

The Tale of the Gingerbread Man

Script and Instructions

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The Gingerbread Man

Script

(The chorus stands.)

Overture

(Sung by the Chorus)

Oh, this is the tale of the Gingerbread Man,
Gingerbread Man, Gingerbread Man,
Oh, this is the tale of the Gingerbread Man,
Running, away as fast as he can.

Oh, you won't believe how this cookie can run,
Cookie can run, cookie can run,
Oh, you won't believe how this cookie can run,
'Cause being dessert isn't very much fun.

Just wait 'til we get to the fox at the end,
Fox at the end, fox at the end,
Just wait 'til we get to the fox at the end,
You'll find out he wasn't a very good friend!

(The chorus sits at finish of song.)

(The curtain opens.)

Narrator:

Once upon a time, there was an old woman, an old man, and a little boy and girl. Christmas was coming, and the children asked their Grandmother to make some holiday cookies.

(Change the words to the narration if you are not performing this as a holiday show.)

(The little boy and girl step up to the microphone now.)

Let's Make Cookies

(Sung by the boy and the girl, repeated by the chorus)

Let's make Christmas cookies,
Lots of Christmas cookies,
Let's make Christmas cookies,
Christmas cookies please!

With Lots of raisins, chocolate chips,
And frosting you can squeeze!
Let's make Christmas cookies,
Christmas cookies please!

Alternate Lyrics

(for non-holiday performances)

Let's all make some cookies,
Lots of yummy cookies!
Let's all make some cookies,
Lots of cookies, please!

With lots of raisins, chocolate chips,
And frosting you can squeeze!
Let's all make some cookies,
Let's make cookies, please!

(While the chorus sings the song a second time through, the boy and girl pretend to mix and bake the cookies, using spoons, a bowl, and a pan.)

Narrator:

So they made some wonderful Gingerbread Man cookies and popped them in the oven. Then the Old Man and Woman asked the children to keep an eye on the cookies while they baked.

(Old Lady and Old Man step up to the microphone now.)

Watch the Oven

(Sung by the Old Man and Old Woman, repeated by the chorus)

Watch the oven, watch the oven,

Don't peek 'til it's done.

When the gingerbread is finished then you can have some. But...

Don't open the oven,

Don't open the oven,

Don't open the oven,

Not until I say;

Don't open the oven,

Don't open the oven,

Don't open the oven,

Let's see if you obey.

(While the chorus repeats the song a second time, the little boy and girl sit down on either side of the oven and pretend to watch the cookies bake.)

Narrator:

So the children sat down and watched the oven and smelled the cookies, but they just couldn't wait! They opened the oven and out popped the Gingerbread Man!

(Gingerbread Man jumps out of the oven and starts running, making circles around the bridge. The little boy and girl step up to the microphone.)

The Little Boy and Girl's Song

(Sung by the boy and girl, repeated by the chorus)

Grandma, Grandma, the cookie got away!
You told us not to open it but we did not obey.
Hurry, hurry! We've got to get him back!
'Cause if we don't that cookie will be someone else's snack!

(While the chorus sings the song the second time through, the whole family chases after the Gingerbread Man. By the end of the song, the Gingerbread Man is on top of the bridge, but the family stops at the bottom of the bridge.)

Narrator:

But the Gingerbread Man ran away, singing this song...

The Gingerbread Man's Song

(Sung by the Gingerbread Man, repeated by the chorus)

Run, run,
As fast as you can,
You can't catch me,
I'm the Gingerbread Man!

*(Dancing Christmas Trees spin during this song.)
(At the end of the song, the Gingerbread Man jumps off the bridge and hides behind it. Optional: At this point, the Elf pushes the oven off to the side of the stage.)*

Narrator:

The Old Man, the Old Woman and the children ran fast, but they couldn't catch up, and soon they had to sit down to rest.

(The family sits down to rest with the chorus.)

Narrator:

Now some farmers working nearby saw the Gingerbread Man running down the street. He looked delicious and they were hungry!

(Farmers step up to the microphone When their song begins, the Gingerbread Man starts running.)

Lookie, Lookie

(Sung by the farmers, repeated by the chorus)

Lookie, Lookie, theres a cookie
Running down the street!
Frosting spread on gingerbread,
Looks so good to eat!
Stop! Gingerbread Man,
Don't put up a fight!
You're delicious and nutritious,
Let me have a bite!

(While the chorus repeats the song, the farmers chase the Gingerbread Man around the stage. By the end of the song, the Gingerbread Man is up on the bridge, and the farmers are waiting at the foot of the bridge.)

Narrator:

**But the Gingerbread Man ran away,
singing...**

The Gingerbread Man's Song

(Sung by the Gingerbread Man, repeated by
the chorus)

Run, run,
As fast as you can,
You can't catch me,
I'm the Gingerbread Man!

(Dancing Christmas Trees spin during this song.)

*(At the end of the song, the Gingerbread Man jumps off the bridge and hides.
The farmers sit down to rest with the chorus.)*

Narrator:

**The farmers ran after the Gingerbread
Man as fast as they could, but they could
not catch him, and soon they had to sit
down to rest.**

(The farmers sit down to rest with the chorus.)

**Next, the Gingerbread Man passed by
three bears. He looked delicious and they
were hungry!**

(The bears step up to the microphone. When the song begins, the Gingerbread Man starts running.)

Lookie, Lookie

(Sung by the bears, repeated by the chorus)

Lookie, Lookie, theres a cookie
Running down the street!
Frosting spread on gingerbread,
Looks so good to eat!
Stop! Gingerbread Man,
Don't put up a fight!
You're delicious and nutritious,
Let me have a bite!

(While the chorus repeats the song, the bears chase the Gingerbread Man around the stage. By the end of the song, the Gingerbread Man is up on the bridge, and the bears are waiting at the foot of the bridge.)

Narrator:

**But the Gingerbread Man ran away,
singing...**

The Gingerbread Man's Song

(Sung by the Gingerbread Man, repeated by the chorus)

Run, run,
As fast as you can,
You can't catch me,
I'm the Gingerbread Man!

(Dancing Christmas Trees spin during this song.)

(At the end of the song, the Gingerbread Man jumps off the bridge and hides. The bears sit down to rest with the chorus.)

Narrator:

The bears ran after the Gingerbread Man as fast as they could, but they couldn't catch him, and soon they had to sit down to rest.

(The bears sit down to rest with the chorus.)

Narrator:

Finally, the Gingerbread Man passed by a hungry fox. The Gingerbread Man looked delicious and he was hungry!

