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Samuel French Acting Edition

How to Eat Like a Child

And Other Lessons in Not Being a Grown-up

Book by

Delia Ephron, John Forster, and
Judith Kahan

Music & Lyrics by

John Forster

Based on the Book by

Delia Ephron

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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www.SamuelFrench.com

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FOR PRODUCTION ENQUIRIES

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Info@SamuelFrench.com

1-866-598-8449

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Plays@SamuelFrench.co.uk

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(Name of Producer)

Presents

The Musical Play

“How to Eat Like a Child
And Other Lessons in Not Being a Grown-up”

Book by
Delia Ephron, John Forster and Judith Kahan

Music and Lyrics by
John Forster

Based on a Book by Delia Ephron

The first musical version of *How to Eat Like a Child* was produced for television as an NBC Project Peacock special, starring Dick Van Dyke, in 1981. Then, using songs from the television show, it was adapted for the stage as a musical revue to be performed exclusively by children. The first production, in New York City in 1984, was by TADA! (the Theater and Dance Alliance).

TADA! THEATER AND DANCE ALLIANCE

Produced by Janine Nina Trevens
Co-Artistic Directors: Linda Reiff & Janine Nina Trevens

presents

HOW TO EAT LIKE A CHILD
And Other Lessons in Not Being a Grown-up.

Music and Lyrics by
JOHN FORSTER

Written by
DELIA EPHRON, JOHN FORSTER
and JUDITH KAHAN

Based on the book by DELIA EPHRON

Sets by Leon Munier
Lights by Victor En Yu Tan
Costumes by Patrick Jon Boylan
Musical Director Joel Gelpe
Vocal Director Mary Ellinger
Production Stage Manager Elizabeth Rogers
Choreographer Linda Reiff
Directed by James Learned

CAST

(in alphabetical order):

Sasha Cincotta	J.P. Nair
Kim Conroy	Melonie Penrhyn
Julie Cutrer	Tweeps Phillips
Seth Granger	Serena I. Rosario
Tiyese Graves	Kirsten Sheridan
Mika Hadani	Naomi Sheridan
Chad Kraus	Sean Smith
	Antuane Thomas

BAND

Piano Joel Gelpe
Percussion Gary Seligson

PRODUCTION NOTES

How To Eat Like a Child, a collection of songs and sketches, is a guide to the art of being a child told by children strictly from their point of view. The revue, in one act, is divided into "lessons." The lessons are printed on title cards, which are displayed vaudeville style, stacked on an easel. Generally, though not always, as each lesson begins, a cast member removes the previous title card to reveal a new one and announces the next lesson.

The revue, as written, is for 15 children, but the number of speaking roles can be reduced by doubling up parts or expanded by dividing them up if there is a need to have more or fewer children in the production. The role of removing cards and announcing lessons can be given to children who are not performing or to one child who acts, in effect, as the MC.

CAST NOTES

The players can range in age from five to fifteen. The names of characters used here are the actual names of the children in the original show. So, in each specific production, characters should be referred to by their own names. Some notes on the players:

GEORGE is the leader, a rock 'n roller. He has to have a strong voice. ANDY is the best singer. COREY, the comedian, needn't sing well. RACHEL is very bossy, very dramatic. She has to be a good singer. REBECCA sings very little. ARLENE, KIMBERLY and PAULA, who sing "I Feel Sick" together, should be cast older, middle and younger sister, respectively. BILLY is George's sidekick. BRANDON is the youngest player.

THE CHILDREN
(in order of appearance)

