

The World According to Toddlers

By Shannon Payette Seip and Adrienne Hedger

Suggested Roles: Actors should take turns announcing the title of each “scene” in a broad announcer’s voice!

ACTRESS: Narrator, Judy, Mom (banana pantomime), Toddler 2, Katie

ACTOR: Narrator 2, Toddler, Chuck



NOTE: This cutting asks each student to portray multiple characters, which is permissible for Nationals and SOME states. It may not meet the rules requirement for DUO in your state! Be sure to check your STATE rules before performing at local tournaments.

NARRATOR 1: (Pg vii – viii) (*cradling an infant in her arms*) In the beginning they are babies

NARRATOR 2: Cue the soft music – (*sings*) Lullaby and goodnight

NARRATOR 1: So cuddly. So sweet. Eating enthusiastically. Playing happily.

NARRATOR 2: Wearing the outfits you choose. Life is good!

NARRATOR 1: Then, around 18 months, the world starts to change. (*off-stage shriek by actor – she wrestles with baby as it morphs into a toddler, finally lets it go*)

TODDLER: (*cross arms and says emphatically*) No! No! No! No!

NARRATOR 1: This is when you realize: Your baby is gone and in its place is a boisterous, opinionated human: Your toddler.

TOGETHER: NO!

INTRODUCTION

ACTRESS: Welcome to the World According to Toddlers

ACTOR: A hilarious, messy (*is hit in the face with a spoonful of something; wipes it off*) and unpredictable universe.

ACTRESS: The best way to navigate the toddler world? Nobody really knows . . . everyone just makes it up as they go along.

ACTOR: It’s a world where the human who believes he is the boss of you only comes up to your knee.

ACTRESS: A world where food must be cut just so.

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ACTOR: *A world where throwing a spectacular tantrum is on the daily "TO DO" list
(off-stage scream by actress) Check!*

ACTRESS: *The World According to Toddlers*

ACTOR: *by Shannon Payette Seip and Adrienne Hedger*

*****A Major Upset*****

NARRATOR 2: (Pg 8-9) It's a major upset – a tantrum is brewing. Let's cut to our commentators, Chuck and Judy, who are live on the scene to give us a play-by-play report

JUDY: Chuck, I sense Toddler is growing dissatisfied.

CHUCK: Well, look at those shoes Mom is asking her to wear. Tennis shoes with Velcro? That's outrageous!

JUDY: I think we're about to witness a full-blown tantrum. Let's watch the technique

TODDLER: *(crying interspersed with "No, no, no" and stomping feet)*

JUDY: She's yelling something . . . I can't quite make it out.

CHUCK: Well, we can hear the word "no" for sure.

JUDY: She's making a move to throw herself to the ground. Wait . . . she's holding back on the sobbing while she concentrates on lowering herself to the ground . . . carefully.

CHUCK: The sobbing resumes, Judy! Watch that arm and leg movement. Impressive.

JUDY: Even more powerful than before.

TODDLER: *(full-blown tantrum mode – kicking and flailing)*

JUDY: Chuck, everything is infuriating to her now. Even air.

CHUCK: She's punching the air! I would not want to be that air right now. And listen to that scream!

TODDLER: *(manages to get one shoe off and throws it viciously)*

JUDY: This kid knows her stuff.

CHUCK: Well, she's had practice, Judy. Plenty of practice.

***** Snack Time *****

NARRATOR 1: (Pg 21) A juice box chilled at exactly 37 degrees.

NARRATOR 2: Hexagonal wheat crackers, arranged in a fan.

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NARRATOR 1: Green grapes that are perfectly oblong.

NARRATOR 2: No, it's not a superstar's dressing room requirements: it's the high-maintenance demands of a toddler.

TOGETHER: (Pg 34-35) Snack Time!

JUDY: Chuck, Toddler wants a banana.

CHUCK: Mom has the banana in hand. He's watching for a sign that it's OK to peel.

TODDLER: *(raising arms and opening and closing fists rapidly, with a low-pitched whine)*

JUDY: There's the sign!

CHUCK: Peeling is underway. She needs to keep this slow and controlled so she can stop at exactly the right point.

JUDY: Chuck, if she peels even a centimeter too much, that banana is ruined. I think we all remember what happened last week, when she pulled the granola bar wrapper down too far.

CHUCK: And let's not forget the incident with the string cheese wrapper.

