

Jack and the Beans Talk

A poor boy discovers there's more to life than money.

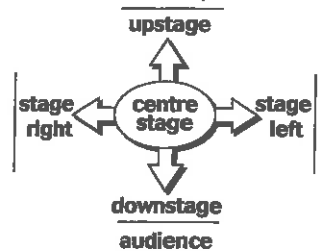
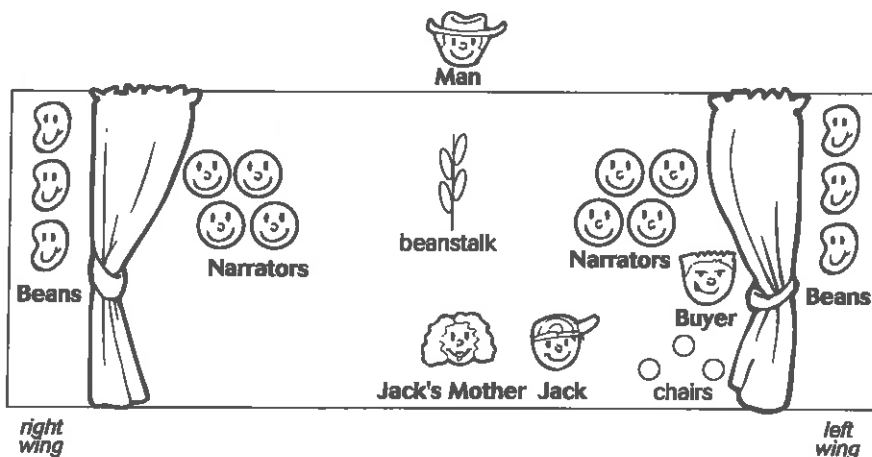
Cast	Costume/Hand Prop Suggestions
Jack	modern clothing (could include a baseball cap worn sideways)
Jack's Mother	modern clothing
Buyer	modern clothing (could include a T-shirt with a slogan such as 'I Love Milk' or 'Beef Eater')
Farmer	jeans, long-sleeved shirt, broad-brimmed hat, riding boots
Bean 1	green clothing, elf-like hat made from green crepe paper
Bean 2	as for Bean 1
Bean 3	as for Bean 1
Other Beans (approximately six)	as for Bean 1
Narrators	as for Bean 1 or dressed as farmers

Additional Props

- tall, thin cardboard 'beanstalk' (must be stable enough for students to move around without falling over)
- three chairs

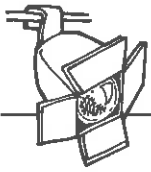
Production Notes

- A backstage crew will be required to place the beanstalk onstage as the narrators relate how the beanstalk grew. At this point, the beans need to creep onstage and move around the beanstalk as if they are growing.
- At the beginning of the play, the stage space should look like the diagram below.



Points for Discussion

- 'Money makes the world go round'. Discuss.
- How important is it to help someone in need?
- What would you have done in Jack's situation?



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Scene 1

Jack's farm

Narrators

Jack and his mother worked hard on their farm
But times were really tough.
They ploughed and planted to earn a wage
But there never was enough.

Jack's Mother

Okay, Jack, you know what to do
You have to get rid of the cow.
Take her to market and sell her –
Get a good price for her, now!

Jack

You can count on me, Mum, that's for sure
I'll sell her for a really top price.
Then we'll have money to burn
Wouldn't that be nice?
(looking dreamily into space)
I could buy a beaut skateboard, computer games,
The latest in trendy gear ...

Jack's Mother

The cow will probably die of old age
If you don't get out of here!
(Jack scurries off towards Buyer, who steps forward. They mime chatting.)

Narrators

But alas, poor Jack is none too bright
And of course you know what this means.
He's been conned into handing over the cow
For a measly handful of beans.
(Buyer and Jack shake hands. Buyer reaches into his/her pocket and puts something in Jack's hand. Buyer then joins Narrators. Jack returns to his mother with his hand in a fist as though he is holding something. He opens his hand and shows it to his mother.)

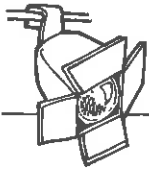
Jack's Mother

(in tears)
Oh, Jack, how could you do this?
You gave away our cow!
No money and nothing left to sell
What are we going to do now?
(Jack shrugs and mimes throwing the beans out of a window, towards centre stage. He and his mother yawn and lie down, as if in bed. Jack's Mother covers her head as if she is crying.)

Narrators

And through the long night, Jack's mother wept
But Jack did not see her tears.
(Jack snores.)
He slept without a care in the world
He was quite thick between the ears!
And out in the moonlight, the strangest of sights





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(Beans creep onstage and begin 'growing' up the beanstalk. They freeze as soon as Narrators finish saying their next lines. Beans 1, 2 and 3 must be facing the audience when they freeze.)

Narrators A gigantic beanstalk grew.
Up past the rooftops and mountains
Up into the heavens of blue.

Scene 2 *Jack's farm, next morning.*

(Jack and his mother yawn, stretch and stand up. Jack's mother walks off stage left. Jack notices the beanstalk and races over.)

Jack *(circling the beanstalk in awe)*
Wow! What a plant! What a gardener I am!
This is my lucky day!
Mum won't be mad at me any more
I've grown a crop that will pay!

Bean 1 Hey, c'mon Jack, don't sell us
We'll end up in a stew!

Jack Who said that? Beans don't talk

Bean 2 The ones on this stalk do!

Jack You really talk! My fortune's made!
And on TV and movie screens
There'll be Jack, the rich and famous
And his fabulous talking beans!