(The fox steps up to the microphone When the song begins, the Gingerbread Man starts running.)

Lookie, Lookie

(Sung by the fox, repeated by the chorus)

Lookie, Lookie, theres a cookie
Running down the street!
Frosting spread on gingerbread,
Looks so good to eat!
Stop! Gingerbread Man,
Don't put up a fight!
You're delicious and nutritious,
Let me have a bite!

(While the chorus repeats the song, the fox chases the Gingerbread Man around the stage. By the end of the song, the Gingerbread Man is up on the bridge, and the fox is waiting at the foot of the bridge.)

Narrator:

**But the Gingerbread Man ran away,
singing...**

(Before the beginning of the next song, the elf should move the microphone over close to the bridge for the fox. Or, have the fox move the microphone himself, or perhaps the teacher/narrator can do it. We have done this all three ways successfully.)

The Gingerbread Man's Song

(Sung by the Gingerbread Man, repeated by the chorus)

Run, run,
As fast as you can,
You can't catch me,
I'm the Gingerbread Man!

(Dancing Christmas Trees spin during this song.)

(This time, the Gingerbread Man stays on the bridge; he does not go to hide. But if the Gingerbread Man forgets, then he can just come back up on the bridge after the fox sings the Fox's Song #1. Both ways work fine.)

Narrator:

**But the clever fox pretended not to hear
him.**

Fox's Song 1

(Sung by the Fox, repeated by the chorus)

Come a little closer,
I really cannot hear you.

Narrator:

Not wanting to come any closer to the hungry fox, the Gingerbread man repeated a little more loudly...

The Gingerbread Man's Song 2

(Sung by the Gingerbread Man, repeated by the chorus)

Run, run,
As fast as you can,
You can't catch me,
I'm the Gingerbread Man!

(Dancing Christmas Trees spin during this song.)

Narrator:

Once again, the fox pretended not to hear him.

Fox's Song 2

(Sung by the Fox, repeated by the chorus)

Come a little closer,
I really cannot hear you.

Narrator:

So the Gingerbread man got a little closer
and repeated a little more loudly...

The Gingerbread Man's Song 3

(Sung by the Gingerbread Man, repeated by the chorus)

Run, run,
As fast as you can,
You can't catch me,
I'm the Gingerbread Man!

(Dancing Christmas Trees spin during this song.)

Narrator:

But the fox pretended not to hear him one
last time.

Fox's Song 3

(Sung by the Fox, repeated by the chorus)

Come a little closer,
I really cannot hear you.

Narrator:

So the Gingerbread Man came down off the bridge and shouted, right in the Fox's ear:

(Tell your Gingerbread Man to not shout super loud into the Fox's ear, but to still sing loudly.)

The Gingerbread Man's Song 4

(Sung by the Gingerbread Man, repeated by the chorus)

Run, run,
As fast as you can,
You can't catch me,
I'm the Gingerbread Man!

(Dancing Christmas Trees spin during this song.)

Narrator:

The Fox grabbed the Gingerbread Man and dragged him away to his den. The Gingerbread Man screamed as the Fox gobbled him up. And so that was the end of the Gingerbread Man!

*(The Fox grabs the Gingerbread Man and pulls him off-stage and gobble him up. The Gingerbread Man screams. Crunching noises are heard.)
(Chorus Stands)*

Finale

(Sung by Chorus and all characters on stage)

Oh, that was the end of the Gingerbread Man,
Gingerbread Man, Gingerbread Man.

Oh, that was the end of the Gingerbread Man, T
he fox ate him up with some tea and some jam.

He should have kept running as fast as he could,
Fast as he could, fast as he could,
He should have kept running as fast as he could,
'Cause there was a fox in his own neighborhood.

If you have a fox living next to your home,
Next to your home, next to your home,
If you have a fox living next to your home,
Be sure that you don't bake your cookies alone!

(All wave and shout, "Merry Christmas!")

Cast

Note: This cast includes a minimum of ten characters, or twelve if three Farmers and Bears are included rather than two. By adding the Elf, the Dancing Christmas Trees, Santa, Mrs. Santa, and two Reindeer (see explanation below), we have included up to twenty children at a time, not including the chorus. However, we would not recommend trying this on your first time putting together a class play, because as you add more parts it becomes increasingly complicated and more difficult to manage.

Gingerbread Man

Old Woman

Old Man

Little Boy

Little Girl

2 or 3 Farmers

2 or 3 Bears

Fox

Narrator (Usually for us, this is the teacher.)

Optional Characters:

Elf (optional stage helper)

Dancing Christmas Trees (see below; we usually used 5 trees because our stage was large enough to accommodate all of them.)

Santa

Mrs. Santa

2 reindeer (see below)

Chorus

Narrator: (one, usually the teacher or an aid)

When I first did this play, I would read the part of the narrator. As I did the play more, I found it was much easier to have my fellow teacher or an aid narrate the show than to attempt to do it myself while running the sound, directing the show, and trying to keep my lively group of children in line! She would be up on stage reading the part of the narrator, as well as helping the kids know where to go when it was their turn up at the mic to sing. I would be

on the floor sitting in front of the children, running the music and helping the chorus an

Gingerbread Man: (one)

This part can be played by either boy or girl. They are the main character and must be able to sing throughout the entire show and keep the energy and the flow of the play. The Gingerbread Man is not a shy child, but one who loves the stage and audience. This child will be running around the stage a *lot*, and will need to have the endurance to keep going and being chased every few minutes by the different characters that come and try to catch him.

Old Woman and Old Man: (one each)

These parts must go to one girl and one boy. The Old Woman and Old Man sing on stage, telling the children to "watch the oven". I usually choose children who are good singers. I always like to have the Old Woman and Old Man who are a little more calm and quiet to best fit the part of how an old couple might act, since the Little Boy and Little Girl part are more rambunctious.

Little Boy and Little Girl: (one each)

These parts must go to one girl and one boy. The Little Boy and Little Girl start off the show and set up the stage for the Gingerbread Man to make his appearance. They must be good singers, and not afraid to sing it out! I usually choose the children who like to move a lot and have lots of energy! These parts move around the stage and also chase the Gingerbread Man around the stage once he pops out of the oven.

Farmers: (two or three)

There really can be any number of farmers, but a comfortable number to have on stage is two or three. They can be any mix of boys and girls, but really whoever you feel is a good singer and has energy to run around chasing the Gingerbread Man. Although I do try to cue the children to let them know when it is their turn to go up on stage, the farmers must be smart enough to know when it is their turn up on stage and remember their song.

