



# Classroom Connections

For teachers and students grades K - 5

# The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

Script, lyrics & music © 1996 & 2006 by Paul Deiss;  
based on the story by Washington Irving

## Teacher Resources



### In the Classroom

Theatre IV's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and the Classroom Connections Study Guide are produced in support of the teaching of states' standards, as well as national standards set forth by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

*Activities provided support curriculum in grades K-5*



### At the Library

Chorpenning, Charlotte B. *Rip Van Winkle; A Play for Young People from the Story by Washington Irving*. Chicago, IL: Coach House Press, 1954.

Irving, Washington. *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and Rip Van Winkle*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1995. (in easy-to-read type)



### On the Web

The following web sites have activities and information related to Washington Irving and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

Audio recording of the story:  
[www.scifi.com/set/playhouse/sleepy/](http://www.scifi.com/set/playhouse/sleepy/)

Upper Elementary Lesson Plan tied to National Standards  
[www.hudsonvalley.org/education/LessonPlans/Storytelling/storytelling.html](http://www.hudsonvalley.org/education/LessonPlans/Storytelling/storytelling.html)

Smithsonian American Art Museum  
[http://americanart.si.edu/art\\_info/1001/2000/10/103100.html](http://americanart.si.edu/art_info/1001/2000/10/103100.html)

Background on Washington Irving  
[www.hudsonvalley.org/education/Background/abt\\_irving/abt\\_irving.html](http://www.hudsonvalley.org/education/Background/abt_irving/abt_irving.html)



John Quidor, 1801–81, *The Headless Horseman Pursuing Ichabod Crane*, 1858, oil, Smithsonian American Art Museum

## Play Synopsis:

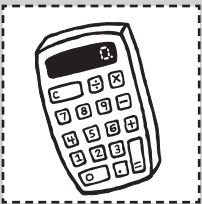
Based on the original story by Washington Irving, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* tells the story of Tarry Town, a place where strange things happen and the townsfolk seem entranced by spirits. Ichabod Crane, a well-educated teacher who comes to live in Tarry Town, meets a mysterious fate. Legend has it that he is the victim of the dreaded 'headless horseman' who allegedly haunts Sleepy Hollow.

Before his disappearance, Ichabod had been at a party at the home of Katrina Van Tassel, a young lady with whom Ichabod was much smitten. During the festivities, he was humiliated by Brom Van Brunt, Ichabod's egotistical rival. He is also frightened by tales of spirits and strange happenings in Tarry Town. He left the party wondering whether he had been the target of a cruel joke by all of the partygoers. After his disappearance, his horse was found grazing in a nearby pasture. His hat was found trampled on the path, and the slimy remains of a pumpkin were found nearby.

Whatever happened to Ichabod? No one knows for sure. Perhaps he left town. Perhaps Brom had something to do with his disappearance. Perhaps he was the victim of a cruel prank. Or perhaps a headless ghost spirited him away, as legend has it.

# Ichabod's Classroom

Cut out and glue each item on the correct side of the line. Is it something that was used 'back then' during Ichabod's time, or do we use it today?



## NOW

## THEN

## Easy as **ABC**

Here is an excerpt from Ichabod's "ABC" song from the classroom. Discuss the way rhyme is used in the song. As a class, finish the song using the rest of the letters of the alphabet. Then, assign each student a 'page' of the alphabet book to illustrate. When you are done, you will have your own original book!

*A is an apple on the tree*

*B is a busy bumble bee*

*C is a cat on the window sill*

*D is a dainty daffodil*

*E is an egg that soon will hatch*

*F is a fisherman's daily catch*

*G is a goat that cries a bleat*

*H is a hog we raise for meat*

# Love in Tarry Town?

For class discussion: Who do you think deserved Katrina, Ichabod or Brom? Who do you think deserved Ichabod? Did Katrina, Gretchen, or Edith? List character traits (words that describe the characters) under their names. Choose who you think should have gotten married if the story had ended with a 'and they lived happily ever after.'

