

THE PRINCESS AND THE PIRATES

By Cliff McClelland

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SYNOPSIS: Margaret would rather play video games than do her homework, so her Poppa tells her the story of Princess Margaret, whose family is kidnapped by pirates. The only way for her to save them is to use the Pythagorean Theorem to help the mermaids find the pirate ship, but did she pay enough attention when her tutor, Professor Archimedes, was trying to teach it to her? *The Princess and the Pirates* is a comic homage to the classic movie, *The Princess Bride*, but with a purpose: to remind children that there are real-life applications for math. An excellent play to present in the weeks before state-mandated, standardized testing!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(10 females, 6 males, 3 either, 7-60 extras; gender flexible)

- MARGARET (F)A ten-year-old video game junkie (71 lines)
- POPPA (M).....Her forty-something father, a wise man (70 lines)
- PRESIDENT OF THE U.S. (M/F)..Ummm, the President of the U.S. (*Non-speaking*)
- SUPERMODEL (F).....A beautiful woman with loads of money (*Non-speaking*)
- CREEPY GUY (M).....He steals the supermodel's money (*Non-speaking*)
- PRINCESS MARGARET (F).....A ten-year-old video game junkie princess (87 lines)
- KING WILLIAM THE CHICKEN (M) A somewhat foppish king, Princess Margaret's dad (64 lines)

- QUEEN SHOULD'VE HAD THE FISH (F) A beautiful, vacuous queen, Princess Margaret's mom (32 lines)
- PAGE (M/F).....The king and queen's page (8 lines)
- PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES (M) The ancient royal tutor (37 lines)
- COOK (M/F).....The royal chef (3 lines)
- SIR VIVAL (M).....A brave knight of the kingdom (13 lines)
- THE FAWNOVER TWINS (F).....Two beautiful blonde girls who constantly compliment everyone (13 lines)
- DUDLEY THE PLUMBER (M).....The first mate of the pirate ship; he carries a pipe wrench and has a plunger hand instead of a hook (16 lines)
- ONE-EYED WILMA (F).....The second mate of the pirate ship (17 lines)
- THIRD MATE WHO'S NEVERNAMED (M/F) The third mate, who's...ummm...never named (11 lines)
- THE DREAD PIRATE HERBERT (M) The most dashing, fearsome pirate on the seven seas (33 lines)
- MERMALINDA (F)Leader of the mermaids (22 lines)
- MERMIRANDA (F)Mermalinda's sister, also a mermaid (18 lines)
- MERMERELLA (F)Mermalinda's sister, a mermaid who is still in love with the Dread Pirate Herbert (19 lines)
- QUEEN POSEIDON (F).....The Queen of the Ocean (14 lines)

EXTRAS.....Important People with Calculators,
Photographers, Pirates and Mermaids
(*Non-speaking roles*)

TIME: Present day

SETTING: Margaret's Bedroom, the Castle, and the High Seas

PRODUCTION HISTORY: Richardson High School (TX) 2010

Do Not Copy

AT RISE:

Lights rise to find MARGARET sitting on her bed playing a video game.

MARGARET: Zap! Pow! Gotcha, evil space monster. Now for the big guy. Blam! Zap! Yes!

Margaret's father, POPPA, walks in, unseen.

MARGARET: Eat vorpal sword, space scum! Woo hoo!

POPPA: Margaret?

MARGARET immediately drops the remote and opens a book.

MARGARET: Oh, hi Poppa.

POPPA: Young lady—

MARGARET: Poppa, I'd love to talk to you, but I'm trying to study my math right now, and you know how easily distracted I am. We'll start talking, and you'll ask how my day was and I'll start telling you about this boy named Ricky Starnes who always steals everybody's snack cakes and sticks them in his nose, except today somebody stuck a pickle in the middle of a Twinkie and the pickle wedged in there and then Ricky sneezed and the pickle hit Ms. Terry in the eye and she had to go to the hospital, and that's like the third time she's been to the hospital this year, what with losing one of her legs in that apple pie eating contest at the beginning of the year, and...

MARGARET starts swaying on the bed. POPPA helps her sit down; he pulls a paper bag out from under the bed and hands it to her. She covers her mouth with it and begins breathing into the bag.

POPPA: I've told you, you have to breathe when you talk, otherwise you hyperventilate.

MARGARET: *(Removing the bag.)* I know, but there are so many things— *(POPPA shoves the bag back over her mouth.)*

POPPA: And sometimes you just need to sit there and listen. Now, if you're worried about your math homework, why were you playing video games when I came in?

MARGARET says nothing.

POPPA: Well?

MARGARET: *(Bag still over mouth.)* You told me I need to sit here and listen.