Bears: (two or three)

There really can be any number of farmers, but a comfortable number

to have on stage is, again, two or three. I normally have three bears. The bears are the same as the farmers. They can be a mix of boys and girls, just depending on who you think best fits the part and can sing with lots of energy.

Fox: (one)

There can only be one fox, and it does not matter whether its a boy or a girl. I usually try to choose one of the children in my class who is witty and charming, just like the fox would be to outsmart the *Gingerbread Man*. The fox comes in at the end and uses his/her smarts to lure the *Gingerbread Man* close so he can eat him in the end!

Elf: (one/optional)

To include more children, an elf role may be created as a stage helper. The elf is given jobs during the show, such as pushing the oven out of the way when that part of the show is finished, or moving a microphone over for the fox to use when he sings at the foot of the bridge. The children can stand anywhere on the stage that they will fit while holding a cardboard cut-out of a Christmas tree in front of them. A hole should be cut out of the tree for their faces. The trees bounce and dance around a little while the characters sing. When the *Gingerbread Man* sings his song, they spin around and around, stopping when the song is over. This is a good role for a child that wants to participate on the stage, but is a little too shy to sing audibly before an audience. This is also a good role for a child that is very unlikely to sit still throughout the whole show as a part of the chorus. As a dancing Christmas-tree, this type of child may be able to successfully participate without causing a disruption or turning this experience into a negative one due to discipline issues.

Santa, Mrs. Santa, Reindeer, etc.: (optional)

To include more children, we added a song onto the end of our play. We used "The Shoemaker" which was on a CD called, "Perceptual Motor Rhythm Games" by Jack Capna and Rosemary Hallum, PHD., and was published by Educational Activities, Inc. (The telephone number for ordering is (800) 645-3739.) Santa and Mrs. Santa got to sit in a red wagon decorated like a sled. The wagon was pushed by the Elf and pulled by two reindeer. Santa and Mrs. Santa waved to the audience and Santa said, "Ho, ho, ho" many times. Mean-

while, the chorus members (along with all other cast members) were given rhythm sticks and performed a patterned sequence many times during this song.

The sequence of the pattern we used was:

Part A

Beats 1-4: Roll sticks (as in "The Wheels on the Bus" song) forward.

Beats 5-8: Roll sticks backwards.

Beats 9-12: Pull sticks backwards from chest on beats 9 and 11.

Beats 13-16: Tap sticks three times on beats 13, 14, and 15.

(Repeat Part A one time.)

Part B

Beats 1-8: Holding sticks in front of you at tummy level, tap the stick belonging to the person to your right on beats 1-7. Make sure you hold your left hand still so that your stick may also be tapped by the person to your left.

Beats 9-16: Holding sticks in front of you at tummy level, tap the stick belonging to the person to your left on beats 9-16. Make sure you hold your right hand still so that your stick may also be tapped by the person to your right.

(Repeat Part B one time.)

Start over again with Part A, then Part B as many times as it takes to complete the song. Santa and his crew continue circling the bridge as the other children sing and do their rhythm stick pattern.

Costumes

The Gingerbread Man

Get some white sweat pants and a sweatshirt and dye them light brown. Add two rows of red rick-rack to the bottoms of the pant legs and sleeves. Sew (or pin) some large red pom-poms to the front of the shirt as well as a red ribbon tied in a bow and sewn at the neckline. Add a red Santa hat and some white tennis shoes. Sometimes, the child objected to wearing a hat. Knowing how hot it can be on stage while running under hot lights, we did not force the issue.



The Old Man

Use an old pair of jeans and an oversized flannel shirt. Add a derby hat if you wish. Powder his hair gray and add wrinkles with make-up. Suspenders also add a nice touch.

The Old Woman

Use a colorful dress and add a white pinafore. Powder the hair gray and add an old lady's hat and glasses. Add wrinkles with make-up.



The Old Man



The Old Woman

Little Boy and Little Girl

The Little Boy and Girl should be shorter than the Old Woman and Old Man. The boy could wear overall shorts and knee socks and the girl could wear a frilly dress and Mary Jane shoes.

The Farmers

The Farmers should be dressed in overalls with a flannel shirt and cowboy hats. Cowboy boots are a great addition as well.

The Bears

The Bears costumes could be made by using oversized black sweat pants and a sweatshirt. Make a hat with bear ears by using felt with iron-on fabric stiffener, or use black earmuffs. The hat is just a headband with circular ears. For a tail, pin on a child's black sock stuffed with pellow. Add a black nose and whiskers with make-up.

The Fox

The Fox's costume may be made using red sweatpants and a sweatshirt, or a red pajama. The hat is a headband with triangle ears. Add a black nose and whiskers with make-up. For a tail, pin on a red knee sock with a bit of white paint on the end.



The Farmer



The Bear



The Fox



The Elf

The Elf

Use a long green shirt, a Santa Hat, and some red tights. A circle collar made of red felt is also a nice touch.

Dancing Christmas Trees

Children wear any holiday outfit that they have, and hold in front of them a child-sized cardboard cut-out of a Christmas tree. The tree is decorated with green paint and glitter, and has a hole cut out for the child's face.



Dancing Tree



Mrs. Santa

Santa

We purchased a Santa suit at Target. But one could also be made with a Santa hat, a red pair of sweats, and a black belt and some buttons. Some black rainboots should complete the outfit. We made the beard by cutting a semi-circle shape out of a white bib, adding some fleece and attaching it to the hat.



The Reindeer

Mrs. Santa

We purchased a red dress at a thrift store. A granny cap completed with the outfit, along with a pair of reading glasses.

Reindeer

The reindeer wore brown sweatpants with a brown stuffed sock pinned on for the tail. We purchased antler headbands at Target.

Props and Sets

Props

Mixing Bowl

Spoons

Baking Pan- we attached a stuffed *Gingerbread Man* with magnets.

Oven - Use a box that could be painted to look like an oven, or a child's play oven that is big enough for a child to enter. We built one out of wood to use each year.

Sets

Bridge: Use a rectangular table that can be safely walked on by a child. Pull apart a large cardboard box (like from a refrigerator or large appliance), unfold, and cut it into the shape of a bridge. Paint the bricks on by hand, and lean it against the table. If you leave the folded box lid attached to the bridge at the bottom, the bridge will lean against the table nicely and can be taped to the floor. Secure it with tape onto the table legs as well, or punch some small holes in the bridge, thread some yarn through it and tie the bridge to the table legs. See pictures included with costume pictures.