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ichabod

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brom

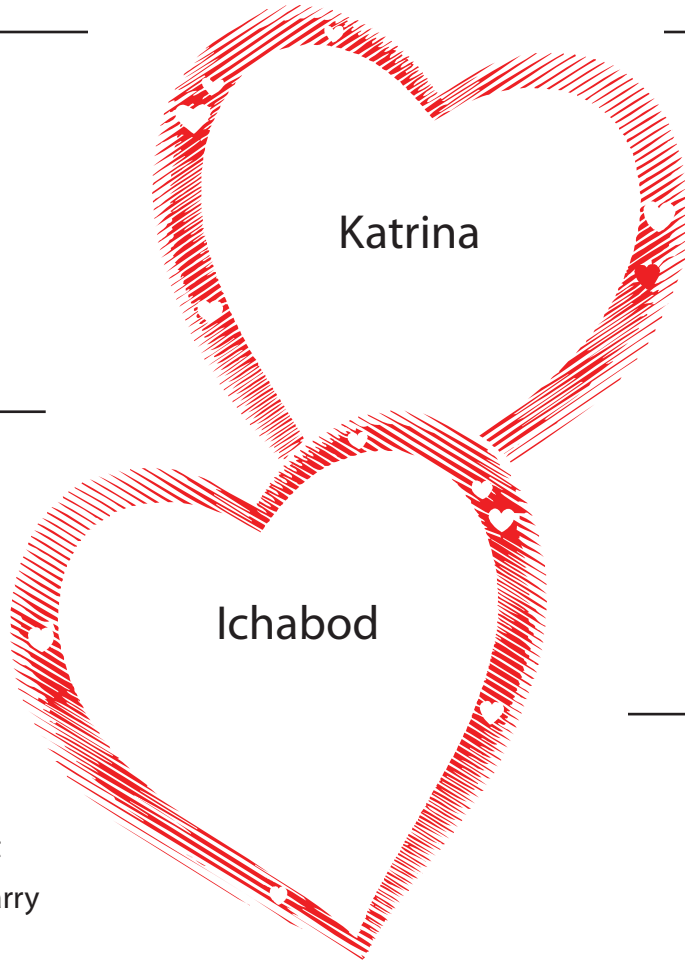
Katrina

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gretchen

\_\_\_\_\_  
Katrina

Ichabod

\_\_\_\_\_  
Edith



Did you want Katrina to marry Ichabod or

Brom? Ask your classmates who they would like Katrina to marry. Then chart the answers on a graph. Who had the most votes? Why?

These words tell about someone in the play.  
Can you match them to the correct name above?

skinny-legged

mean

singer

pretty

strong

smart

jealous

# Legend Has It...


## Did You Know?

The Legendary Headless Horseman

.....  
For more than 200 years, the exciting story of Ichabod Crane and the headless horseman has thrilled readers of all ages.

The Sleepy Hollow legend was made popular by Washington Irving. However, the legend may be based on a German folk tale written by Karl Musaus (1735 - 1787). Musaus introduced the image of the headless horseman who has since been written about in numerous children's books, cartoons, television shows, videos, and puppet shows.

.....

 What other characters are legendary?

Can you think of three?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Legend:** A story that has been handed down from generation to generation and usually includes information about the past. Most cultures have legends.

**Discussion:**  
Brainstorm different types of stories that might be legends (i.e., ghost stories, fables, family stories, or stories about the past).

What stories are most well known? (Some examples may include tall tales such as Paul Bunyan or fairy tales such as Cinderella).



**Questions:**  
1. In what forms do we experience legends?  
(For example, a book is one form).

2. Why do you think legends are important to a culture?
3. Do legends teach us anything about people or the past?

**Read Aloud:**  
Choose a legend to read aloud to your class, such as *Rip Van Winkle* (also by Washington Irving) or *Johnny Appleseed*. Then, ask students to answer the following:

1. How does the legend make you feel?
2. What does the legend tell you about America?
3. Which characters in the story were most important? Most familiar?
4. What makes this story interesting to many people?