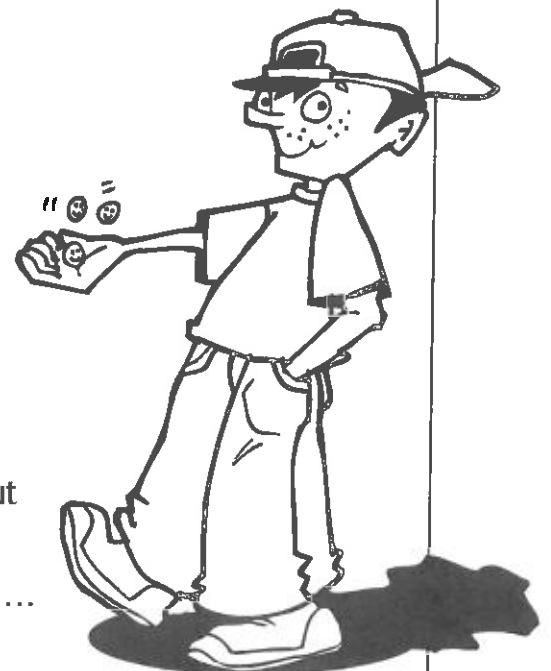
Bean 3 Now listen, Jack, we're not for sale
We're magic beans, it's true.
But we won't utter a single sound
For anyone but you.
So forget all about your TV show
And the fortune and the fame.
We're very happy the way we are
We won't play your little game!

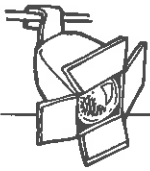
Jack But how can I pay all the bills
And make Mum smile once more?
I could've been rich and famous
A millionaire, that's for sure.

Bean 1 There's more to life, as you'll find out
Than what you have to spend ...

Bean 2 There's feeling good about yourself ...

Bean 3 And helping out a friend ...





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(Man walks onstage, stands behind the beanstalk, and leans over as if he is looking down.)

Man

(calling out)
Somebody, help me PLEASE!
Get me out of here!
I'm lost and stuck and scared to death
IS THERE ANYBODY NEAR?

Jack

(to beans)
Did you hear that? Someone's stuck!
I wonder who he can be?
I'll have to climb your beanstalk
I hope I can set him free.

Narrators

So up Jack climbed and climbed

(Jack mimes climbing up the beanstalk. Man steps to the left from behind the beanstalk as Jack finishes climbing. Jack stands on Man's left.)

And finally found the man.

Jack

How did you get stuck up here?

Man

I'll tell you if I can.
I went walking in the mountains
But became hopelessly lost.
I spent the night out under the stars
In the dark, the cold, and the frost.
But this morning when I awakened
I couldn't believe my eyes.
There right beside the mountain
Was a beanstalk growing up to the skies.

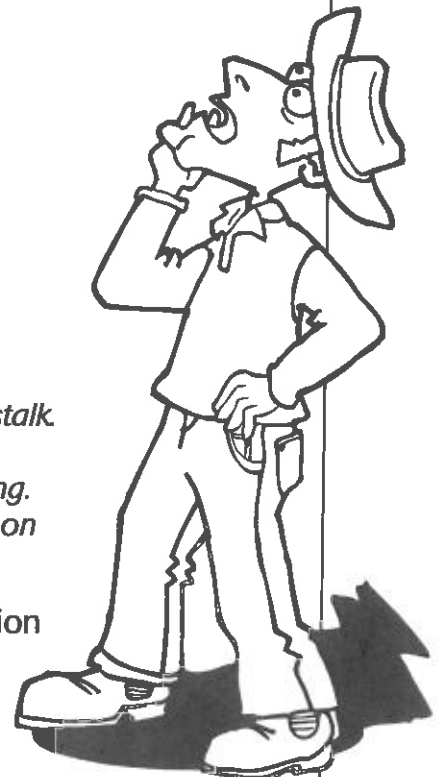
Jack

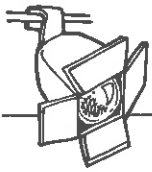
Don't worry now, you're safe again
We'll climb down the beanstalk with care.
And Mum will give you a cup of tea
And make you welcome there.

(Jack and Man mime climbing down the beanstalk. Jack's Mother enters from stage left. She approaches the beanstalk as they finish climbing. Man stands closest to the beanstalk, with Jack on his left. Jack's Mother stands next to Jack.)

Narrators

Now Jack's mother had heard the commotion
And went into the garden to see.
Jack and the man climbing downwards
Through a beanstalk as big as a tree.





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Bean 1 Good morning, Madam, let me tell you
How brave and kind Jack has been.

Bean 2 Don't you go scolding this poor boy

Bean 3 We don't want you making a scene.

Jack's Mother I admit I was really angry
When Jack came home with no money.
But now I feel nothing but motherly pride
For my brave boy; isn't that funny?

(Jack and his mother hug. Jack introduces Man to his mother. She gestures towards the house. She mimes making a pot of tea and the three of them sit on the chairs and drink.)

Narrators Now the man that Jack saved was a farmer
And he offered to show Jack the way.
To plough and to plant and to harvest
And they worked on that farm every day.

Jack *(walking over to the three beans)*
You were right not to let me sell you
There's more to life than fame.
We're not wealthy, but making a living
And we're happy, just the same!

(Jack and Beans mime talking to each other, Man and Jack's Mother continue drinking tea together.)

Narrators And Jack and his mother were happy
And the farmer would soon realise
That life for him was quite blissful
When he looked into Jack's mother's eyes
And in the evenings, the two sit talking
And sometimes they go for a walk
Or they drink cups of tea in the parlour
While Jack and the beans talk.