A Christmas tree, garlands, and lights may be placed on the stage to give it a holiday look, if the play is done during the holiday season. Garlands may be decorated with small cookie cutters, rolling pins, and ribbons if desired.

A large cardboard box cut and painted like a *Gingerbread House* would also be a great decoration. This can also be done with a painted canvas. A canvas house can be safely pinned to curtains at the back of the stage. See pictures behind costume pictures.

Funding Suggestion:

Our PTA very happily paid us back for most of our expenses for this play. It doesn't hurt to ask if your PTA will help. We also acquired these costumes, props, and decorations gradually. The first year we put on this play, it was very basic, and has grown a little each year in terms of costumes and decorations.

Lyrics for all Songs

Overture

(Sung by the Chorus)

Oh, this is the tale of the Gingerbread Man,
Gingerbread Man, Gingerbread Man,
Oh, this is the tale of the Gingerbread Man,
Running, away as fast as he can.

Oh, you won't believe how this cookie can run,
Cookie can run, cookie can run,
Oh, you won't believe how this cookie can run,
'Cause being dessert isn't very much fun.

Just wait 'til we get to the fox at the end,
Fox at the end, fox at the end,
Just wait 'til we get to the fox at the end,
You'll find out he wasn't a very good friend!

Let's Make Cookies

(Sung by the little boy and girl, repeated by the chorus)

Let's make Christmas cookies,
Lots of Christmas cookies,
Let's make Christmas cookies,
Christmas cookies please!

With Lots of raisins, chocolate chips,
And frosting you can squeeze!
Let's make Christmas cookies,
Christmas cookies please!

Let's Make Cookies - Alternate Lyrics

(for non-holiday performances)

Let's all make some cookies,
Lots of yummy cookies!
Let's all make some cookies,
Lots of cookies, please!

With lots of raisins, chocolate chips,
And frosting you can squeeze!
Let's all make some cookies,
Let's make cookies, please!

Watch the Oven

(Sung by the Old Man and Old Woman, repeated by the chorus)

Watch the oven, watch the oven,
Don't peek 'til it's done.
When the gingerbread is finished then you can have some. But...
Don't open the oven,
Don't open the oven,
Don't open the oven,
Not until I say;
Don't open the oven,
Don't open the oven,
Don't open the oven,
Let's see if you obey.

The Little Boy and Girl's Song

(Sung by the Little boy and girl, repeated by the chorus)

Grandma, Grandma, the cookie got away!
You told us not to open it but we did not obey.
Hurry, hurry! We've got to get him back!
'Cause if we don't that cookie will be someone else's snack!

Lookie, Lookie

(Sung by the farmers, bears, and the fox, and repeated by the chorus)

Lookie, Lookie, theres a cookie
Running down the street!
Frosting spread on gingerbread,
Looks so good to eat!
Stop! Gingerbread Man,
Don't put up a fight!
You're delicious and nutritious,
Let me have a bite!

The Gingerbread Man's Song

(Sung by the Gingerbread Man, Repeated by the chorus)

Run, run,
As fast as you can,
You can't catch me,
I'm the Gingerbread Man!

Fox's Song

(Sung by the Fox, repeated by the chorus)

Come a little closer,
I really cannot hear you.

Finale

(Sung by the chorus, and all characters on stage)

Oh, that was the end of the *Gingerbread Man*,
Gingerbread Man, Gingerbread Man.

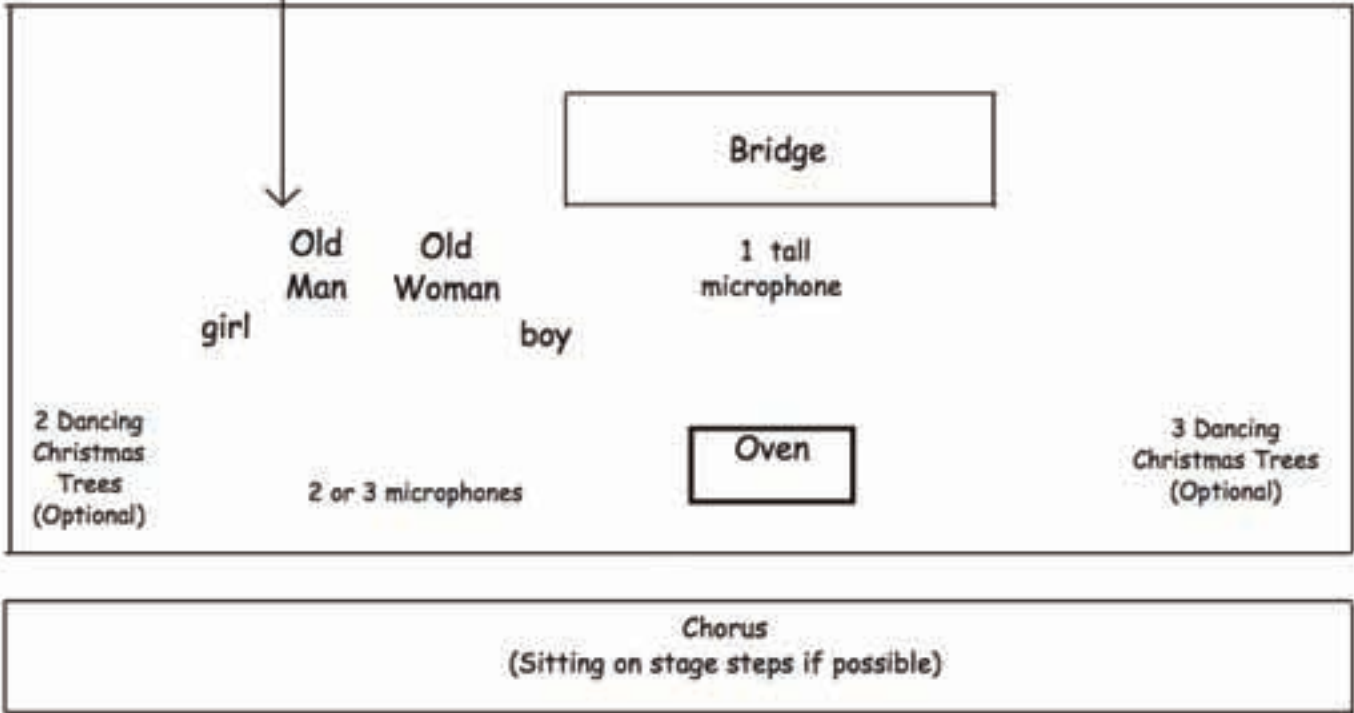
Oh, that was the end of the *Gingerbread Man*, T
he fox ate him up with some tea and some jam.