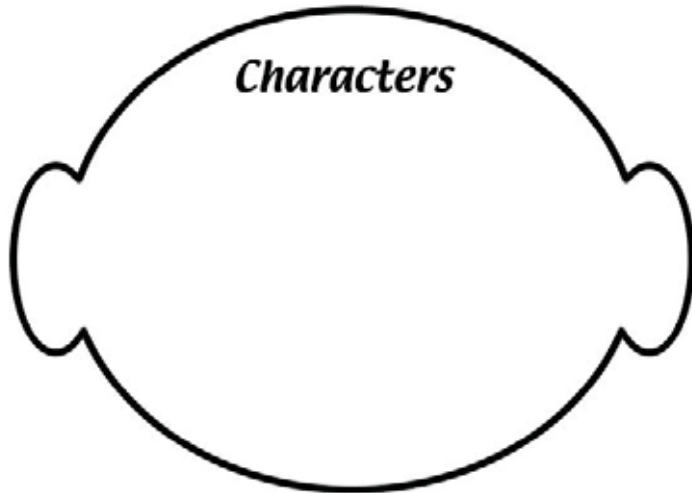
.....  
**Try This!**  
As legends are told and re-told, the stories sometimes change. Try this in class by playing "telephone." Have your teacher begin by whispering a short couple of sentences to a classmate. Continue whispering around the circle until each student has had a turn listening and "repeating" what the teacher said. Did the message stay the same, or did it change?  
.....

# Mapping the Story of Sleepy Hollow

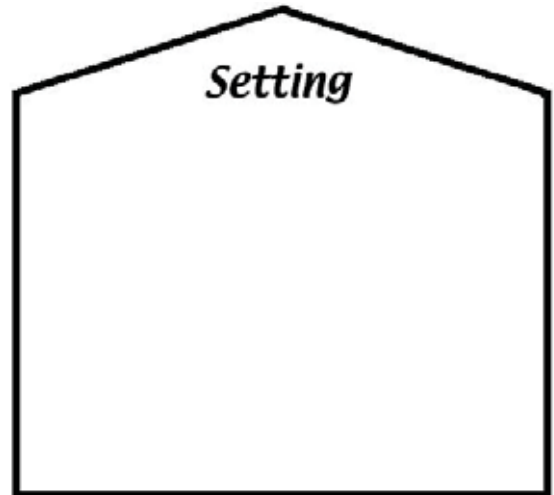
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Use the organizer below to map out the storyline from the play. In a story like *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, is there a solution to the main problem? How does the lack of information at the end of the story make the story more interesting?

**Characters**



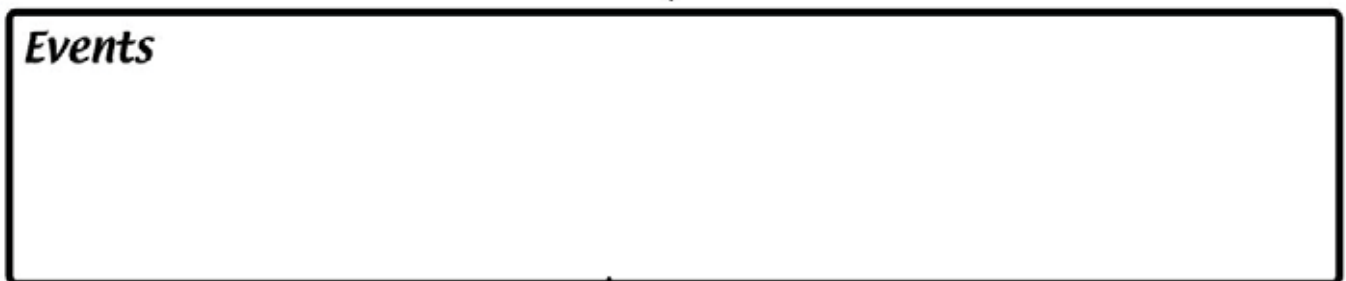
**Setting**



**Problem**



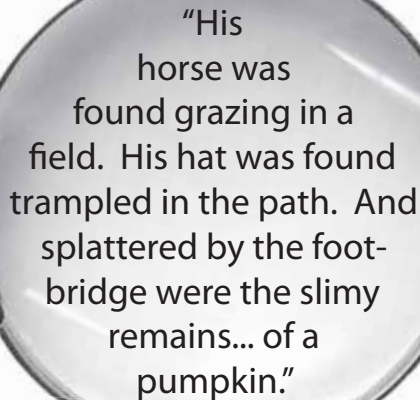
**Events**




**Solution**



# A Mystery: Ichabod's Final Moment



"His horse was found grazing in a field. His hat was found trampled in the path. And splattered by the foot-bridge were the slimy remains... of a pumpkin."