COREY
RACHEL
ARLENE
JOHN
CHRISTY
KIMBERLY
DARIEN
ANDY
BRANDON
GEORGE
RICKY
BILLY
PAULA
REBECCA
SUNSHINE

THE LESSONS

Prologue

- “Like a Child” Company
Lesson 1: HOW TO EAT LIKE A CHILD—PART I
Lesson 2: HOW TO STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL
“I Feel Sick” Arlene, Kimberly, & Paula
Lesson 3: HOW TO RIDE IN A CAR
Lesson 4: HOW TO LAUGH HYSTERICALLY
Lesson 5: HOW TO PRACTICE THE VIOLIN
“The Jolly Buccaneers” John
Lesson 6: HOW TO EXPRESS AN OPINION
Lesson 7: HOW TO BEG FOR A DOG
“Say Yes” George & Billy
Lesson 8: HOW TO PLAY
Lesson 9: HOW TO UNDERSTAND YOUR PARENTS
“Means ‘No’” Kimberly, Darien & Company
Lesson 10: MORE HOW TO LAUGH HYSTERICALLY
Lesson 11: HOW TO EAT LIKE A CHILD—PART II
Lesson 12: HOW TO DEAL WITH INJUSTICE
“Why Should a Kid Have to Walk?” Sunshine
Lesson 13: HOW TO HANG UP THE TELEPHONE
Lesson 14: HOW TO WAIT
“Waiting, Waiting” Paula
Lesson 15: HOW TO EAT LIKE A CHILD—PART III
Lesson 16: MORE HOW TO LAUGH HYSTERICALLY
Lesson 17: HOW TO TORTURE YOUR SISTER
“How to Torture Your Sister” Company
*Lesson 18: HOW TO LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR
BIRTHDAY*
“The Birthday Song” Andy
Lesson 19: HOW TO EAT LIKE A CHILD—PART IV
*Lesson 20: HOW TO ACT AFTER BEING SENT TO YOUR
ROOM*
“Sayonara” Rachel
Lesson 21: HOW TO WATCH MORE TELEVISION
Lesson 22: HOW TO GO TO BED
“We Refuse to Fall Asleep” Company
Finale:
“Like a Child” (reprise) Company

Supplemental Lessons (optional)

Lesson: HOW TO BEHAVE AT SCHOOL

Lesson: HOW TO BRAG

“The Brag Rag”Ricky & John

How to Eat Like a Child

And Other Lessons in Not Being a Grown-up

PROLOGUE

[MUSIC: PROLOGUE]

Dark stage. MUSIC. Spotlight will illuminate one group of kids after another. Action moves quickly. Lines of dialogue punctuate the underscoring.

COREY. (*dialing the telephone*) Hello. Is your refrigerator running? Then you'd better go and catch it.

(*He hangs up and cracks up. MUSIC. Spot now illuminates ARLENE and RACHEL. RACHEL lies on the floor reading, her legs waving in the air; ARLENE is playing with a yoyo.*)

RACHEL. Would you rather freeze to death or be burned alive?

ARLENE. Freeze to death. No wait, burned alive. No, wait—

(*MUSIC. Spot cuts over to . . .*)

JOHN. (*yelling*) Hey, Mom, watch me, watch me, watch me, watch me.

(*He stands on his head. MUSIC. Spot now picks out CHRISTY, KIMBERLY, DARIEN, and ANDY, as CHRISTY is handing a quarter of an orange to each.*)

CHRISTY. Ready? One, two, three . . .

(*They each stuff the entire orange quarter in their mouths and smile huge orange peel smiles. MUSIC. Spot now illuminates BRANDON, talking to RICKY, GEORGE, BILLY and PAULA.*)

BRANDON. Knock, knock.

GEORGE. Who's there?

BRANDON. Me.

GEORGE. Me who?

BRANDON. Me, Brandon. Don't you recognize me?

(*GEORGE, BILLY, RICKY, and PAULA groan. MUSIC. Spot now picks out REBECCA and SUNSHINE sitting next to each other, chewing gum. Simultaneously, they each pull one end of the gum out of their mouths and stretch it into a spaghetti-like strand. Then they attach the ends of their gum together. As they press the ends together . . .*)

REBECCA & SUNSHINE. Ooooooooooooooooooooo. Gross . . .

(*MUSIC. ANDY notices the audience for the first time, and gets the other kids' attention. They all huddle for a moment. Then GEORGE comes downstage and addresses the audience confidentially.*)

[MUSIC NO. 1: "LIKE A CHILD"]

GEORGE.

IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO TELL,
WE'VE GOT QUITE A LOT TO TELL.
STUFF WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO DO,
STUFF WE SHOULD, BUT DON'T
'CAUSE IT'S TOO GROSS TO DO.
IF YOU'RE SHOCKED, DON'T YELL.

ALL.

AND WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T TELL.

ARLENE.

EVERYONE HATES TURNIPS
BUT GROWNUPS ALWAYS EAT THEM.
KIDS ARE MUCH TOO SMART
TO LET A VEGETABLE DEFEAT THEM.