He should have kept running as fast as he could,
Fast as he could, fast as he could,
He should have kept running as fast as he could,
'Cause there was a fox in his own neighborhood.

If you have a fox living next to your home,
Next to your home, next to your home,
If you have a fox living next to your home,
Be sure that you don't bake your cookies alone!

These cast members start here at the beginning of the show, then leave the stage after their parts. The Gingerbread Man hides inside the oven at the beginning of the show, staying there until it is time to come out. Some kids need a flashlight to keep them company!

Stage Set Up



Note: It is very difficult to get Kindergartners to share a microphone without having one child dominate the other. It is best to provide as many microphones as you have singers at any given time. For example, if you have three bears singing, you need three microphones if possible. Otherwise, the more outgoing child usually becomes a "microphone hog," sometimes even shoving the other child out of the way in his or her eagerness to "be a star." Also, parents get upset when their own child cannot be heard or gets pushed, and will sometimes demand that you do something about it immediately (in the middle of the show!) The places where it says "girl, Old Man, Old Woman, boy" is the same spots where the farmers, bears, and fox will stand to sing.

General Instructions

"The Tale of the Gingerbread Man" is a musical play that was written by a kindergarten teacher for use as a holiday program in a public school. It was first used in a Kindergarten class, but it would also be very appropriate for any class up to second or third grade. Although it was intended to be used as a holiday program, this musical could easily be presented at other times of the year by changing the words to just one song, "Let's Make Cookies." (See alternate lyrics in script.)

Probably the easiest way to put on a class play is to team up with another teacher and another class. We suggest that you plan on presenting the play twice with two casts of children as principal actors, and both classes forming the chorus together for both plays. In this way, you will have an understudy for every role, with one class providing the cast for a morning show and one class providing the cast for the evening show. Also, there will be more volume from the chorus with more children singing. For very young children, it is probably best if the teacher is the narrator. Older classes may be able to let one child or a group of children be the narrator. With Kindergarten and First Graders, the teacher that narrates the show stands up on the stage with the children, and is available to solve problems as they arise.

If two teachers team up to present this play, one teacher could teach both casts the stage direction while the other teaches the rest of the children the music and hand motions. If possible, have a parent volunteer or teacher aide assist in the stage direction to remind the children of their cues. If one child continually forgets his cue, sometimes it is helpful to give another child the job of reminding him. Even young children will take this responsibility seriously and may surprise you at how well they can remember their own part as well as someone else's.

This play was written in such a way that nearly every child that has a part on the stage has a buddy with him or her. For example, the old man and the old woman do everything together, as well as the little girl and boy, the two farmers, and the bears. Therefore, with the exception of the Gingerbread Man and the Fox, each child sings and does all of the stage action with a buddy. It may be helpful to pair up a more confident child with a timid one. To increase the number of children given a part in the play, there could be extra farmers and bears if desired.

The children who have the principal parts in the play may also join the

chorus before and after they sing their parts. You may wish to have a parent helper stay on the side of the stage to quietly escort the children to their seats on the edge of the chorus steps or risers. We have found that it is also helpful to place a strip of masking tape with each child's name on it in the spot where they should sit when they are finished. The children will then always sit right where they are told, and you can separate children that should not sit together due to behavior problems. It looks very professional when children exit the stage and go straight to their assigned places in an orderly fashion. I have found that if the children stay off-stage when they finish their part, they tend to get a bit unruly because they are so excited. On the other hand, if they rejoin the chorus, they stay focused and under control, since they are watched and still a part of the show.

Having the children chase the Gingerbread Man around is the most exciting part of the play as well as the most challenging for the teacher. However, most children that really want a part in the play will do as they are told, as long as they understand that this is the condition of having a part in the play. Instruct the children to circle the bridge around and around until the chorus finishes singing the "Lookie, Lookie" song. If necessary, make a path for them to follow by placing masking tape on the floor. By the end of the song, the Gingerbread Man should have climbed up on top the the table which forms a bridge, with the characters who were chasing him at the foot of the bridge. After he sings, "You can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man!" the characters at the foot of the bridge sadly leave the stage and join the chorus on the risers or steps.

You will find that all of the songs (with the exception of the Overture and the Finale) are sung twice: the first time through the song is sung by the principal actors as either solos or duets, and the second time through the entire chorus echoes the song back again. The only solos in the play are sung by the fox and the Gingerbread Man. If after practicing the music the children are not comfortable singing alone or in pairs, then the chorus may sing some or all of the songs both times through.

In order to teach the blocking of the play, I have found that telling the story with flannel board characters works very well. I went to an educational supply store and found enough characters there to make up the whole cast, just by buying a few sets of storybook flannel board characters. The Little Boy, Old Lady, Old Man, Gingerbread Man, and the Fox came from a 22 set of Gingerbread Man flannel board characters. One Farmer came from an

Old MacDonald set, and the other Farmer (just a man with a hat), the Bears, and the Little Girl came from a Goldilocks and the Three Bears set. I made my own oven and bridge to go along with it. I also made a little microphone out of felt, so that I could show the actors standing before the microphones. To teach the blocking, I tell the story several times to my class using the flannel board set and the music, encouraging them to sing along. By the time we go over to the stage to rehearse, the children already have a good idea of where they are going. Also, I show a videotape of past classes performing the show. This really helps young children understand what you are trying to teach them.

It may take 2-3 weeks of practicing the stage directions before very young children have learned it well enough to do it for an audience. Plan on about two to three weeks to teach your class all of the songs and hand motions whole group. Then choose the children who will be the main characters, and proceed to teach those children the stage blocking.

Finally, have fun and keep your rehearsals "light." Very young children need to be told even the simplest stage direction many times before they remember it. Praising children for their efforts does wonders to help them succeed. To ensure success, before we begin each rehearsal we discuss their cues and remind the children of what they should do when they hear them. The narration has been set up to remind the children of their actions on the stage. Establishing some hand signals from the director of the play are very useful. The children will know when to begin singing, chasing, stop chasing, etc. when they see their director signal them. They can also be taught to recognize a hand signal that tells them if they are not loud enough or too loud, or if they need to approach the microphone a bit more. Sometimes, children inadvertently turn a microphone off. They can be taught a signal that tells them to turn it back on.

Remember, many people who are struck with "stage fright" often forget nearly everything they have learned when the spotlight goes on. The children will probably be depending on the narration to remind them of their actions, which is another reason why it may be easiest to let a teacher be the narrator. It may be necessary for the narrator to repeat a line if a child missed his cue. Naturally, the older the children are, the easier it will be present this play. But it can be done very successfully with Kindergarten children as well. And truthfully, the mistakes are usually the cutest part!

