

## FIVE BROTHERS – IDEAS FOR PERFORMANCE

### 1. Backdrop for the play



Students can create a backdrop for the brothers' mountain-climbing venture to the top of Mount Tai. This background was made from colored paper cut-outs glued to fabric (a bed sheet works well).

### 2. Eagle who grabs herb



One of the author's classes used an eagle kite for that particular brothers' challenge in the play. It can be hung from the end of a broomstick, with a student carrying it across the stage to show the bird flying away with the herb.

### 3. Lingzhi herb for the brothers' father



(photo by Eric Steinart, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lingzhi>)

Lingzhi, a woody mushroom that grows on decaying logs and tree stumps, has been highly regarded in traditional Chinese medicine for more than 4,000 years, said to promote health and longevity. The word *lingzhi*, in Chinese, means "herb of spiritual potency," and the herb has also been described as "mushroom of immortality."

If the class prefers the real thing for its performance, Lingzhi can be purchased in many Asian markets as well as Western health shops. Or a large mushroom (like Portobello) can be used. Alternatively, students can make a fake Lingzhi for the prop – perhaps stuffing a brown sock or stocking.