POPPA removes the bag.

POPPA: You can answer questions.

MARGARET: Oh, okay. Well, about my homework. I can't really say that I was worried about my math. I mean, it's not lost in the middle of the woods with no way home or captured by evil villains who accidentally burn a lightning bolt into its forehead or anything. It's math. It's not like it has feelings, so why would I worry about it? Besides, somebody's gonna make it feel worthwhile, like Betty Williams, that smart girl who sits in front of me and lets me borrow her homework when I don't have time to finish it on my own.

POPPA: So you're cheating in class.

MARGARET: Poppa! I have never been so insulted in all my life. I'm probably going to have to have something very expensive bought for me to make up for the loss of self-esteem I just experienced!

POPPA stares at her a moment, then laughs.

MARGARET: *(Continued.)* And you laugh? I might as well make an appointment with a psychiatrist now.

POPPA: No, no. Come here. *(He sits down, and MARGARET crawls into his arms.)*

POPPA: You're such a smart child. I wish your mother were here to see how smart and pretty you're getting to be.

MARGARET: Me, too. But you take very good care of me. When you're not ruining my impressionable childhood.

POPPA: Video games are ruining your impressionable childhood.

MARGARET: But Poppa! I was on Level 30 and about to beat the Alien King. Then it would've been easier to focus on my math.

POPPA: Except then you'd have to start on the new video game I bought you for your birthday.

MARGARET: Pirate Attack IV? I haven't even opened it yet, but we could open it now and play it together! C'mon, Poppa! It'll be so much fun! *(She hops off the bed and starts sorting through her video games.)*

POPPA: *(To heaven.)* Perhaps I have not been helping the situation. *(To Margaret.)* Margaret?

MARGARET: I know it's here somewhere.

POPPA: Margaret! *(MARGARET stops.)*

MARGARET: Yes, Poppa?

POPPA: Math first. Video games later. After dinner.

With an elaborate sigh, MARGARET plops back down on the bed and opens her book. She continues to "fake" sigh as she struggles to get comfortable and study. POPPA starts to leave, but she lets out a huge sigh.

POPPA: Yes?

MARGARET: I just don't get why this is all that important! I'm not going to be a mathematician when I grow up. I'm gonna be a princess or a president or supermodel or something!

POPPA: But math is important to all of those jobs!

MARGARET: *(Puckering up.)* You see this face? This is my highly skeptical face. Because I don't believe you.

As POPPA talks about the different jobs, the people he describes come to life on stage.

POPPA: But it's true! A president has to balance the budget for an entire country.

A PRESIDENT enters, followed by IMPORTANT-LOOKING PEOPLE with calculators.

MARGARET: Aren't we in like a trillion gazillion dollars of debt right now?

The PRESIDENT looks at one of the calculators and faints. The others carry him off.

POPPA: See? If he were better at math...

MARGARET: And the supermodel? She doesn't need math.

SUPERMODEL enters, followed by PHOTOGRAPHERS who take her picture and give her handfuls of cash.

POPPA: Are you kidding? A supermodel sometimes makes \$10,000.00 an hour. Do you know how much that is?

MARGARET: Ummm...a lot?

POPPA: If each one of your video games costs \$10.00, you could have a thousand video games. Given the size of each game and the general square footage of your room, the video games could fill a quarter of your room halfway to the ceiling.

MARGARET: So...a lot of money.

POPPA: Right. And what will happen to all that money if she can't do math?

A CREEPY GUY enters, steals all of the SUPERMODEL's money, and puts a barrel over her head to wear. She exits.

MARGARET: Because poor people wear barrels. That's what I see when I volunteer at the homeless shelter, all those barrels.

POPPA: Well...

MARGARET: And the princess. What about her?

POPPA: Oh, the princess needs math more than any of the others.

MARGARET: *(Skeptical.)* Really?

POPPA: Why, yes. As a matter-of-fact, there was once a princess...and this is a true story, by the way...

MARGARET: Uh-huh.

POPPA: Totally true. Anyway, there was once a princess in the far off kingdom of Noddingwell. Her name was—

MARGARET: Princess Margaret?

POPPA: How'd you know?

MARGARET: We've played this game before.

The lights start changing, and a castle appears.

POPPA: Then hush and listen. So Princess Margaret lived in this wonderful castle in the land of Noddingwell with her father King William the Chicken and his wife, Queen Should've Had the Fish.

MARGARET: Great names.

POPPA: Thanks. Anyway...

PRINCESS MARGARET plays video games on her bed.

PRINCESS MARGARET: Zap! Pow! Gotcha, evil space monster.
Now for the big guy. Blam! Zap! Yes!