Suggested Timeline

The *Gingerbread Man* can be easily prepared as a class play in about 5 weeks at a leisurely pace. (In other words, if you can devote 20 minutes a day for three to four days per week, you will probably be ready in plenty of time if you begin 5 weeks in advance.) The play can be done in less time if you practice more often, but I would caution teachers from attempting to produce this play in less than three weeks.

Beginning of School Year:

* Choose a date for your show and reserve your auditorium (if necessary) for both rehearsals and shows. Remember, these facilities are usually very busy especially during the holidays.

* Consider contacting your local cable company to see if they would like to broadcast your show if desired. Arrangements for this must usually be done well in advance. (We were never comfortable having our show broadcast until we had successfully produced it many times.)

* Begin making costumes.

Five weeks ahead of showtime:

* Introduce the story by reading any available version of *The Gingerbread Man*. Reread the story at least twice and talk about it.

* Introduce the flannel board play and the songs. Show the children the stage blocking (where they go on the stage) with the flannel board characters. We usually do this about two or three times during this week.

* Teach the handmotions for the songs. Sing each of the songs at least one time per day. The only exception is that we usually wait to teach the Finale until the children know the Overture, since it is the same melody. It seems to be less confusing this way because they are written to the same tune.

Four weeks ahead of showtime:

* Continue practicing the songs and handmotions. We usually do this as "filler activities" or "sponge activities" when we need a break from sitting too long. We try to sing the songs a little bit each day.

* We also usually retell the flannel board story one more time during the week.

* Show a video or DVD of the play if you have one. I always save copies of the previous year's show. This visual aide especially helps the process become more concrete for the limited English students or students with language delays.

Three weeks ahead of showtime:

- * Retell the flannel board story one more time. This helps them learn the blocking of the play, so it becomes more clear if you do it often.
- * Audition your students by having them come up and sing in pairs in front of the whole group. Let students volunteer for this- no one HAS to do it. But if they won't, they cannot get a special part. They will have to be in the chorus. Explain that not everyone can be the Gingerbread Man or the Fox.
- * Bring props to the stage that you will be using and make sure that there are no issues with the microphones. Now is the time to check the micro- phones, since technical problems can be time consuming to solve and can potentially ruin your show. Parents want to hear their children singing.
- * Put tape down on the stage where the children stand when the children will stand at the beginning of the show. Write their names on the tape. (See the stage set up layout.) The children will also need some strips of tape put down where they should stand when the *Gingerbread Man* stands on the bridge to sing. You may not want to write names on this tape, since it will be used by almost all of the cast members sometime during the show.
- * Put tape down where your cast members will sit when they are sitting with the chorus. Write names on the tape, separating children that should not sit together.
- * Put tape down to make a path where the cast members can come down off of the stage when it is time to join the chorus. (We have had children try to pick their way straight through the middle of the chorus as they sit on the steps. They don't necessarily know that they should go around.
- * We also designated different spots for cast members to sit in after they do their part in the show. They were so over-excited that they had trouble settling down. They did better when they sat down right in front of me on the floor.
- * Remember to bring tape to secure the cord from your CD player to the floor if necessary, and to tape down microphone cords. We always seem to have someone tripping over cords making microphones fall over and CD players stop running mid-show. Make a note about which CD track you are using for each song, just in case you lose power in the middle of the show.
- * Send a note home to parents about your coming show. You may also want to inform them about when you are planning on auditioning. Sometimes we send home the words to the songs for kids to practice singing at home as part of their homework.

Two weeks ahead of showtime:

- * Start bringing your cast members to the stage to practice. Usually the first day of rehearsal on the stage, I only bring the Gingerbread Man, Old Man, Old Lady, little boy, and little girl along. Teach them their parts first.
- * After you have one session with only these children, then the next day, bring the farmers and bears along with the previously included cast members. Teach them their parts. Remember to give them a special place to sit when they are part of the chorus and have them sit there whenever it is not their turn to practice. My students know that they must always sit on their names. Otherwise, it becomes a bit chaotic as children wait for their turn to practice to arrive.
- * On the third day, bring the fox to the stage along with the previous cast members.
- * On the fourth day, review the blocking with all of the cast members, minus the chorus and trees, elf, etc.
- * Sometime this week, begin to try practicing with live microphones. Children can be really thrown off by any change that you make right before the show. They need to be taught how close to stand to the microphone in order to be heard.
- * Plan on having one day each week to take a break from practicing. Kids will tire of this in time. Plus, if someone gets sick (including the teacher!) then you don't have to worry about losing a day.

One week before showtime:

- * Bring entire class to stage to practice. Add in the Dancing Christmas Trees and the Elf, etc., if you are having children do this. Be sure to plan two or three days to practice with everyone. We always let the chorus have at least one day to watch the cast members perform. Otherwise, they will always be turning around to watch when they are supposed to be facing the audience.
- * We usually feel comfortable enough at this point to only practice every other day, but this depends on how your students are doing. I usually plan on practicing more often, and then choose to skip it if we need a break.
- * You may or may not want to let them practice once with costumes on. This is also a good time to take some pictures.
- * Try costumes on the children to make sure they fit. Put each child's costume and accessories in a bag with their names on it.
- * Make a program with the children's names in it for the parents to read when

they arrive.

- * Ask other teachers in the school to plan on watching a daytime show!

One day before the show:

- * Reconfirm that lights and microphones work.

- * Send home another reminder note to parents about the show.

- * After school, put the costumes out (with names on them) for the children to put on when they arrive at school for the morning show. It helps to put a parent volunteer in charge of getting everyone dressed and ready.

On the day of the show:

- * Arrive early to make sure everything is in place and working properly.

- * Remind kids to always face forward. No one came to see the backs of the children in the chorus.

- * Videotape the show if possible. They will enjoy watching it later.

- * Plan a Gingerbread Themed day for after the play if you wish. Our students enjoyed decorating and eating their own Gingerbread Man cookies. But they seem to like sugar cookies made into the shape of a Gingerbread Man the best.

Audition Tips

-Have everyone try out on the same song. We usually use the "Lookie, Lookie" song.

-Make notes on what you liked about each person, or what was wrong. This helps if you are confronted by a rather forceful "stage mom" who is upset about her child's part (or lack thereof.)

-We usually tell the children that the most important thing is that we can all hear you singing and that they do the hand motions. A child that won't move and can't be heard is not a good choice for a special part. We tell kids that we cannot choose them if we cannot hear them.