RICKY.

SO YOU COULD EAT YOUR TURNIPS LIKE A GROWNUP
OR YOU COULD DROP 'EM IN YOUR NAPKIN
BEFORE THEY REACH YOUR MOUTH
AND SMUGGLE THEM TO THE GARBAGE
LIKE A CHILD.

ALL. (*with simple movements or dance steps*)
 LIKE A CHILD, LIKE A CHI-CHI-CHILD,
 LIKE A CHILD, LIKE A CHILD,
 LIKE A CHI-CHI-CHILD.
 JUST DO WHAT YOU'VE GOT TO DO
 AND SMUGGLE THEM TO THE GARBAGE
 LIKE A CHILD.

RACHEL.
 EVERYONE'S REAL NOSY
 BUT GROWNUPS TRY TO HIDE IT.
 FIND A DOOR THAT SAYS . . .

COREY. (*spoken*) "Keep Out!!"

RACHEL. (*sings*)
 . . . YOU'LL FIND A KID INSIDE IT.

(PAULA picks up a cube to reveal ANDY behind it.)

ANDY.
 SO YOU COULD TRY TO HIDE IT LIKE A GROWNUP
 OR YOU COULD RAID YOUR PARENTS' CLOSET,
 GO THROUGH THEIR DRESSER DRAWERS
 TO SEE WHAT YOU'LL GET FOR CHRISTMAS
 LIKE A CHILD.

ALL. (*again with simple movements*)
 LIKE A CHILD, LIKE A CHI-CHI-CHILD,
 LIKE A CHILD, LIKE A CHILD,
 LIKE A CHI-CHI-CHILD.
 JUST DO WHAT YOU'VE GOT TO DO
 AND SEE WHAT YOU'LL GET FOR CHRISTMAS
 LIKE A CHILD.

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOTTA DO.
 SO JUST SET ABOUT IT.
 IF YA GOTTA THINK ABOUT IT
 OR FRET ABOUT IT,
 FORGET ABOUT IT.

GEORGE.
 EVEN IF YOU'VE GROWN UP
 AND LOST YOUR EFFERVESCENCE,
 DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T HAVE FUN.
 IT JUST MEANS YOU NEED LESSONS.

ALL.
SO YOU COULD SIT THERE THINKIN' LIKE A GROWN-
UP . . .

RICKY.
. . . OR YOU COULD COME ALONG AND JOIN US,
(*The COMPANY breaks into smaller groups, each with its own
playground activity—tag, somersaults, etc.*)

RACHEL.
CLOWN AROUND THE PLAYGROUND,
(*The following four lines may be spoken for greater intelligibil-
ity.*)

PAULA.
JUMP AND BUMP YOUR NOGGIN,

ANDY.
TRIP AND RIP YOUR TROUSERS,

JOHN.
LOSE YOUR MITTEN,

DARIEN.
SKIN YOUR ELBOW,

ARLENE. (*sung*)
AND START TO CRY,

ALL.
AND, FIFTEEN SECONDS LATER,
FEEL SO HIGH,
ROAMIN' THROUGH THE WILD
LIKE A . . .

PAULA.
WE DO WHAT WE'VE GOT TO,

CHRISTY.
EVEN IF WE'RE NOT TO.

ALL.
LIKE A CHI-CHI-CHILD.
(*lots of playground activity*)
LIKE A CHI-CHI-CHILD!
YEAH!

(*Black out.*)

LESSON #1

GEORGE, holding a microphone and posing as a television

reporter, is interviewing REBECCA and COREY, D.R. BILLY stands in front of them.

BILLY. (*clicking a movie clapper board*) How to Eat Like a Child, Part 1. (*Exits.*)

GEORGE. Hello there. We're eating potatoes with Rebecca and her brother, Corey. Rebecca, tell us, how do you handle mashed potatoes?

REBECCA. Well, George, first I pat the potatoes flat. (*demonstrates*) I dig three or four holes and fill them with gravy to make gravy lakes. (*does so*) Then, with my fork, I carve rivers between the lakes and watch the gravy flow between them. (*does so.*) I decorate the whole thing with peas.

GEORGE. When do you eat the potatoes?

REBECCA. I don't.

GEORGE. Corey, what about French fries? Are they eaten?

