

THE CRAZY CRITTERS OF TAIWAN!

This Script Features Five Animals from Taiwan:

Hsuehshan Grass Lizard, Red-Bellied Squirrel, Red Eared Turtle,
Ryukyu Flying Fox, and the Asian Leopard Cat

Created and Formatted for Readers Theater by Lois Walker

Cast: 1 Teacher or Older Narrator and 5 Beginning Reader Parts

PROPS AND COSTUMES

PROPS OR COSTUME PIECES MAY BE USED AS EACH READER TAKES ROLE OF THE FUNNY OLD MAN. FOR EXAMPLE: STRANGE HAT, GLASSES WITH FALSE NOSE, AND WALKING CANE. AS READING BEGINS, PROPS AND COSTUMES ARE UNDER READER 1's CHAIR. THESE ITEMS WILL BE PASSED FROM READER TO READER AS THE READING PROGRESSES.

SIGNS

LARGE SIGNS WITH THE FOLLOWING WORDS PRINTED UPON THEM WILL ALSO BE NEEDED): ***SURPRISED, AMAZED, DUMBFOUNDED, BEWILDERED, ASTONISHED, HSUEHSHAN GRASS LIZARD!, RED-BELLIED SQUIRREL, TURTLE/REPTILE, RYUKYU FLYING FOX, AND ASIAN LEOPARD CAT.*** SIGNS MAY BE GLUED TO HOLDING STICKS, IF DESIRED. THESE WILL BE KEPT ON FLOOR IN FRONT OF APPROPRIATE READERS UNTIL CALLED FOR IN THE SCRIPT.

SEATING/READING ARRANGEMENTS

FACING AUDIENCE, ALL READERS SIT IN A ROW ON STOOLS OR CHAIRS. SCRIPTS ARE HELD IN HANDS, LOW ENOUGH SO THAT FACES ARE EASILY SEEN.

THE NARRATOR STANDS AND THE READING BEGINS:

NARRATOR: Late last Monday
It happened, you see,
A funny old man
Shuffled up to me.

(READER 1 PUTS ON HAT AND GLASSES,
TAKES CANE. THE FOLLOWING READERS
STAND AS THEY READ THEIR INDIVIDUAL
LINES:

READER 2: He pointed his finger

READER 3: And scratched his head.

(READER 1 STANDS AND BEGINS TO SHUFFLE
DOWNSTAGE CENTER, PRETENDING TO BE
THE OLD MAN).

READER 4: Then this is what the old man said,

(THE FOLLOWING WORD MUST BE SAID JUST
AS IT IS WRITTEN: " EX-CUE-OOOOZ" IS
PRONOUNCED AS THREE SYLLABLES.
"OOOOZ" AND "ME" ARE EMPHASIZED.
REHEARSE THIS BY ESTABLISHING A BEAT OR
RHYTHM TO BE USED THROUGHOUT THE
STORY WHEN THESE WORDS APPEAR).

ALL: **EX-CUE-OOOOZ ME!**

(READER 1 POINTS CANE OR WAGS FINGER
AT AUDIENCE DURING READING OF
FOLLOWING POEM):

READER 1: Is that your mama
With a white underside,
She's got a long tail
But she's not very wide?

She's got a forked tongue
And I'll tell you too,
That crazy critter looks a lot

(ALL READERS POINT TO AUDIENCE IN
UNISON ON "LIKE YOU!").

ALL: **LIKE YOU!**

(ALL READERS POINT TO AUDIENCE IN
UNISON ON "LIKE YOU!" READER 1 RETURNS
TO CHAIR AND PASSES PROPS TO READER 2).

NARRATOR: As you can well imagine,
I was

(READER 5 PICKS UP SIGN SAYING
"SURPRISED." READER 5 STANDS, HOLDS
SIGN ABOVE HEAD, AND SAYS):

READER 5: Surprised!

(ALL READERS EXCEPT NARRATOR SIT.
READER 5 PLACES SIGN ON FLOOR).

NARRATOR: I began to feel
Scales, shiny and brown,
Sprouting on my body
Up and down.

Oh no! I cried.
Then I shook and quivered.
That critter's called a

ALL: **HSUEHSHAN GRASS LIZARD!**

(FROM SEATED POSITION, READER 4 HOLDS
UP SIGN SAYING "**HSUEHSHAN GRASS
LIZARD**" AS ABOVE LINE IS READ. WHEN
FINISHED, THE SIGN IS RETURNED TO
FLOOR).

NARRATOR: Late last Tuesday
It happened, you see,
A funny old man

Shuffled up to me.

(READER 2 PUTS ON HAT, GLASSES, TAKES
CANE. THE FOLLOWING READERS STAND AS
THEY READ THEIR INDIVIDUAL LINES).

READER 1: He pointed his finger

READER 3: And scratched his head.

(READER 2 STANDS AND SHUFFLES
DOWNSTAGE CENTER, PRETENDING TO BE
THE OLD MAN. READER 2 FACES AUDIENCE).

READER 4: Then this is what the old man said,

(SAME DIRECTIONS AS EARLIER).

ALL: **EX-CUE-OOOOZ ME!**

(READER 2 POINTS CANE OR WAGS FINGER
JUST AS READER 1 DID EARLIER)

READER 2: Is that your papa
Dashing 'cross the trail?
Brown hair, red belly,
And a fat fluffy tail?

He's heading for his burrow