

The Sleepy Shepherd

Written by Andrew Holgate

Synopsis

On the night of Jesus' birth, a young shepherd struggles to stay awake. His shepherd friends and sheep try all sorts of creative and funny ways to keep him from dozing off—because this is no ordinary night in Bethlehem! Angels appear, stars shine bright, and the good news is just around the corner... if only he can stay awake long enough to see it.

Notes for Teachers

This script is designed for children aged 4–6 and accommodates up to 60 performers, including ensemble roles. It uses a narrator to guide the action and includes simple dialogue and mime for young children. Opportunities for repetition and physical movement are built in to keep children engaged.

Songs

- Wake Up, Little Shepherd
- Stars Are Shining
- We're Watching Sheep
- Angels Singing
- Follow the Star
- Baby Jesus is Born
- Finale: Hooray for Bethlehem!

Cast List

Little Shepherd: 25 lines

Shepherd 1 (Ella): 15 lines

Shepherd 2 (Ben): 15 lines

Shepherd 3 (Tilly): 15 lines

more shepherds could be added to this play to share lines and give more children parts

Angel Gabriel: 5 lines

Angel Choir: 4 lines each (non-speaking optional)

Star: 1 line (movement only)

Sheep: 1-2 lines each, ensemble baa-ing and movement

Mary: 2 lines

Joseph: 1 line

Innkeeper: 1 line

Narrator (Teacher): Narrates all scenes

Ensemble (Sheep, Angels, Townsfolk): Non-speaking, sings and participates in all group scenes

preview

Scene Breakdown

Scene 1: Sleepy on the Hill

Characters: Narrator, Little Shepherd, Shepherds, Sheep

Props Needed: Blanket, toy sheep

Scene 2: Stars Begin to Shine

Characters: Narrator, Shepherds, Little Shepherd, Star

Props Needed: Star prop or light

Scene 3: Still Watching Sheep

Characters: Narrator, Shepherds, Little Shepherd, Sheep

Props Needed: Sheep props, crooks

Scene 4: Angels in the Sky!

Characters: Narrator, Shepherds, Little Shepherd, Angel Gabriel, Angel Choir

Props Needed: Angel wings, lights

Scene 5: To Bethlehem We Go!

Characters: Narrator, All Shepherds, Little Shepherd, Star

Props Needed: Walking staffs, Star prop

Scene 6: Baby Jesus is Born

Characters: Narrator, Mary, Joseph, All Shepherds, Little Shepherd, Sheep

Props Needed: Manger, Baby Jesus doll

Finale: Hooray for Bethlehem!

Characters: Full cast

Props Needed: None

Preview

Scene 1: Sleepy on the Hill

Setting: A peaceful hillside under a darkening sky. Shepherds tend their sheep. One shepherd is curled up, yawning loudly.

Narrator:

Long ago, on a hill outside Bethlehem, some shepherds were doing something very important—they were watching over their sheep. The stars were beginning to twinkle, the breeze was gentle, and all was calm. But not everyone was awake...

(Little Shepherd snores loudly. Other shepherds and sheep tiptoe around him.)

Shepherd 1 (Ella) (nudging him):

Wake up, Little Shepherd! We're working, not napping!

Little Shepherd (sitting up, yawning):

But the sheep are fine... I'm soooo sleepy...

Shepherd 2 (Ben) (folding arms):

If you don't stay awake, you'll miss something really special!

Shepherd 3 (Tilly) (grinning):

Let's try tickling him again!

(All mime tickling. Little Shepherd giggles and rolls over.)

Little Shepherd:

Okay, okay, I'm up! Sort of...

Narrator:

The shepherds were clever. They tried clapping, hopping, and dancing to wake him up.

(Children act out clapping, hopping on one foot, spinning around.)

Shepherd 1 (clapping loudly):

Maybe some shepherd jumping jacks?

(Shepherds do simple jumps and encourage the audience to join in.)

Little Shepherd (sleepy):

Can I just watch you do the jumping?

Narrator:

But still, his eyes began to close again. So they decided to sing!

♪ **Song 1: “Wake Up, Little Shepherd”**

(Fun, upbeat tune. Shepherds circle around Little Shepherd with light choreography.)

Verse 1

Wake up little shepherd the stars are so bright
The sky is so twinkly on this special night
The sheep are all whispering it's time to go see
What's happening in Bethlehem for you and for me

Chorus

Wake up wake up it's time to go
Follow the star it'll show you the glow
Wake up wake up come on don't delay
The Savior is born let's hurry his way

Verse 2

Wake up little shepherd the angels have sung
They've told us the news with their heavenly tongues
A baby is waiting in a manger so small
He's come to bring love and joy to us all

Chorus

Wake up wake up it's time to go
Follow the star it'll show you the glow

Wake up wake up come on don't delay

The Savior is born let's hurry his way

Bridge

Little feet running over the hill

Hearts full of wonder minds standing still

The star is above us shining so bright

We'll sing for the baby all through the night

Chorus

Wake up wake up it's time to go

Follow the star it'll show you the glow

Wake up wake up come on don't delay

The Savior is born let's hurry his way

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Scene 2: Stars Begin to Shine

Narrator:

As night fell, the sky grew deeper and darker... and something amazing started to happen. Tiny lights appeared in the sky. One by one, stars began to twinkle.

(Children wave sparkly star wands or move arms like shimmering lights.)

Shepherd 2 (pointing):

Whoa! That star is super bright!

Shepherd 3:

It's shining like a torch!

Shepherd 1 (gasps):

It's not just shining. It's moving!

(The Star character glides slowly across stage. Children follow it with eyes.)

Little Shepherd (half-asleep):

Dancing stars... sounds like a dream...

Narrator:

The other shepherds were wide-eyed with wonder. But Little Shepherd was still rubbing his eyes.

(He stretches, yawns, and lies down again.)

Shepherd 2 (frustrated):

You're missing the night's sparkle!

Shepherd 3 (grinning):

Maybe the stars will jump on his nose!

(Shepherds pretend to throw stars at him. He giggles.)

🎵 Song 2: “Stars Are Shining”

(Stars dances gently across the stage. Other children twinkle and sway like stars.)

Verse 1

The stars are shining bright tonight

They twinkle in the sky so white

We wave our hands up high and cheer

The night of joy is finally here

Chorus

Stars are shining in the sky

Lift your hands and reach up high

Dance and twirl and feel the glow

The night is magic

Let it show

Verse 2

The moon is glowing big and round

It lights the world without a sound

We tiptoe softly

Spin with grace

A smile of wonder on each face

Chorus

Stars are shining in the sky

Lift your hands and reach up high

Dance and twirl and feel the glow

The night is magic

Let it show

Bridge

Clap your hands and stomp your feet

The stars above

They're so sweet

Twinkle twinkle all around

Make a wish

Don't make a sound

Chorus

Stars are shining in the sky

Lift your hands and reach up high

Dance and twirl and feel the glow

The night is magic

Let it show

Preview