-Wait until later to choose children to be the "extra" characters, such as trees, elves, Santa, etc. We like to wait until we can see exactly who is the most disappointed to not be given a special role. Then we can give them the part as a special treat when the show comes closer. This usually helps heal some heartaches. Also, children usually tend to be disappointed about not being the Gingerbread Man when you first make your announcements regarding roles to the class. If you tell them they are going to be a tree on that day, they are usually not happy about it. But if you tell them later (after all hope of being the Gingerbread Man is gone,) then they are usually very excited.

-Consider double casting the best parts, such as the Gingerbread Man and the Fox. One child can perform for a morning show, and one in an evening show. That way, you have an understudy for the important roles. (However, be aware that this requires more rehearsal time.)

-Sometimes, it helps the kids who did not get a special role to know that you will be doing another show later in the year. Just don't mention it unless you KNOW you will follow through!

- Consider making some kind of special t-shirt for chorus members to wear if you wish. We have found that if they are given some kind of "costume," they feel more special. But of course, this is an extra expense and more work.

CD Musical Track Options

The music CD is divided into sections for your use.

First Set: Demonstration Tracks

(This is how it is intended to sound! These are good tracks to sing along with for rehearsals.)

1. Overture
2. Let's Make Cookies
3. Watch the Oven
4. The Boy and Girl's Song (Grandma, the cookie got away....)
5. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain
6. Lookie Lookie (sung by Farmers)
7. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain
8. Lookie Lookie (sung by Bears)
9. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain
10. Lookie Lookie (sung by Fox)
11. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 1
12. Come a Little Closer 1
13. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 2
14. Come a Little Closer 2
15. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 3
16. Come a Little Closer 3
17. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 4
18. (Crunching Noises)
19. Finale

Second Set: No Vocals, instrumental performance tracks only

(These tracks are for those who wish their students to perform without any additional back-up vocals. This is for the very brave only! If you choose to use this option, be sure to practice the play using this track several times before the performance.)

20. Overture
21. Let's Make Cookies
22. Watch the Oven
23. The Boy and Girl' s Song (Grandma, the cookie got away....)
24. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain
25. Lookie Lookie (sung by Farmers)
26. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain
27. Lookie Lookie (sung by Bears)
28. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain
29. Lookie Lookie (sung by Fox)
30. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 1
31. Come a Little Closer 1
32. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 2
33. Come a Little Closer 2
34. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 3
35. Come a Little Closer 3
36. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 4
37. (Crunching Noises)
38. Finale

Third Set: Vocals are only provided on the sections that the chorus sings. The soloists parts are done instrumental only, so that only your soloists can be heard.

(This set is for those that want vocal support for the performance for the chorus only. All other solo or duet parts have been eliminated.)

39. Overture (with vocals throughout)
40. Let's Make Cookies (chorus sings 2nd time only)
41. Watch the Oven (chorus sings 2nd time only)
42. The Boy and Girl' s Song (chorus sings 2nd time only)
43. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain (chorus sings 2nd time only)
44. Lookie Lookie (sung by Farmers) (chorus sings 2nd time only)
45. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain (chorus sings 2nd time only)
46. Lookie Lookie (sung by Bears) (chorus sings 2nd time only)
47. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain (chorus sings 2nd time only)

48. Lookie Lookie (sung by Fox) (chorus sings 2nd time only)
49. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 1 (chorus sings 2nd time only)
50. Come a Little Closer 1 (chorus sings 2nd time only)
51. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 2 (chorus sings 2nd time only)
52. Come a Little Closer 2 (chorus sings 2nd time only)
53. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 3 (chorus sings 2nd time only)
54. Come a Little Closer 3 (chorus sings 2nd time only)
55. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 4 (chorus sings 2nd time only)
56. (Crunching Noises)
57. Finale (with vocals throughout)

Fourth Set: These are the original vocals that were recorded by Kimmie and Krissie Butkus when they were six years old. You may wish to use these tracks for your students to sing along to during the performance, because they wind up sounding just like the children that are singing live. In other words, this provides support for the singers doing all parts, but it is somewhat more of a "secret" because it really sounds like children normally sound at this age. But be careful about switching tracks on the children without practicing with those tracks in advance!!!!!! We cannot emphasize this enough.

(These are the tracks that we have always used to perform this play. We just turn up the volume of the children's microphones higher than the voices on the CD.)

58. Overture
59. Let's Make Cookies
60. Watch the Oven
61. The Boy and Girl's Song (Grandma, the cookie got away....)
62. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain
63. Lookie Lookie (sung by Farmers)
64. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain
65. Lookie Lookie (sung by Bears)
66. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain
67. Lookie Lookie (sung by Fox)
68. The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 1
69. Come a Little Closer 1

- 70. *The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 2*
- 71. *Come a Little Closer 2*
- 72. *The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 3*
- 73. *Come a Little Closer 3*
- 74. *The Gingerbread Man's Refrain 4*
- 75. *(Crunching Noises)*
- 76. *Finale*

• Extra tracks:

- 77. *Let's Make Cookies (with non-holiday lyrics)*
- 78. *Let's Make Cookies (chorus vocals only on non-holiday lyrics)*

Acknowledgements

This play (both the words and music) was written by me, Heidi Butkus. However, the costumes were designed by Sherry Kinne, a dear friend that I shared a Kindergarten room with for 10 years before she tragically died of ovarian cancer. Sherry also provided much support in the formation of the management routines that are outlined in this booklet. Whenever you see the word "we" in this booklet, it is a reference to my good friend and "angel" Sherry. It is only through her love and support that this play became a reality for our students and yours. I will always miss her guidance and friendship.

The background tracks were originally recorded in the garage recording studio of my friend and neighbor, Michael Cravens. It was through his generous donation of time and resources that I was able to get my first three recordings arranged and recorded free of charge. Although he has since been paid for his services, and the vocals have been re-recorded, I will always be grateful for his visionary support of using music in the classroom and his belief in the value of it. I provided the melodies and words, and he provided all of the background music that you hear on the CD's. I will always value his friendship, help, and support that he provided and continues to provide in all of my endeavors.

The graphic designs on all of the CD covers, as well as the formation of the videos and DVD's, were all put together by the tireless efforts of my husband and best friend, Greg Butkus. It was through his knowledge of technology that I have been able to turn these projects into realities that can be shared with people like you. He also provided the expertise to put together the website, often spending many hours after work and on week-ends to accomplish these tasks. I know that there is no way I can ever repay him for the time that he has given me, and he will always be my hero!

