THE GREAT GAME PLAN – Preview information

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THE GREAT GAME PLAN – Director’s Notes

**Casting:** Most roles can be flexible in regard to gender, even Teagan. Some roles can be eliminated (for example, the two Cherry Pickers can be combined into one character). With three mice, there are 24 characters, but if necessary actors can play more than one role (the Capture sequence in scene 7 would need to be altered if characters are eliminated).

There are four hippos in the Hungry Hungry Hippos game, but if necessary, you can reduce the number. The hippos often speak as a group, so this is a good role to give to a child who wants to be on stage but is afraid to speak. The individual hippo lines can be distributed however you like.

**Set and Blocking:** This play can be done with very minimal sets. If you have resources to make over-sized game pieces to be randomly laying around in each scene, that would be great, but not necessary. In our production, we used:

SCENES 1 & 8: A blanket spread center stage with random game pieces spread on it. (The blanket is really only there to make it easier to move the items quickly.)

SCENE 2 & 6: Two large blocks or boxes painted to look like oversized dice. (An added advantage if they are sturdy enough for characters to sit and stand on.)

SCENE 3 & 7: Empty

SCENE 4: Two artificial trees and two buckets with large “cherries” – red balls – in them.

SCENE 5: A Railroad Crossing sign

The Capture sequence in Scene 7 will require a lot of practice to get it timed right. Fortunately, the kids usually love that scene and don’t mind the rehearsal. ☺ If actors need to double up on roles, you will not have the available actors to do the sequence as described – adjust as necessary.

For the Old Man’s tub, use a plastic kiddie swimming pool. Yellow is ideal – matches the one in the Mouse Trap game. We could only find a purple one, so we added lines after the tub was found:

Teagan: Wait – I thought the tub was yellow!

Timmy: Well, you’ve been pretty confused since we met you.

**Costumes:** Costumes for this show can be very fun! Here are suggestions for some of the game pieces:

Timmy: overalls, striped long-sleeved shirt

Susie: denim jumper and striped shirt

Cootie: yellow sweatpants and shirt, black or colored sleeveless top, headband antennae, two extra legs (stuffed fabric tubes, attached to body with Velcro)

Old Man: wifebeater shirt and skinny shorts

Cavity Sam: light pink or beige sweatsuit, with "body parts" velcro’d or sewn in the appropriate places, a red clown nose and large "tweezers" (kitchen tongs) hanging by side

Captain: marine-type jacket and a captain's hat

Mr. Mint: red/white striped shirt, red pants, carries a large plastic candy cane

Hippos: pastel-colored sweats or pj's, matching visors with hippo ears and two large white teeth hanging down from the visor front.

Cherry-Pickers: farm clothes (flannel shirts, jeans, boots)

Lord Licorice: red knickers, white shirt, black cape and boots, fancy black hat

Princess Lolly: yellow skirt and matching shirt, big lollipop, pink wig; lollipops sewn on skirt is a nice touch!

Pennybags: black pants, black suit coat with tails, top hat, monocle, and cane

Broker: nerdy glasses, suspenders over white shirt and black pants

Cop: policeman jacket and hat, handcuffs, nightstick, whistle

Ms. Scarlet: red dress, red boa, and red fancy hat

Molasses Swamp kid: brightly colored solid shirt and shorts, brown sheet sewn together at edges and stuffed lightly for his portable “swamp”

Mice: primary or bold-colored sweats, mouse ears and noses

**Scene Transitions:** If your number of actors is smaller and you have to double-up on parts, you will simply need to end each scene with a blackout and a scene change. But if your numbers and space permit, these transitions below can add a lot of fun and energy – and give your minor characters a little more stage time! The transition scenes happen at the front edge of the stage while the set is being changed behind – and some fun, funky music pays in the background. They sound complicated when written out like this ☺, but play with the timing and spacing to make them work in the time you have.

Note: The Molasses Swamp Kid character is only necessary if you use these transitions. SR = Stage Right. SL = Stage Left. C = Center stage.

