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Introduction

Do you want to make history come to life? Performing historical skits is a great way to do that! While memorizing dates is important, acting out a skit that shows what actually happened is more interesting.

In this book there are historical plays from the time of ancient Greece to the early Christian era. Some of the short skits call for only two actors while others call for as many as ten.

This book includes only the skits. For more information about staging, costumes, sets, etc., please visit your local library. Costumes are number 391 and stage presentations are number 792 in the Dewey Decimal System.

There are a few costume ideas in *Heroes, Heroines, and Tales of Ancient History*.

I hope you enjoy the skits in this book!

Pilgrim on a journey,

Amy Puetz

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Pandora's Box

(Greek Legend)

By Ada Maria Skinner

Characters

Narrator
Pandora

Hope
Epimetheus

Scene 1

A little cottage in ancient Greece

Narrator: The Greeks tried to explain why there was evil and good in the world. The Greeks did not follow the one true God and probably did not remember the account of Adam and Eve. But the story they told of how evil came into the world does hint at the historical events that took place in Eden. Pandora and Epimetheus are similar to Eve and Adam in that Pandora and Eve both disobey the one rule they were to follow and the result was chaos. Here is the legend of Pandora's box. Long ago there lived a little boy who had neither brothers nor sisters. He often wanted someone to play with.

Epimetheus: I am so lonely. I wish I had a playmate!

Narrator: Just then he looked up and saw a tall stranger and a lovely little girl standing before him. The stranger said, "I have brought you a playmate, Epimetheus. Come, Pandora." The little girl, who had been hanging back, came forward and smiled at Epimetheus.

Epimetheus: Come in Pandora, I would love to show you my cottage.

Pandora: What a nice house you have. That is a very lovely box over there. (Pointing to a box in the corner.) What is in that box, Epimetheus?

Epimetheus: Ah Pandora, that is a secret. The box was left here to be kept safely. I do not know myself what is in it.

Pandora: But where did it come from?

Epimetheus: That is a secret, too.

Pandora: Really? At least you can tell me how it came here?

Epimetheus: It was left at the door, by a stranger who was dressed in an odd cloak. He had wings on his shoes and wings on his cap.

Pandora: I know him. He is Mercury, and he brought me here as well as the box. No doubt he meant it for me.

Epimetheus: Perhaps so.

Pandora: If I could but just peep into the box!

Epimetheus: He said that I was not to open or touch the box. Oh, come, Pandora! Do not think any more about that box. Let us run out and play in the creek.

Pandora: I am tired, I will stay here.

Epimetheus: Just as you like. I shall go into the garden and gather figs and grapes. (Goes out.)

Pandora: (She goes to the box and touches the lid.) I wonder what is in it. Just a peep will not matter. All I have to do is untie the golden cord. I think I can untie it, just a little, and tie it up again so Epimetheus will not know. I will try. What is that? I think I hear voices inside. Is there something alive in the box? Well, yes, I will take just one peep—only one peep, and the lid shall be closed down as safely as ever. There can be no harm in one little peep. (She unties the knot and opens the lid just as Epimetheus comes in.)

Epimetheus: What are you doing, Pandora?

Pandora: Oh, Epimetheus, I wanted so much to see what was in the box.

Narrator: Just then a swarm of winged creatures brushed past Pandora, flying out of the box and stinging Epimetheus and Pandora as they went.

Epimetheus: Ah, something stung me. Why have you opened this wicked box?

Pandora: Oh how it hurts. Can we get them back in the box? Why was I so foolish as to let them out! (They try to avoid the winged creatures.)

Narrator: Suddenly there was a gentle little tap on the inside of the lid.

Pandora: What can that be? Who are you? Who are you inside this naughty box?

Hope: (From inside the box.) Only lift the lid and you shall see.

Pandora: No, no! I have had enough of lifting the lid. You are inside the box and there you shall stay.

Hope: You had better let me out. I am not like those naughty creatures that have stings in their tails. Come, Pandora, let me out.

Pandora: Epimetheus, I think I will open the box again.

Epimetheus: The lid is heavy, Pandora, I will help you.

Narrator: The children opened the box and out jumped a beautiful creature in white.

Pandora: Who are you?

Hope: I am called Hope. I will take away your pain. Just let me touch the spots where you have been stung and I will make them better. (She touches the children and makes them well.) And now I must go away and help other people who have been hurt and are in trouble by all the evil things you let out of the box. I shall come back, though, whenever you need me.

Narrator: And Hope left Pandora and Epimetheus. This legend shows how the ancient Greeks accounted for all the evil in the world and also for the hope that seems to dwell in all mankind.

(All go out.)