MARGARET: This sounds vaguely familiar.

POPPA: Hush. And listen.

Princess Margaret's father, KING WILLIAM, and her mother, QUEEN SHOULD'VE HAD THE FISH, enter.

PRINCESS MARGARET: Eat vorpal sword, space scum! Woo hoo!

KING WILLIAM: Page! Where's my page?

PRINCESS MARGARET: Take that!

A PAGE comes running in.

PAGE: Sorry, your Majesty. Ahem...presenting his Majesty, King William the Chicken and her highness, Queen Should've Had the Fish.

PRINCESS MARGARET: Gotcha!

KING WILLIAM: Margaret! You will attend to me when I enter the room! (*To the PAGE.*) Make the announcement again.

PAGE: Ahem...presenting his Majesty, King William the Chicken!

PRINCESS MARGARET: Almost almost...there! Yeah!

KING WILLIAM: She's not listening to me. Or you, rather.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Well, no wonder. You have to ask a princess nicely. Now, muffin! You must stop playing that game and listen to your parents. Hello! *(To the KING.)* Nothing. *(PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES enters, huffing and puffing.)*

KING WILLIAM: Ah, there you are, Professor Archimedes. What took you so long?

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Too ... many ... stairs! *(The PROFESSOR keels over.)*

KING WILLIAM: *(To the PAGE.)* Revive him. *(The PAGE starts shaking the PROFESSOR.)*

KING WILLIAM: Now what do we do?

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: I'm not sure. Something extreme, I think. *(To PRINCESS MARGARET.)* No dinner for you, young lady!

KING WILLIAM: Oh no, we can't do that!

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Why not? *(The PROFESSOR begins to revive.)*

KING WILLIAM: Well, if she goes hungry she might go pale, and then when we ride out in front of the townspeople, everyone will go, "There goes the pasty-faced daughter of King William and Queen Should've Had the Fish. They must starve her!" And then they would give me nasty looks, and you know how nasty looks affect me!

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Oh, yes. They give you gas. Horrible! *(The PROFESSOR stands to watch what's going on.)*

KING WILLIAM: Exactly. So no missing dinner. In fact, we should probably give her extra ice cream, just to make sure she's nice and plump for the parade.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Consider it done!

KING WILLIAM: Excellent. I think our job here is done.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Right, we'll be off then.

KING WILLIAM: Excellent! *(They start to leave.)*

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Excuse me!

KING WILLIAM: Ooh, he's giving me a nasty look.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Stop, before it's too—

She and the PAGE grabs their noses.

PAGE: Too late.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Oh, goodness. That's horrible.

KING WILLIAM: Sorry. Sorry everyone.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: I believe we came here for a reason. *(The PROFESSOR goes over to PRINCESS MARGARET and takes away her game remote. Everyone stares at the PROFESSOR in shock, and then...)*

PRINCESS MARGARET: Waaaaa aaaaaaaaaa aaaaaa
aaaaaaaa aaaa aaaaaa aaaaaa aaaaaaaaa!

The sound continues.

KING WILLIAM: My ears! Someone make it stop!

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Please!

PAGE: The King and Queen demand silence!!

PRINCESS MARGARET: Demand? Did you demand something from me?

PAGE: Umm, absolutely not. It was them. Don't shoot the messenger.

PRINCESS MARGARET: *(To her parents.)* I was at the final level of Pirate Attack 5. Do you know how long it's taken me to get to the final level? Months! Then you barge in here like a couple of...parents! And you let him take away my game remote! My game is lost! My life might as well be over. I...I'm going on a hunger strike!

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Oh, no. Don't do that! We'll...we'll buy you a pony!

PRINCESS MARGARET: I have a pony. I have three ponies!

KING WILLIAM: We'll throw you a party!

PRINCESS MARGARET: I don't want a party!

KING WILLIAM: What about a duck?

PRINCESS MARGARET: *(Beat.)* A duck?

KING WILLIAM: It was all I could think of. But we can get you one, nonetheless.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: I have an idea.

KING WILLIAM: Oh, excellent. Someone who actually has a brain!

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Why don't we... *(Turning to PRINCESS MARGARET.)* ...ground you until you finish your homework?!

KING WILLIAM: I'm...I didn't get that.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: I thought he said ground her.

KING WILLIAM: Me, too.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: I did! That's what you came up here for, remember? Your daughter hasn't done her homework in a week! She can't tell the difference between a hippopotamus and an orangutan, doesn't know how to write a proper sentence, and can barely add two plus two!

PRINCESS MARGARET: That's not true!

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Oh, really?