"Whoever you are, you're scaring my horse! Brom? Is that you?... Ah! That's not Brom!"



## Reading Resource:

**Epitaph:** An inscription on a tombstone in memory of the one buried there.

### Try This:

What do you think Ichabod's grave stone would have said? Write an epitaph for Ichabod Crane.

### Extend It:

Washington Irving is buried in Sleepy Hollow. What do you think his epitaph says? Research it and find out.



Think about what may have happened to Ichabod:

1. "Some suspect he was the victim of a cruel prank, and blame his disappearance on Brom Van Brunt."
2. "Some say he left on his own accord, too embarrassed to face his beloved Katrina."
3. "It would not surprise me if he had been spirited away by some ... headless ghost."

What is your conclusion about the fate of Ichabod? Why?



## Easy Activity

Pretend you met the Headless Horseman. Think of five questions you would ask he to find out more about who he was.



## Challenge

You are detective with the Tarry Town Police Department. One night on patrol you pull over the Headless Horseman and bring him in for questioning. Think of five questions you would ask him to help you find out what truly happened the night Ichabod Crane disappeared. Explain how these questions would help you get to the truth.



## Extra Challenge

You are detective investigating the disappearance of Ichabod Crane. You are planning an interview with the Headless Horseman, and with Brom Van Brunt. What questions would you ask each of these suspects? Write the answers to your questions, from the perspectives of Brom and the Headless Horseman. What would they say?

# About the Author



Portrait of Washington Irving, Esqr., by Charles Turner. Smithsonian American Art Museum

Washington Irving was born April 3, 1783, in New York City. He was the youngest of a rich **merchant's** eleven children. In school he was an average student who enjoyed music, books, and art. Though he would practice law on Wall Street, work in his family's cutlery business, and even serve (later in life) as U.S. Minister to Spain, he loved books and writing. By the time he was 35 he **devoted** himself to his writing.

Much of Irving's writing was influenced by his travels. **Excursions** up the Hudson River were followed by a two-year stay in southern Europe. While there, Irving filled notebooks with his **impressions** of people. He wrote **satires** based upon those notes about people. He **published** his first book, *A History of New York*, in 1809, under his **pen name**, *Diedrich Knickerbocker*.

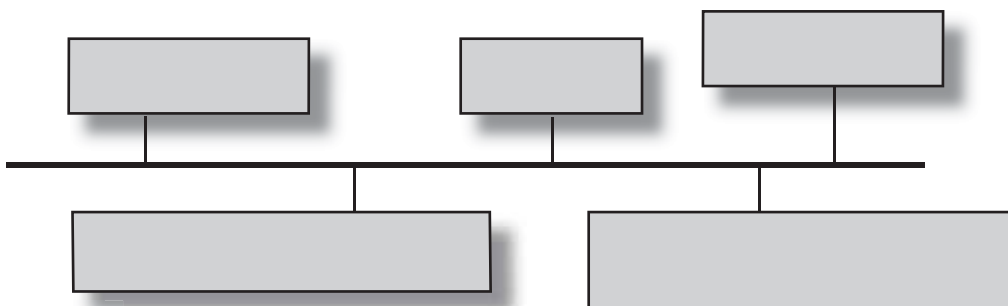
Other famous books included *The Sketch Book* (1819, which included *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and *Rip Van Winkle*), *Tales of a Traveler* (1824), and *The Alhambra* (1832).

Irving also wrote biographies of Oliver Goldsmith, Mahomet, and George Washington. Irving never married, being happy to spend his time at home with his brother and five nieces. Washington Irving died on November 28, 1859 in Irvington, New York. He was 76.



## Questions to Consider:

1. Why do you think an author would use a pen name? If you were to choose a pen name, what would it be?
2. Do you think Irving ever met anyone like Brom? If he had, what impression do you think he'd have of a Brom-like person?
3. Irving lived from 1783 - 1859. America was a new nation. Technologies that we take for granted were unheard of in that time. In what ways do you think his story *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* might have been different if it were written in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
4. Using the information above, create a timeline of important events in Washington Irving's life. Add boxes if you need to.