*Transition A* : Old man crosses R to L, looking for tub

Mint enters L; Scarlet enters R; they meet center, greet & walk by each other

Pickers cross L to R, picking up cherries (which are scattered around the front of the stage)

2 hippos enter R, try to eat Mint’s cane, he chases them off R

mice enter L, knock over Scarlet, run off R

Old Man picks up Scarlet, they exit L

*Transition B:* Timmy crosses R to L, looking for tub

SL: Broker tries to talk to Lolly, gives her policies to look at

Moneybags enters SR, stands counting money

mice runs through (R to L), bump Moneybags and he drops money

LL scares Lolly who drops papers, LL chases her off SR, circling around Moneybags

broker picks up papers, Timmy stops to help

ends with Timmy seeing Molasses Kid sitting on Swamp at edge of stage

Timmy: “What’s the matter with you?”

M Swamp Kid: “I’m stuck in Molasses Swamp.”

Transition C : hippo who gets cherry at end of scene 4 stays center to eat

Teagan crosses R to L, looking for tub

Old Man crosses L to R with big dice, stops occasionally, stands on dice to look, jumps off

Captain enters from R, looking with spyglass for tub

Mouse runs in from L, scares hippo who drops cherry and runs off L, mouse stays C and gloats

Cop enters R, blowing whistle, chases off mouse SL

Captain climbs on Old Man’s dice to look, they exit SR

Teagan sees Molasses Kid sitting on Swamp

Teagan: “What’s the matter with you?”

M Swamp Kid: “I’m still stuck in Molasses Swamp.”

Transition D: Lolly hops up from RR, looks around center stage for help

Susie crosses R to L, looking for tub

Cootie sneaks up behind Lolly and scares her, she screams and hops off SR

Cootie stays center stage and laughs

Cavity Sam enters SR, looking for tub

Hippo enters from L, tries to eat cootie’s leg cootie

Cootie chases hippo off SL, hitting her with the leg

Mouse enters SR, buzzes Sam with his tweezers, Sam yells, chases mouse off SR

Susie sees Molasses Kid sitting on Swamp

Susie: “Are you okay?”

M Swamp Kid: “I hate Molasses Swamp!”

*Transition E:* All characters involved with trapping the mice in Scene 7 run randomly around the stage and end up in their spots for the trap. Ends with Teagan saying to Molasses Swamp Kid, “Hey, I found something for you”, and handing him an oversized card with two red squares; Swamp Kid says, “Yes!”

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Scene 1

Mom: Teagan! Teagan!

Teagan: Yeah?

Mom: Teagan, would you come in here for a minute?

Teagan: What is it?

Mom: What do you see in this room?

Teagan: Toys. It’s a playroom, Mom. This is where the toys belong.

Mom: Yes, that’s true, but where in the playroom do the toys belong?

Teagan: Aw, mom….

Mom: They do not belong in a pile on the floor. That’s why we spent the big bucks for the lovely shelving.

Teagan: These aren’t toys, Mom. These are game pieces, from the games.

Mom: From all the games? All mixed together?

Teagan: Yeah! I was making a story with all of them. You see ……

Mom: Oh, Teagan, what am I going to do with you? You need to get this picked up before we leave to get Ty from baseball and Olivia from band practice.

Teagan: Aw, mom, do I have to go along? I hate to pick them up from practices.

Mom: They’re your family. We need to be supportive of their activities just like they’re supportive of yours.

Teagan: What activities? I don’t have any activities. I’m no good at anything.

Mom: That’s not true! God has given you your own gifts, Teagan.

Teagan: Whatever.

Mom: Oh, it’s almost time. We’ll talk about this later. Pick up the games pieces now. We need to get going soon. (*exits*)

Teagan: Geez, why do I have to pick them up when I’m still in the middle of playing with them? Why can’t I be good at stuff like Ty and Olivia? Why do I have to be such a loser? *(lays down, blackout, “dream sequence” music, blanket with game pieces off stage*)

Scene 2 (*lights up, Teagan still laying on stage, Timmy and Susie roll in yelling, land on top of her*)

Teagan: Whoa! Watch where you’re going!

Timmy: Sorry!

Susie: Boy, that was a long chute!

