Read the book aloud to children first, so that they can enjoy the illustrations and become familiar with the story. Then, hand out a set of photocopied scripts to ten students. (For challenged readers who may need group support, consider a role in the Chorus; for challenged readers to whom you’d like to assign a brief part, consider Father.) Ask the remaining children to be the audience. If you have plenty of time set aside, allow students to practice their parts individually or as a group until they are reading fluently. If time is limited, have performers face the audience and simply read their parts on the first run-through. Because the text is written in rhyme, you will want to emphasize the necessity of maintaining the rhythm throughout, as well. Once all readers are comfortable with their parts, have a second reading with the opportunity to use props or costumes if desired, and to act out the story while reading.

Roles

Iggy Peck | Narrator One
Mother | Narrator Two
Father | Narrator Three
Miss Lila Greer | Chorus (three readers)

After Reading


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**Iggy Peck, Architect**

**Narrator One:**
Young Iggy Peck is an architect and has been since he was two,

**Narrator Two:**
when he built a great tower—

**Chorus:**
in only an hour

**Narrator Two:**
—with nothing but diapers and glue.

**Mother:**
Good Gracious, Ignacious!

**Chorus:**
His mother exclaimed.

**Mother:**
That’s the coolest thing I’ve ever seen!

**Narrator Three:**
But her smile faded fast as a light wind blew past and she realized those diapers weren’t clean!

**Mother:**
Ignacious, my son! What on Earth have you done?
That’s disgusting and nasty! It stinks!

**Narrator One:**
But Iggy was gone. He was out on the lawn using dirt clods to build a great Sphinx.

**Narrator Two:**
When Iggy was three, his parents could see his unusual passion would stay.

**Iggy Peck:**
I built churches and chapels from peaches and apples, and temples from modeling clay.

**Father:**
At dinner one night, to my certain delight, Iggy got a bright gleam in his eye and out on the porch built the St. Louis Arch from pancakes and coconut pie.

**Narrator Three:**
Dear Ig had it made until second grade when his teacher was Miss Lila Greer.

**Narrator One:**
On the very first day, she had this to say:

**Miss Lila Greer:**
We do not talk of buildings in here! Gothic or Romanesque, I couldn’t care less about buildings—ancient or new.

**Iggy Peck:** *(Shocked.)* She said in her lecture about architecture that it had no place in grade two!

**Narrator Two:**
That might seem severe, but she was sincere. For when she was no more than seven,

**Narrator Three:**
she’d had a great fright at a dizzying height in a building so tall it scraped Heaven.

**Narrator One:**
On an architect’s tour on the ninety-fifth floor, young Lila got lost from the group.

**Narrator Two:**
She was found two days later in a stuck elevator, eating cheese ...

**Chorus:**
with a French circus troupe.

**Miss Lila Greer:**
After that day—it’s quite safe to say—I thought all building-lovers were nuts.

**Narrator Three:**
As a teacher, she taught that above all, one ought to avoid them.

**Chorus:**
No ifs, ands, or buts!
Narrator One:
As you might guess, it would cause Iggy stress to hear such terrible talk.

Narrator Two:
But he didn’t hear. He sat in the rear while building a castle of chalk.

Miss Lila Greer:
You! Iggy Peck! Your desk is a wreck! Tear down that castle right now! You will not build in here. Is that perfectly clear? Do you need to see Principal Howe?

Iggy Peck:
“No, Ma’am,” I just said. I lowered my head, and my heart sank down to the floor.

Narrator Three:
With no chance to build, his interest was killed.

Chorus:
Now second grade was a bore.

Narrator One:
After twelve long days that passed in a haze of reading, writing, and arithmetic,

Miss Lila Greer:
I herded the class to Blue River Pass for a hike and an old-fashioned picnic.

Narrator Two:
They crossed an old trestle to a small island nestled in the heart of a burbling stream.

Narrator Three:
But they no sooner passed than the footbridge collapsed and Miss Lila Greer started to ...

Chorus: scream!

Miss Lila Greer:
We’re trapped here! Oh my! Alas, kids, good-bye!

Narrator One:
Her eyeballs rolled back in her head. She dropped to the ground with a vague groaning sound.

Chorus:
Luckily fainted—not dead.

Narrator Two:
The class was amazed. They stood there quite dazed, uncertain of what they should do.

Iggy Peck:
I’m a bright young man. I was hatching a plan, which started with Miss Lila’s shoe.

Narrator Three:
Soon each lad and lass there at Blue River Pass was working together as one.

Miss Lila Greer:
And when I came to, I most certainly knew that something quite brave had been done.

Narrator One:
She looked in the air and saw hanging there a structure with cables and braces.

Narrator Two:
And on the far side—beaming with pride—were seventeen smiling young faces.

Iggy Peck:
Boots, tree roots and strings, fruit roll-ups and things—

Chorus: some of which one should not mention—

Iggy Peck:
were stretched ridge to ridge in a glorious bridge dangling from shoe string suspension.

Miss Lila Greer:
It all became clear to me, Lila Greer, as I crossed that bridge over the stream. There are worse things to do when you’re in grade two than to spend your time building a dream.
Reader’s Theater

Narrator Three: Now every week at Blue River Creek Elementary in second grade,

Narrator One: all the school kids can hear—

Miss Lila Greer: with me, Lila Greer—

Narrator Two: how the world’s greatest buildings were made.

Narrator Three: The weekly guest speaker, in t-shirt and sneakers, talks of buildings from Rome to Quebec.

Iggy Peck: Of course, I’m the guy who builds towers from pie.

Chorus: He’s that brilliant young man, Iggy Peck.