Sincerely,
Heidi Butkus

The Gingerbread Man Overture

Verse 1



Wave hands back
and forth in time
to the music, with
fingers spread
open.



Oh, this is the tale of the Gingerbread Man,



Gingerbread Man, Gingerbread Man,



Oh, this is the tale of the Gingerbread Man,



Clap hands on the
words, "he can."

Running away as fast as he can!

The Gingerbread Man Overture

Verse 2



Make running motion with hands swinging back and forth. (We bounce our knees in time to the music, but don't "run" with our feet. It's too noisy!)

Oh, you won't believe how this cookie can run,



Cookie can run,



Oh, you won't believe how this cookie can run,



Clap hands on the words, "much fun."

'Cause being dessert isn't very much fun!

The Gingerbread Man Overture

Verse 3



Put hands on head
to form fox ears,
and rock head
back and forth.

Just wait 'til we get to the fox at the end,



Fox at the end, fox at the end,



Just wait 'til we get to the fox at the end,



Clap hands on the
words, "good
friend."

You'll find out he wasn't a very good friend!

Let's Make Cookies

(Sung by Little Boy and Girl)

On the word
"Let's," make a
"come on!" motion
with your hands.



Spread hands out
to show a whole
lot of cookies.

Let's make Christmas cookies, lots of Christmas cookies!

On the word
"Let's," make a
"come on!" motion
with your hands.



Put hands in
front of you as
if praying on the
word, "please."

Let's make Christmas cookies, Christmas cookies please!

Clap hands on each beat, (or
on each of the words, "lots,"
"chocolate," "frosting," and
"squeeze."



With lots of raisins, chocolate chips and frosting you can squeeze!

On the word
"Let's," make a
"come on!" motion
with your hands.



Put hands in
front of you as
if praying on the
word, "please."

Let's make Christmas cookies, Christmas cookies please!

Alternate lyrics for a non-holiday show:
Let's all make some cookies, lots of yummy cookies,
Let's all make some cookies, lots of cookies, please!
With lots of raisins, chocolate chips and frosting you can squeeze!
Let's all make some cookies, lots of cookies, please!

Watch the Oven

(Sung by Old Man and Old Lady)

Put hand over eyes to see something.



Cover up eyes on the words "Don't peek" and uncover them on the word "done."



Watch the oven, watch the oven, Don't peek 'til it's done!

Hold out hands on the word "done" as if you are giving me something.



When the gingerbread is finished, then you can have some.

Point to someone each time you say, "Don't!"



Put hands around mouth as if shouting something on the word, "say!"



But... don't open the oven, don't open the oven, Don't open the oven, not until I say!

Point to someone each time you say, "Don't!"



Put hands out and shrug shoulders as if to say, "I don't know!"



Don't open the oven, don't open the oven, Don't open the oven, let's see if you obey!

Watch the Oven

(Sung by little boy and girl)

Flip hands up and down as if you are saying, "help, help!"



Put thumb out "hitchhiker style" on the word, "away."



Grandma, Grandma, the cookie got away!

Shake finger back and forth in time to the music as if to say, "I told you so!"



Shrug shoulders and put hands out as if to say, "Oh, well!"



You told us not to open it, but we did not obey!

Make a "Come on!" motion with your hands on each word, "Hurry!"



On the word, "back," pound your fist into the palm of your hand.



Hurry, hurry! We've got to get it back!

Shake finger back and forth in time to the music as if to say, "I told you so!"



Place hands on stomach on the word, "snack."



'Cause if we don't, that cookie will be someone else's snack!

The Gingerbread Man's Refrain



Put hands on head and wiggle hands back and forth in a "Nya, nya, you can't catch me!" motion.

Run, run, as fast as you can,



Shake finger back and forth in time to the music as if to say, "I told you so!"

You can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man!



Put hands on head and wiggle hands back and forth in a "Nya, nya, you can't catch me!" motion.

Run, run, as fast as you can,



Shake finger back and forth in time to the music as if to say, "I told you so!"

You can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man!

Lookie, Lookie

Put hand over eyes to see something, and bounce in time to the music.



Lookie, lookie, there's a cookie, running down the street!

Pretend to spread frosting on your hand.



Pretend to take a bite out of something.



Frosting spread on gingerbread, looks so good to eat!

Wave hands back and forth in time to the music, with fingers spread open on the words, "Gingerbread Man."

Hold hand out as if to stop somebody on the word, "Stop!"



Hold fists out in the "fight" position on the word, "fight."

Stop! Gingerbread Man, don't put up a fight!

Rub tummy on the words "delicious and nutritious."



Pretend to take a bite out of something.



You're delicious and nutritious, let me have a bite!

Come a Little Closer

(The Fox's Song)



Make a "come here" motion with your finger.

Come a little closer!



Put hand on your ear as if trying to listen.

I really cannot hear you!



Make a "come here" motion with your finger.

Come a little closer!



Put hand on your ear as if trying to listen.

I really cannot hear you!

The Gingerbread Man Finale

Verse 1



Wave hands back and forth in time to the music, with fingers spread open.



Oh, that was the end of the Gingerbread Man,



Gingerbread Man, Gingerbread Man,



Oh, that was the end of the Gingerbread Man,

Show fox ears on your head on the word, "fox."



Make a drinking motion with your hand on the words, "tea and some jam."



The fox ate him up with some tea and some jam!

The Gingerbread Man Finale

Verse 2

Make running motion with hands swinging back and forth. (We bounce our knees in time to the music, but don't "run" with our feet. It's too noisy!)



He should have kept running as fast as he could,



Fast as he could, fast as he could,



He should have kept running as fast as he could,

Show fox ears on your head on the word, "fox."



Clap two times on the last two syllables of the word, "neighbor-hood."



'Cause there was a fox in his own neighborhood!

The Gingerbread Man Finale

Verse 3

Point forward on
the word, "you."



Put hands on your
head like fox ears
and sway back and
forth on the words,
"fox," "next," and
"home."

If you have a fox living next to your home,



Put hands on your
head like fox ears
and sway back and
forth on the words,
"next," and "home."

Next to your home, next to your home,

Point forward on
the word, "you."



Put hands on your
head like fox ears
and sway back and
forth on the words,
"fox," "next," and
"home."

If you have a fox living next to your home,

Shake your finger
as if to say, "I
told you so!"



Make sure that you don't bake your cookies
alone!

All wave and shout, "Merry Christmas!"
(If you do this as a holiday play.)