COREY. Definitely. But you have to start by waving one French fry in the air for emphasis, like this. (*He demonstrates. GEORGE moves back a little to get out of the way.*) Pretend to conduct an orchestra. (*does so, humming some music*) Then . . . place four French fries in your mouth at once (*does so*) and chew. Turn to your sister and open your mouth. (*Does so; REBECCA recoils.*)

GEORGE. (*peering into COREY's mouth*) That's disgusting.

COREY. (*pleased*) That's the point.

(*Black out.*)

[MUSIC NO. 1A: PLAYOFF]

LESSON #2

Lights up c.s. Cubes are arranged into three parallel beds with blanket covers. Feet of beds face DS. REBECCA, playing "the mother," enters.

REBECCA. Hurry up. The bus will be here in ten minutes. Don't forget—you have that big test today. (*Exits.*)

JOHN. (*removing previous title card*) How to Stay Home From School. (*Exits.*)

[MUSIC NO. 2: "I FEEL SICK"]

(NOTE: Each girl should remain motionless under her covers and not visible to the audience until she makes her first singing "entrance." The sisters should clearly be faking their illnesses.)

ARLENE. (*sitting up in bed #1*)

I FEEL SICK.

AWFUL SICK.

TOO SICK TO DO

ARITH . . .

(*She coughs.*)

. . . METIC.

IT'S A COLD IN MY HEAD.

I BELONG IN MY BED.

WHAT I NEED

IS A DOSE OF SAINT JOSEPH'S ASPIRIN.

(*She snuffles, wipes nose with hand.*)

AND THOUGH I HATE TO MISS THAT TEST,

WHAT I REALLY NEED IS REST

'CAUSE —

I FEEL SICK.

KIMBERLY. (*pops up in bed #2*)

ME, TOO.

ARLENE.

AWFUL SICK.

KIMBERLY.

YOU SAID IT.

ARLENE.

TOO SICK . . .

KIMBERLY.

SHE COUGHED . . .

ARLENE.

. . . TO DO . . .

KIMBERLY.

. . . ON ME . . .

(ARLENE coughs loudly.)

AND SPREAD IT.

ARLENE.
IT'S A COLD.

KIMBERLY.
IT'S A GRIP.

ARLENE.
IT'S A FLU.

KIMBERLY.
OH YES.

ARLENE.
WHERE YA WHEEZE,

KIMBERLY.
AND YA SNEEZE,

ARLENE.
AH-CAH-CHOO!

KIMBERLY.
GOD BLESS.

ARLENE & KIMBERLY.
AND YA KNOW WHAT YA NEED
IS A DOSE OF SAINT JOSEPH'S ASPIRIN.

(Both sniffle and wipe noses with hands.)

ARLENE. *(pointing to arm)*
YOU SEE THIS DOT?
IT'S A MEASLE.

KIMBERLY.
ON TOP OF A NASTY FLU.

ARLENE. *(points to "swollen gland")*
AND THIS BUMP

KIMBERLY.
WHERE?

ARLENE.
COULD BE A MUMP.

KIMBERLY.
IT'S A MUMP.

PAULA. *(pops up in bed #3)*
I'VE GOT A MUMP, TOO

I FEEL SICK.

KIMBERLY.
SICK.

PAULA.

SICK.

AWFUL . . .

KIMBERLY.

AWFUL . . .

PAULA.

SICK.

ARLENE.

IT'S CONTAGIOUS.

KIMBERLY.

PHLEGM.

PAULA.

IT'S AN EPIDEMIC.

KIMBERLY.

RIGHT!

ARLENE.

AND IT STRIKES . . .

ALL.

ALL AGES.

PAULA.

IT'S A BUG.

ARLENE.

IT'S A PLAGUE.

KIMBERLY.

IT'S A RARE DISEASE.

PAULA.

IT'S A GRIP.

ARLENE.

IT'S A FLU.

KIMBERLY.

WHERE YA BURN

PAULA.

AND FREEZE.

ALL.

AND WE'RE SURE THAT THE CURE
IS A DOSE OF SAINT JOSEPH'S ASPIRIN.

(They all three sniffle and wipe noses with lengths of arms.)

ARLENE.

WE'LL ALL FEEL BETTER TOMORROW.

KIMBERLY.
YES, THAT WE CAN SAFELY SAY.