## Vocabulary

**merchant:** a businessman who sells goods

**pen name:** a name an author uses that is not his/her real name

**publish:** to print, make public, and distribute a book

**excursion:** a trip, adventure

**satire:** a type of writing that pokes fun at people or situations

**devoted:** to be loyal or faithful to something or someone

**impression:** an observation, thought, or idea about something



## Challenge

Re-write Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, changing the setting from that of the 1700's to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

If the story were re-written today, how would the characters change or stay the same? Are there still people around like Ichabod, or like Brom?



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Richmond, VA 23220  
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www.theatreiv.org

Theatre IV Presents...  
*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, by Paul Deiss.  
Based upon the story  
by Washington Irving.

Theatre IV...

Bruce C. Miller  
Artistic Director

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# 10 Fascinating Facts about *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and Washington Irving*

1. Washington Irving was born at the end of the Revolutionary War on April 3, 1783. He died on the eve of the Civil War, on November 28, 1859.

2. Irving's parents, Scottish-English immigrants, were great admirers of General George Washington, and named their son after their hero.



3. The fictional Sleepy Hollow is actually the lower Hudson Valley area near Tarrytown, N.Y.

4. The legend featured in the story is that of The Headless Horseman, the ghost of a soldier who lost his head to a cannon-ball during "some nameless battle" of the American Revolutionary War and who "rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head."

5. "Brom" is short for Abraham.

6. With Irving's companion piece *Rip Van Winkle*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* is the earliest American work of fiction to still be read widely today.

7. In 1842, American President Tyler appointed Irving Minister to Spain - a position we would now call ambassador. This meant he traveled throughout Europe as a diplomatic representative of the United States. (*I wonder if he told the other Ministers scary stories?*)

8. Sleepy Hollow is a village in Westchester County, New York, United States. Known as North Tarrytown from 1874 through 1997, it was officially renamed in March 1997. From the end of the American Revolution to incorporation in 1874, the hamlet was called Beekmantown.

9. Washington Irving is actually buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery.

10. *Knickerbocker* (from Irving's pen name) came to mean someone from New York. The basketball team, the New York Knicks (Knickerbockers) still use it today.



Information on Washington Irving and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* courtesy of Wikipedia and Historic Hudson Valley.



## *Behind the Scenes*

*It Takes a Team to Put on a Play!*

### **Who's Who on the Theatre Team**

**Actors** are the people who perform the story on stage. You see them every time you come to the theatre.

*There are a lot of people on the Theater Team you never get to see. The team works hard to get a show ready for you. Here are a few:*

The **Director** tells the actors where to move on the stage and oversees the work of everyone involved in the play.

The **Stage Manager** is responsible for calling lighting and sound cues and for supervising the technical crew.

The **Playwright** writes the musical or play. What they write tells the actors what to say on stage.

The **Prop Master** is in charge of the objects used by the actors on stage.

The **Costume Designer** plans the clothing the actors wear, called costumes. Costumes give clues about when and where a story takes place, and the characters who wear them.

The **Lighting Designers** plan the kinds of lights to show the setting and mood of each part of the story.

The **Set Designers** plan the scenery for the play.

## *In Front of the Stage: Did You Know?*

### *You are an Important Part of the Theatre Team!*

It wouldn't be a performance without you. Your part is to pretend with the actors that the action of the play is real. Part of this pretending includes accepting certain theatre ways called **theatre conventions**.

1. Actors sing songs that tell you about the story.
2. Actors talk to the audience.
3. The same actors may play many different characters.
4. Settings are suggested by flipping a panel on the set, and by props.

### *How to Play Your Part*

Attending a play is different from watching television or going to the movies. The actors are right in front of you. You will have to watch and listen carefully to understand the story. The story is told through words, songs, actions, costumes, props, and set.

### *Remember*

Watch with your eyes  
Listen with your ears  
Keep your mouth quiet  
so everyone can hear  
Clap with your hands  
And laugh out loud  
You're a member of the audience,  
a jolly good crowd!



Our actors like to hear from their audience!

Write about or, send drawings of the performance to the address to the right.

## **THEATRE IV**

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