

### Acting Out Scenes from *Peter and The Wolf*:

There are so many colorful animal characters in the story of *Peter and the Wolf*. And so many funny and interesting relationships to imagine! In this activity participants will choose roles, introduce themselves as animal characters from *Peter and the Wolf*, then act out scenes from the story.

**Materials Needed:** Space to move and a few chairs or a bench to serve as the branch of the tree.

**Optional:** A rug, towel, or blanket to represent the pond.

### Directions:

#### Step 1: Assign roles and introduce yourselves

- Decide which person in your group will play each of the following roles: Bird, Duck, Cat, Wolf. Actors are encouraged to play more than one role. That can make for some pretty funny comedy, especially if the same actor is playing the wolf and the duck, or the bird and the cat!
- Prepare to introduce yourselves to the audience. You can say a little something about yourself from the character's point of view. Try one of these examples, or even better, make up some ideas of your own:

*"I am the bird. Birds are very brave and graceful, unlike the clumsy duck."*

*"I am the wolf, and I was just hungry. Why couldn't Peter stay in his garden and let me eat in peace?"*

*"I am the duck, and everyone picks on me. The bird makes fun of the way I fly, and even the narrator makes fun of me, but YOU try getting away from a hungry wolf. It's not so easy."*

*"I am the cat. I can move fast when I need to. One of these days I am going to eat that tasty little bird."*

#### Step 2: Set up your space

- Choose a place with some room to move around. Use some chairs, a bench, or even a few pillows lined up on the floor to create a tree branch for the bird and cat to sit on.

**Optional:** Place a rug, towel or blanket on the floor to represent the pond.

#### Step 3: Rehearse your scene

For each scene you choose to perform, you will need to rehearse (practice) your actions (what you do with your face and body), your lines, (words and sounds you make with your voice), and your blocking (where you are on stage). Choose one of the following three or a different scene from the story that you prefer.

- **Scene one:** The duck is happily swimming in the pond. The bird flies by, whizzing by the duck on one side and then the other. The duck becomes annoyed and quacks at the bird. The bird brags about how much better they are at flying, and the duck replies that they are very good at swimming.
- Add some funny details of your own. Maybe the duck will splash the bird with water, or the bird will tweet when the duck is trying to sleep. If you have enough actors, the cat can be laughing at the bird and duck from up in the tree, and the wolf can be sneaking around or hiding, or sneaking around hoping to bounce on the bird. The wolf might be hiding, watching the other animals.

**"Even without wings, the cat FLEW up the tree. So this is how things stood. Up in the tree, one cat and on bird...[and] circling the tree, thinking of cat and bird recipes, a very greedy wolf."– Dudley Moore, narrating *Peter and the Wolf***

### Step 3 cont.: Rehearse your scene

- **Scene two:** The wolf comes out of hiding. Create a funny chase scene for the wolf and the duck!
  - Maybe they run in a circle, then stop, turn around and run the other way. The wolf could lurch and miss the duck a few times before finally eating it. Or maybe your duck will manage to get away!
- **Scene three:** The bird flies up to the tree branch, and the cat runs up to safety on the same branch. Find a funny way to show the cat climbing up. Each time the bird moves away from the cat, the cat moves a bit closer. When the bird gets to the end of the branch, it flies around to the other side of the cat, and the routine can start again going the other direction.
  - Think of some funny things for them to say. The cat might say, “fancy meeting you here,” or “perch here often?” The bird could say, “Why don’t you make like a tree and leave?” or “How about a little personal space.” What does the wolf have to say from down below? Maybe the wolf could say to the bird, “There’s plenty of room down here on the ground, and you’d be so tasty...I mean comfortable here next to me.”

### Closing:

- Once you have practiced your actions and your lines and figured out your blocking, it’s time to perform!

### Bonus:

- The animals in this story have a hard time getting along, but sometimes animals that look and act very different can get along very well. Here are some suggestions for learning about amazing animal friendships.

#### To Read:

- *Unlikely Friendships: 47 Remarkable Stories from the Animal Kingdom* by Jennifer S. Holland
- *Friends: True Stories of Extraordinary Animal Friendship* by Catherine Thimmesch
- *Owen and Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship*

#### To Watch:

- *Milo and Otis*, the classic family film about a dog and cat who are friends and narrated by Dudley Moore, narrator of *Peter and the Wolf* on our Program, is also a book by Mark Saltzman.
- A short, funny video of a bird protecting a cat: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u10kqKVlabQ>