able to keep the doctor away!

After applause has died away, class lines up and quotes:

Ecclesiastes 9:10a Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might...

Colossians 3:23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.

Phillippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Sing "Little by Little" by Ron Hamilton, available from Majesty Music, 733 Wade Hampton Blvd, Greenville, South Carolina 29607

Notes: The engines are made out of cardboard. In the original play, their names were painted on them: the freight engine was "FR8", the rusty old engine was "RUS-T", and the passenger engine was "FAN-C". We used

head pieces to show the other parts. It worked best (this was with K-1) to tie a piece of clothesline rope onto each individual car, and put that loop around the child's neck that was carrying that car. That left their arms free to move like pistons, and also eliminated dropping and leveling of the cars. (Otherwise, one car would be resting on toes, and another would be held up to the chest!)

Written By
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