JUDY: What about the time Dad handed Toddler a naked banana?

TOGETHER: *(Gasp!)*

CHUCK: I think we're getting close . . . close.

MOM: *(peeling a banana like she's diffusing a bomb)*

CHUCK: She's stopping!

TODDLER: *(stops screaming suddenly, takes the banana and munches on it)*

JUDY: Whew! Right at the perfect point!

*******The Social Lives of Toddlers*******

NARRATOR 1: (Pg 41) Peeing in the sandbox.

NARRATOR 2: Though this violation might offend an adult during a social gathering, it's commonly accepted during a toddler's playdate.

NARRATOR 1: No feelings hurt.

NARRATOR 2: No friendships destroyed.

NARRATOR 1: Let's take an inside look at how toddlers play, share

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NARRATOR 2: Yeah, right!

TOGETHER: *(laughing)*

NARRATOR 1: . . . and enjoy the company of others. Come hop in the sandbox!

NARRATOR 2: *(pointing)* Just watch out for that wet spot.

NARRATOR 1: **(Pg 54)** [It's just your average] playdate at the park!

NARRATOR 2: **(Pg 94)** Don't forget your blankie, stuffed giraffe, pacifier, snack, pillow, another snack and your favorite socks!

NARRATOR 1: **(Pg 100)** Understand this: You do not need a stroller. Your mom thinks you still need one, but she is dead wrong!

TODDLER: *(wandering in, clutching all these items in her arms)*

CHUCK: **(Pg 54)** Whoa! Judy, I think she's just going to stand next to that tree, holding her treasured toys.

JUDY: Here comes Toddler's friend to say hi. Here comes another!

TODDLER 2: **(Pg 50)** Do you want to play with me?

TODDLER: *(turns away violently shaking her head)*

CHUCK: **(Pg 54-55)** She's got a pretty hostile look on her face. That little head is vehemently shaking no.

JUDY: Mom is encouraging Toddler to play.

CHUCK: She can't be serious, Judy. Doesn't she know that those kids will just steal Toddler's best toys?

JUDY: That's right, Chuck. The point of bringing your toys to the park is to make sure no one else gets them.

TODDLER: **(Pg 67)** No, no, no, no!

JUDY: This powerful word is appropriate at any time, in any setting . . .

CHUCK: **(Pg 55)** Yes! Her plan is to hold tight and not move for the entire 90-minute playdate.

JUDY: It's too risky to even play with your things or other kids might want to play too.

CHUCK: All you can do is show up and guard your stuff.

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JUDY: Guard it with your life, Chuck. With your life!

TODDLER: (Pg 66) Mommmmmmmmy!

JUDY: Hungry, tired, uncomfortable, or bored? Yelling MOMMY is the remedy!

***** Night Night *****

NARRATOR 1: (Pg 136-137) Dear Katie, Thank you for babysitting for us tonight. Here are some notes about putting Bobby to bed. Best of luck!

NARRATOR 2: Bobby needs to be situated at a 30 degree angle to the door.

NARRATOR 1: With his yellow blanket (light yellow, not dark yellow) covering him just up to his chest – one-half centimeter lower than his armpits.

NARRATOR 2: Now sing the ABC song to him.

KATIE: (*singing*) A, B, C, D, E, F, G . . .

NARRATOR 2: In a British accent!

KATIE: A, B, C, D, E, F, G . . .

NARRATOR 2: When ABC concludes, sing “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” until he falls asleep or until we get home.

KATIE: (*singing*) Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

NARRATOR 2: Thank you! We’ll be home VERY late.

TOGETHER: (*evil, giddy laughter*)

TODDLER: (Pg 139) [Dear Magic Eight Ball], I don’t want to sleep and I’m tired of crying it out. Should I throw up? (*shakes magic eight ball*)

MAGIC EIGHT BALL: Crying takes too much energy; it’s more effective and expedient to throw up. Chances are very good that “night-night time” will be all done.

TODDLER: (*smiles evilly*)

KATIE: (*singing*) . . . How I wonder where you are (*continues singing through Toddler’s mime*)

TODDLER: (*throws up*) (Pg 17) Gotta go potty! (*makes a grimacing face*) It’s coming out! (*pooping his pants. A contented sigh, then stuttering*) (Pg 62) You know wha. . You know wha. . . You know wha . . . (Pg 20) I DO IT! I DO IT!

SOURCE INFORMATION

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AWARD HISTORY

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