PRINCESS MARGARET: Of course I can add two plus two. It's...wait. Umm, I'm getting there.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Try apples. It always worked for me.

PRINCESS MARGARET: Two apples, and then someone brings me two more apples. But that's silly, because we always get apples in big piles from the gardener. It's a silly question.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: I thought you could answer it.

PRINCESS MARGARET: Umm... *(She looks at her father, who's holding up five fingers.)*

PRINCESS MARGARET: Five! *(Everyone applauds except the PROFESSOR.)*

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Well done.

KING WILLIAM: I knew she could do it.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: It's four!!! That's it! I'm done with the lot of you! *(He starts out.)*

KING WILLIAM: You can't leave us. I'm the King!

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Are you?

KING WILLIAM: I...I am the king, right? *(Everyone nods.)*

KING WILLIAM: Absolutely!

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: *(Pointing at PRINCESS MARGARET.)* I thought she was!

KING WILLIAM: Now, that's silly. She's just the princess.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Then why does she run the kingdom?

KING WILLIAM: She doesn't. I do! Well, actually, I have advisors to do all the hard work, but I take the credit for it.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: It's simple logic, King William. A king is in charge of all the subjects. That means that he tells people what to do, and they do it.

KING WILLIAM: Exactly right.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Well, your daughter tells all of you what to do, and you do it. That makes her the king.

KING WILLIAM: Oh. I hadn't thought of it that way. I guess I should give her this then. *(He starts to take off his crown.)*

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Don't do that!

KING WILLIAM: Sorry.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Just make her do her homework! And then you'll be the king.

KING WILLIAM: Oh, well that's easy. *(To PRINCESS MARGARET.)* Pumpkin, do your homework.

PRINCESS MARGARET: No.

KING WILLIAM: *(To ARCHIMEDES.)* What now? *(ARCHIMEDES whispers to him.)*

KING WILLIAM: Really?

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Yes.

KING WILLIAM: Okay. Margaret, do your homework or I'll never buy you another video game.

PRINCESS MARGARET: I don't believe you.

The KING looks at the PROFESSOR helplessly, and the PROFESSOR whispers again.

KING WILLIAM: Ooh, that seems a bit drastic. *(Beat.)* Okay then.

The KING takes the game remote and tosses it out the window. PRINCESS MARGARET runs to the window. After a moment, there's a splash.

PRINCESS MARGARET: You...you...you...

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: I think she's broken.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: You do your math or you won't get another one.

PRINCESS**MARGARET:**

Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

The PROFESSOR removes earphones from his bag and puts them on. Everyone else puts fingers in his ears.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: I can take it from here.**KING WILLIAM:** Good. Carry on then.**QUEEN SHOULD'VE:** Thank you, Professor Archimedes.

All exit but the PRINCESS and the PROFESSOR.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: They've gone, so you can stop with all of that.

The PRINCESS stops screaming, and the PROFESSOR removes his earphones.

PRINCESS MARGARET: I hate you.**PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES:** You'll thank me for this someday.**PRINCESS MARGARET:** Quite unlikely.

The PROFESSOR pulls a remote from his bag, and a projection screen appears.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Now, your lesson today involves triangles. There are three types of triangles. Equilateral, obtuse, and acute. *(A colorful display appears on the projection screen, with big smiley faces on the three different triangles.)***PRINCESS MARGARET:** I was bored at "Now, let's..."**PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES:** Nevertheless, we shall proceed.

There is one thing that all triangles have in common, and that is the Pythagorean Theorem. If you know how big two of the sides of the triangle are, you can always find how big the third is with this formula. *($A^2 + B^2 = C^2$ appears on the board.)*

PRINCESS MARGARET: Omigosh, I see it! I totally understand this!

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: You do? I haven't even really explained it yet.

PRINCESS MARGARET: Yes! If side A of the triangle is five inches—

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Yes?

PRINCESS MARGARET: And side B is seven inches—

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Go on. Go on!

PRINCESS MARGARET: Then, then...you're a big poopyhead.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Uhhh...goodness.

PRINCESS MARGARET: This is stupid! It's not like I'm gonna be walking through the streets and people are gonna stop me and go, "Help! I have two sides of a triangle, and if I don't get the third side, giant eagles are going to drop rocks on my head!

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: No, but there are other times when it would be helpful to—

PRINCESS MARGARET: I'm tired of all this, and I'm the princess, so I think you should leave.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Not a chance.

PRINCESS MARGARET: Fine. Then I will. *(The PROFESSOR blocks the door.)* Fine. *(She jumps out the window. The PROFESSOR runs over to the window.)*

MARGARET: She jumped out the window?

POPPA: There was a moat.