PAULA.
WE'LL FEEL FINE THE REST OF OUR LIVES

ALL.
IF YA LET US SUFFER TODAY.

(*INSTRUMENTAL, during which the kids stand up in their beds and diagnose each other, sticking out tongues, saying "Ah," testing reflexes, searching for possible measles, etc.*)

ARLENE. (*examining PAULA's neck*)
I HAVE FOUND MORE DOTS!

PAULA. (*alarmed*)
BUT I DON'T NEED SHOTS.

ALL.
JUST A DOSE OF SAINT JOSEPH'S

PAULA.
ASPIRIN—

KIMBERLY.
ASPIRIN—

ARLENE.
ASPIRIN.

(*All now with GREAT SUFFERING.*)

PAULA. (*collapsing in bed*)
OW—

KIMBERLY. (*collapsing*)

EE—

ARLENE. (*collapsing*)

OH—

(*The suffering grows as they writhe on their beds in pain.*)

PAULA.

AH!

OW—

KIMBERLY.

EE—

ARLENE.

OH—

PAULA.

AH!

OW—

KIMBERLY.

EE—

ARLENE.

OH—

ALL.

AH!

PAULA.

OW—

KIMBERLY.

EE—

ARLENE.

OH—

ALL.

AH!

ASPIRIN!

(rationally)

SO WHAT'S THE USE OF GOING WHEN
THE NURSE WOULD ONLY
SEND US HOME AGAIN?

(REBECCA re-enters.)

REBECCA. I know you're not feeling very well, but I'm sure you'll feel better once you get to school.

ARLENE. *(sings)*

OH RATS!

KIMBERLY.

OH NUTS!

PAULA.

OH SHUCKS!

ARLENE.

BUT WHY?

ALL.

OH, WELL.

IT WAS WORTH A TRY.

(Black out.)

LESSON #3

ANDY. *(removing the previous title card)* How to Ride in a Car. *(Exits.)*

(*At c.s. are DARIEN, COREY, REBECCA, RACHEL, BILLY, and BRANDON. This lesson can be presented in choral speaking-style or staged to suggest the front and back seats of a car.*)

DARIEN. Insist that you don't have to go to the bathroom. If your mother points out that sometimes you think you don't have to go and then it turns out that you do, claim that you just went. Then have this conversation with your sister.

(*COREY and REBECCA in rapid exchange:*)

COREY. Dibs on the front seat.

REBECCA. I want it. You always get it.

COREY. You had it last time.

REBECCA. *You* had it last time.

COREY. I did not.

REBECCA. Did too.

COREY. Did not. What a liar.

REBECCA. I am not a liar. Mom, he called me a liar.

RACHEL. Your mother will say that she can't stand it another minute—no one is sitting in front.

DARIEN. Once you're in the car, draw an imaginary line down the back of the front seat, across the floor and up the back seat. Tell your sister not to cross the line, saying,

COREY. Stay on your own side—I don't want your cooties.

BRANDON. Ask if you're almost there yet.

DARIEN. Shortly after the car leaves the driveway, announce that you have to go to the bathroom, and deny kicking your sister.

RACHEL. Tell your mother that she's driving over the speed limit. Tell her that her seat belt isn't fastened. Tell her that a person's always supposed to drive with both hands on the wheel. Tell her that she really shouldn't smoke; it's bad for her.

BRANDON. Ask if you're almost there yet.

BILLY. Good grief. Now your sister thinks she is getting car-sick. Make a horrible face. Like this: (*COREY makes an atrocious face.*)

BILLY. Or this: (*DARIEN makes an atrocious face.*) Say, "Euuu, she's always getting sick. P.U." Holding your nose say, the car is going to smell re-volting. Say to her—

COREY. Don't throw up on me.

DARIEN. Tell your mom it's stupid to take her anywhere since she practically barfs the second she gets in the car. Whisper to your sister—

COREY. Want a sandwich, hee hee hee.

RACHEL. When she clutches her stomach and tells your mom to make you stop, say,

COREY. (*innocently*) All I said was, 'Want a sandwich.'

BRANDON. Ask if you're almost there yet.

DARIEN. Lean back against the seat. Close your eyes. Think about your sister. Yuck, she is disgusting. Open your eyes and look at her. Swear that you'll never talk to her again. Ever. More than anything wish that you were an only child.

