



**Herb and Lois Walker's**  
**SCRIPTS FOR SCHOOLS**

**THE STORY OF  
CHU YUAN**

by Lois Walker

**The Origin of the  
Dragon Boat Festival**

A Readers Theater Script  
for Primary Readers

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## THE STORY OF CHU YUAN

A Readers Theater Script: The Origin of the Dragon Boat Festival  
Adapted and Formatted by Lois Walker

Cast: 2 Narrators and 10 Child Readers

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ALL: Oh, Chu Yuan,  
You jumped into the river,  
You jumped into the river,  
Floated down, down, down.

ALL BOYS: Oh, Chu Yuan,  
The fishes want to eat you,  
The fishes want to eat you,  
They swim round and round.

ALL GIRLS: Oh, Chu Yuan,  
We'll fill them up with Zongzi,  
We'll fill them full of dumplings,  
'Til they're puff-puff-puffed.

ALL BOYS: Oh, Chu Yuan,  
And so they will not eat you,

ALL GIRLS: And so they will not eat you,  
They'll be stuff-stuff-stuffed!

ALL: Chu Yuan,  
Chu Yuan,  
Oh, Chu Yuan!

NARRATOR 1: Once upon a time, there was a loyal official named Chu Yuan.

ALL: Chu Yuan  
Chu Yuan  
Oh, Chu Yuan!

CHILD 1: He was a wise and talented poet

CHILD 2: And he was adored by the king.

ALL: Chu Yuan,  
Chu Yuan,  
Oh, Chu Yuan!

NARRATOR 2: But one sad day, someone spread ugly rumors about  
Chu Yan's loyalty to the king.

CHILD 3: Chu Yan was loyal to the king.

CHILD 4: He loved the king.

CHILD 5: But the king believed in war,

CHILD 6: And Chu Yuan believed in peace.

ALL: Chu Yuan,  
Chu Yuan,  
Oh, Chu Yuan!

NARRATOR 1: The ugly rumors continued, and the king came to believe  
Chu Yuan was not his friend.

CHILD 7: The king became angry.

CHILD 8: He told Chu Yuan to go away.

CHILD 9: He made Chu Yuan live in a far-away place.

CHILD 10: And Chu Yuan was broken-hearted.

NARRATOR 2: Chu Yuan was so broken hearted that he tied his body to a heavy rock and jumped into the Mi-lo River on the 5th day of the 5th lunar month.

ALL: Chu Yuan,  
Chu Yuan,  
Oh, Chu Yuan!

CHILD 1: People of the country went out in their boats,

CHILD 2: And searched for Chu Yuan's body.

CHILD 3: They searched for many days.

CHILD 4: But they could not find him.

ALL: Chu Yuan,  
Chu Yuan,  
Oh, Chu Yuan!

CHILD 5: They were worried that the fish might want to eat him.

CHILD 6: So they threw pyramid-shaped rice dumplings into the river,

CHILD 7: And hoped the fish would eat the dumplings instead.

CHILD 8: Then they remembered the dragon that lived in the lake,

CHILD 9: And worried that the dragon might eat the dumplings first.