They listen, and there's a splash.

MARGARET: But she could've broken her neck, or drowned!

PRINCESS MARGARET: *(From off stage.)* I'm okay!

MARGARET: Whew! Don't scare me like that!

POPPA: I'm just telling you what happened. It's all true.

MARGARET: Sure it is. Because Princesses in olden days had video games, and teachers had projectors.

POPPA: I didn't say this was the olden days.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: You would think things like this couldn't happen in 2011. *(Or current year.)*

POPPA: See?

Lights fade on the castle.

MARGARET: Well none of it matters anyway. I'm with Princess Margaret. I'd rather jump out the window than worry about the Sagittarius Symptom. It sounds like a disease. For constellations.

POPPA: It's the Pythagorean Theorem. I learned it in the fourth grade.

MARGARET: Whatever.

POPPA: And you haven't heard the rest of the story yet.

MARGARET: There's more?

POPPA: Of course.

MARGARET: Maybe I could throw myself out a window...

POPPA: You're on the first floor.

MARGARET: I could go upstairs.

POPPA: Just listen.

MARGARET: Fine.

POPPA: So, the next day...

Lights up on the castle, in the breakfast room. The KING, QUEEN, PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES, and PRINCESS MARGARET are being served breakfast by the COOK.

COOK: Duck eggs, with quackers for his Majesty.

KING WILLIAM: I love quackers! (*He picks up a duck call and "quacks."*)

COOK: (*Serving the QUEEN.*) Zero calorie cola and a piece of cheesecake for her majesty.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Perfect!

COOK: And for my little princess...?

PRINCESS MARGARET: I'm not eating 'til I get a new game remote.

KING WILLIAM: We'll order you one right—

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Ahem!

KING WILLIAM: (*Looking at the PROFESSOR.*)—right after you learn your math.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: Thank you, your Majesty.

KING WILLIAM: Being a parent is so hard.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: You're doing fine, dear.

PAGE: Entering into the presence of his and her Majesties...Sir Vival! (*SIR VIVAL, a knight, enters.*)

KING WILLIAM: Ah! Sir Vival, any news?

SIR VIVAL: Indeed, Sire. The people are revolting!

KING WILLIAM: What?

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Oh my goodness!

SIR VIVAL: Yes, Sire. I've never seen an uglier group of people. All dirty faces and warts and loud ugly children. Happy to be back in the castle.

KING WILLIAM: Oh.

SIR VIVAL: Other than that, everything seems to be just fine.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: I heard you had a nasty fall from a horse this morning, Sir Vival.

SIR VIVAL: Indeed, your majesty. And the horse was at the top of the castle steps, so I actually rolled down 287 steps in full armor.

KING WILLIAM: And you're okay?

SIR VIVAL: Not a scratch. Sometimes I'm just lucky that way. (*Remembering.*) Oh, I almost forgot. There's a new ship in the harbor. I was going to the docks later to investigate.

KING WILLIAM: New ship, you say?

SIR VIVAL: Yes.

KING WILLIAM: Hmm. Maybe someone has sent me a gift. Yes, I'm sure that's what it is.

PRINCESS MARGARET: Maybe they brought me new parents.

QUEEN SHOULD'VE: Now, dear...

KING WILLIAM: Oh, she's just testy about her testing...oh, I made a funny! Everyone applaud!

PRINCESS MARGARET: It's not funny!

PAGE: Your Majesty! The Fawnover Twins would like an audience.

KING WILLIAM: Bring them in! Bring them in! (*To Sir Vival.*) I do love seeing the twins. Such a delight. (*The FAWNOVER TWINS, two pretty ladies-in-waiting, enter. Sometimes they speak together, and sometimes separately, but barely a complete sentence comes out of one of them by herself.*)

FAWNOVER TWINS: Oh, King William! You look so handsome today! Is that cloak new? It looks imported. I wish all the men in the kingdom looked as handsome as you! And Queen Should've Had! I simply love that diadem you're wearing!

SIR VIVAL: If you were any more beautiful, I would just explode. Oh, I feel faint. It's just too much, you two. Too much gloriosity in one place. Let me die now!

The FAWNOVER TWINS faint.

KING WILLIAM: They do tend to get a little overexcited.

PROFESSOR ARCHIMEDES: So little blood in their brains, your Majesty. It's common among blondes.

KING WILLIAM: Ah.

FAWNOVER TWINS: Where? Where are we? Oh, your Majesty! Have we complimented you yet this morning? Oh, what does that matter, we should compliment you again. Have we ever told you just how wonderfully blue your eyes are. So blue that the sea is envious. So blue that the sky blushes red at dawn to see them. So blue—

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