BRANDON. Ask if you're almost there yet.

(*Cross fade to . . .*)

LESSON #4

COREY. (*on the telephone*) Hello. I'm taking a survey. Have you ever eaten peanut butter and amatta? What's amatta? I don't know. What's amatta with you? (*He hangs up and shrieks with laughter. Cross fade to . . .*)

LESSON #5

SUNSHINE. (*removing previous title card*) How to Practice the Violin.

(*JOHN is at a music stand. ARLENE enters.*)

ARLENE. (*as "the mother"*) I'm sorry, John. You can't go out to play unless you finish practicing. (*Exits.*)

(*JOHN picks up violin and starts metronome ticking. He plays.*)

[MUSIC NO. 3: "THE JOLLY BUCCANEERS"]*

*(NOTE: The violin part is simple enough to be learned by a non-violinist with just a few hours' practice. A violin teacher's guidance is recommended. As a last resort, the violin playing can be mimed while the pianist plays the musical line. In

JOHN. (*glumly*)
 BOY, IS THIS A STUPID PIECE OF MUSIC.
 WHY'S IT CALLED "THE JOLLY BUCCANEERS"?
 IT DOESN'T MAKE ME THINK
 OF SHIPS OR PIRATES.
 IT MAKES ME WANT TO HOLD MY EARS.

DEVO IS MUSIC.
 SO ARE *THE CLASH*.
 KISS IS MUSIC.
 THIS IS TRASH.

WISH I HAD A RICKENBACKER TWELVE-STRING.
 (*Guitar chord—audience hears what JOHN imagines.*)
 NOT THIS DUMB OL' CREEPY VIOLIN.
 (*Guitar fill*)
 AN INSTRUMENT DOES NOT BECOME AN
 INSTRUMENT
 UNTIL YOU PLUG IT IN.

(*Rock music fills the air. JOHN undergoes a complete physical transformation into a macho rock star. Besides turning up his collar or ripping open his shirt, he struts, swaggers and gyrates as he plays to an imaginary audience of adoring fans, using the violin as a Heavy Metal guitarist would use a guitar. The Lights pulsate during the instrumental. Suddenly it's over . . . the guitar sound fades; the metronome sound reappears. JOHN dejectedly goes back to practicing the violin. Music and Lights slowly fade.*)

LESSON #6

KIMBERLY. (*removing previous title card*) How to Express an Opinion.

that case, the violin strings should be replaced with twine so that no sound comes out.

If a sound system—or even a beatbox—is available a pre-recorded rock music tape can be used. If a guitarist is available, he/she can improvise the part, playing the heaviest riffs they know. If neither a sound system or a guitarist is available, the song can be omitted from the show.)

(*CHRISTY steps up to a podium and clears her throat. The others, except GEORGE, BILLY, and BRANDON, form an appreciative audience. CHRISTY begins quietly, almost clinically, but she adds emotion gradually and finishes with grand oratorical flourishes.*)

CHRISTY. Yucky . . . Gross . . . Dis-gusting . . . Ugh!! . . .
 Scuzzy . . . Sick . . . Sickening . . . Hideola . . . Creepy . . . Icky
 . . . Obnoxious . . . Creeps . . . Crummy . . . Vomitrocious.

(*She bows. The others applaud. All exit but COREY, who removes the title card to reveal the next one, "How to Beg for a Dog," but he does not read it.*)

LESSON #7

GEORGE enters.

GEORGE. (*to audience*) Persuading your parents to let you have a dog is one of the toughest things you'll ever have to do. But it can be done. Here's how my brother and I finally did it.

(*BILLY enters leading a dog, played by BRANDON, wearing cocker spaniel ears.*)

GEORGE. (*continued*) We found an actual dog up for adoption. We brought him to our house and stationed him by the fireplace. Then, when our parents came home . . .

[MUSIC NO. 4: "SAY YES"]

. . . We went to work.

(*GEORGE and BILLY work the audience with the clockwork precision of a vaudeville team. NOTE: Utter sincerity is important— even in the dog.*)

GEORGE. (*speaking in rhythm*)
 OH MY GOSH! IS THAT A DOG?

BILLY.
 YES, THAT'S A DOG.

GEORGE.
WHOSE DOG IS IT?

BILLY.
THAT'S THE DOG THAT JERRY'S FAMILY
WON'T LET HIM KEEP.

GEORGE.
YOU MEAN TO SAY HE'S HOMELESS?

BILLY.
YES, HE'S HOMELESS.

GEORGE.
WHAT A TRAGEDY!

BILLY.
IF THEY DON'T FIND A HOME FOR HIM
THEY'LL HAVE HIM PUT TO SLEEP.

GEORGE.
OH—NO!
WELL, HOW MUCH IS THAT DOGGIE?

BILLY.
HE'S FREE.

GEORGE.
DID YOU SAY FREE?

BILLY.
I SAID FREE.

GEORGE.
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.

BILLY.
WELL, IT'S TRUE.

GEORGE.
THAT'S GREAT.
AND WHEN IS HE AVAILABLE?

BILLY.
IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE.

GEORGE.
RIGHT NOW?

BILLY.
RIGHT NOW.

GEORGE.
OH MY GOSH! IT'S FATE.

GEORGE & BILLY. (*singing and doing a simple vaudeville step*)
THIS DOG IS FREE
AND SO ARE WE.

WHAT A SENSIBLE ADDITION TO THE FAMILY.
HE'S ADORABLE, AVAILABLE AND ODORLESS.
DON'T BREAK OUR HEARTS.
SAY YES.

GEORGE. That performance alone will not get you a dog, but
it's a start. Now you've got to come up with practical arguments.

For example: (*speaking in rhythm*)
NOW HOW IS HE AT BURGLARS?

BILLY.
HE'S EXCELLENT AT BURGLARS.

GEORGE.
DOES HE SCARE 'EM?

BILLY.
HE'S AS SCARY AS A JUNGLE CAT.

GEORGE.
AND HOW IS HE WITH CHILDREN?
IS HE GENTLE?

BILLY.
VERY GENTLE.

GEORGE.
WOULD HE KEEP 'EM OUT OF DANGER?

BILLY.
HE'S A SPECIALIST AT THAT.

GEORGE & BILLY. (*singing and dancing*)
THIS DOG IS SMART.
THIS DOG HAS HEART.
YOU COULD HITCH HIM UP AND HAVE HIM PULL
YOUR SHOPPING CART.
HE'S AS WONDERFUL WITH CHILDREN AS A
GOVERNESS.
THIS DOG'S A SAINT.
SAY YES.

IF YOU SAY YES
INSTEAD OF NO,
HE'S SURE TO COME IN HANDY.
LIKE WHEN YOU'RE STRANDED IN THE SNOW

BILLY.
HE'LL COME THROUGH WITH THE BRANDY.

GEORGE. (*speaking in rhythm*)
NOW WHO IS GONNA WALK HIM?

BILLY.
US!

GEORGE.
WHO WILL TEACH HIM TRICKS?

BILLY.
US!

GEORGE.
WHO IS GONNA FEED HIM?

BILLY.
US!

GEORGE.
WHO WILL CHECK FOR TICKS?

BILLY. (*spoken*) You.

GEORGE. *And you.*

BILLY. *And me.*

GEORGE. Right. (*speaking in rhythm*)
AND MOM AND DAD WON'T HAVE TO LIFT A FINGER?

BILLY.
WE SWEAR.

GEORGE.
WE'LL BE SO RESPONSIBLE THAT
NOBODY WILL EVEN KNOW HE'S THERE.

GEORGE & BILLY. (*singing*)
OUR FINGERS ITCH
TO PET THIS DOG.
WE NEEDED HIM THE MOMENT THAT WE MET THIS
DOG.
AND WE'LL NAG AND NAG AND NAG UNTIL WE GET
THIS DOG.

GEORGE.
LOOK AT THAT FACE!

BILLY.
LOOK AT THAT LEG!

GEORGE.
COME ON, ROVER, BEG!

(BRANDON "*begs.*")

GEORGE & BILLY. (*really pouring it on*)
IT MIGHT TAKE THREATS.

IT MIGHT TAKE TEARS.
 IT'S GONNA TAKE SOME PATIENCE
 'CAUSE IT MIGHT TAKE YEARS.

GEORGE.

BUT ONE DAY YOU'LL FINALLY WEAR 'EM DOWN
 AND THEN—

GEORGE & BILLY.

THREE CHEERS.

(*BRANDON barks.*)

THEY'RE GONNA SAY
 "ALL RIGHT."
 "OKAY."
 "ANYTHING YOU SAY."
 THEY'LL SAY—
 "YES, YES, YES, YES,
 YES!"

(*BRANDON barks. Black out.*)

LESSON #8

DARIEN. (*removing previous title card*) How to Play. (*Exits.*)

(*RACHEL, RICKY, CHRISTY, SUNSHINE, and REBECCA deliver this lesson in a choral speaking style.*)

RACHEL. Wander around the house trying different seats. Say, "I'm so bored, I've never been so bored, I'm going to die of boredom, there's nothing to do."

RICKY. Your mother will suggest all sorts of games that you might like to play. Say, "Nah, I don't feel like it" to every one.

CHRISTY. Open the refrigerator, look inside, close the refrigerator.

SUNSHINE. Decide to form a club. Appoint yourself president. Think about the kids in the class who you do not want to join because they have no personality at all. Call them up and announce that you're organizing a club and they can't join.

RACHEL. Fly a kite out of your bedroom window.

REBECCA. Look in your mother's dresser drawers.

RICKY. Ask for the keys to the car. You want to sit in it and listen to the radio.

CHRISTY. Open the refrigerator, look inside, close the refrigerator.

RACHEL. Decide to make chocolate pudding. Rip open the package so that half the mix lands on the saucepan and the other half lands on the floor.

CHRISTY. Spread it around with your feet so the mix blends in with the linoleum print. Stir the pudding and when it doesn't thicken fast enough, say "It's probably done anyway."

RICKY. On your way out of the kitchen, run and slide on the mix-covered floor.

SUNSHINE. Throw raisins in the air and try to catch them in your mouth. Miss. Throw raisins in your friend's mouth while he throws them into yours. Miss. Put raisins on your face and let the dog lick them off until your mother comes out and says,

RACHEL. (*as "the mom"*) Don't let the dog lick your face, he has germs.

REBECCA. Put your chin in a glass and move it around the table. (*She demonstrates.*)

RICKY. Then, pretending to be a TV newscaster, use the glass as a microphone.

REBECCA. (*talking into a glass*) Good evening, everyone. It's Saturday at the house and there's not much happening. I'm sitting at the table drinking juice.

CHRISTY. Your mother will walk in and say—

RACHEL. (*sternly*) Have you been looking in my dresser drawers?

CHRISTY. Be shocked.

REBECCA. (*shocked*) No, Mom, why?!

SUNSHINE. Your mother will say—

RACHEL. I don't mind if you did, I only mind if you lie to me.

CHRISTY. Be even more shocked.

REBECCA. (*even more shocked*) No, Mom, honest!

(*Segue to . . .*)

LESSON #9

Rest of company enters. BRANDON removes the previous title card.

ALL. How to Understand Your Parents.

(*KIMBERLY plays "Everymom," DARIEN plays "Everydad."*
They stand in front of the rest of the group.)

[MUSIC NO. 5: "MEANS NO"]

(The tone should be stern and serious, the staging static and oratorio-like. The only movement should be the kids' sneaking ds. behind the "parents," later in the song.)

RICKY.

PARENTS TALK A SPECIAL LANGUAGE.
LET US DEMONSTRATE.

KIMBERLY & DARIEN.

WE'LL SAY THINGS A PARENT SAYS.

ALL OTHERS.

AND WE'LL TRANSLATE.

KIMBERLY.

"WE'LL SEE . . ."

ALL OTHERS.

. . . MEANS "NO."

DARIEN.

"NOT NOW . . ."

ALL OTHERS.

. . . MEANS "NO."

KIMBERLY.

"ASK YOUR FATHER . . ."

ALL OTHERS.

. . . MEANS "NO."

DARIEN.

"ASK YOUR MOTHER . . ."

ALL OTHERS.

. . . MEANS "NO."

KIMBERLY.

"MAYBE WHEN YOU'RE OLDER . . ."

ALL OTHERS.

. . . MEANS "NO."

DARIEN.

"WE'LL DISCUSS IT LATER . . ."

ALL OTHERS.

. . . MEANS "NO."

KIMBERLY.

"IS YOUR BED MADE?"

ALL OTHERS. (*beginning to move ds. toward "parents"*)

"NO!"

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