Timmy: Yeah, I didn’t see that one coming.

Teagan: Hey, wait a minute . . . who are you? How did you get in here?

Timmy: What do you mean? We’re always in here.

Susie: Except when you take us out in the backyard to play with – and you’re not supposed to do that! One of these days, you’re going to lose us, you know….

Teagan: Lose you? What are you talking about? Hey, wait . . you look just like the kids in the Chutes and Ladders game.

Timmy: Really. Isn’t that a coincidence.

Teagan: Isn’t what a coincidence? What are you talking about?

Timmy: (*turning to leave*) Come on, Susie. Let’s find another ladder.

Susie: Look out! (*mice run by and knock them over*)

Teagan: Whoa! Were those mice? They are GIGANTIC!

Timmy: Gigantic annoyances.

Teagan: And I’ve never seen mice that color.

Susie: Never? Are you sure? Think really hard, Teagan. You’ve seen them somewhere.

Cootie: (*wanders in, taps Teagan on the shoulder*) Excuse me. (*Teagan turns, jumps and yells*) Have you seen my probiscus?

Teagan: Y-your what?!?

Cootie: My probiscus. Curly thing. Sticks out right about here.

Timmy: (*to the side*) What a wimp. Afraid of a cootie bug.

Susie: It’s right over here. (*Hands probiscus to him*)

Cootie: Oh, thank you! Every time those mice fly by they knock something else loose. (*exits*)

Teagan: Was – was that a – a . . .

Timmy: You’re as articulate as you are brave, huh?

Susie: Oh, stop it, Timmy. Yes, Teagan, it’s a cootie bug, from the Cootie game. And those were mice from the Mouse Trap game, and we’re . . .

Teagan: The Chutes and Ladders kids?

Susie: Oh, good! You’ve got the idea now! I’m Susie, and this is Timmy.

Timmy: (*holds out his hand*) Pleased to make your acquai- . . .

Teagan: (*turns away from them*) No! No way! This is impossible!

Timmy: Well, that was rude.

Susie: No, it’s not impossible, Teagan. Very improbable, but not impossible, because, well, it’s happening.

Teagan: But, you’re just game pieces . . .

Timmy: Just game pieces? Boy, you sure know how to make friends and influence people, don’t you?

Susie: I’m not exactly sure how it’s happening, but the fact is that, it is happening . . .

Timmy: Oh, for Pete’s sake, can we get back to climbing those ladders?

Susie: He really loves to climb ladders. So, do I, actually. It’s what we’re made to do.

Timmy: When I’m climbing ladders, I feel . . . complete.

Old Man: (*from off-stage*) Hey, do you see it over there?

Teagan: Who’s that?

Susie: (*calls off-stage*) See what?

Old Man: (*enters*) My tub! I can’t find my tub to jump in to! How am I supposed to catch those mice without my tub?

Susie: Well, it’s got to be around here somewhere . . . (*Timmy and Susie start looking around*)

Old Man: Drat those mice!

Teagan: (*looks closely at Old Man*) You – you look familiar . . .

Old Man: (*looks at Teagan just as closely*) Yes, so do you. You’re the young lady that keeps pilfering my tub!

Teagan: The Mouse Trap game! That’s it! You’re the Old Man on the teeter-totter that springs into the tub that knocks down the cage . . .

Old Man: That traps the mice. Exactly. That’s why I need my tub. The mice are loose again, and they’re causing a ruckus, like they always do!

Timmy: I don’t see it around here anywhere.

Old Man: Drat those mice! They’ve spilled the barrel of monkeys, snapped all the Kerplunk sticks in half, and gobbled up all the Trivial Pursuit pie!

Susie: Again?

(*Mice come running through and knock everyone to the ground*)

Old Man: Drat those mice!

Susie: We’ve just got to find that tub so you can capture those mice before they destroy everything.

Timmy: Right. I say we split up. Teagan, you go that way.

Teagan: Me? Oh, I don’t know that I would be helpful. I’m not very good at….

Timmy: Do you have eyes?

Teagan: Yeah.

Timmy: You know what the tub looks like?

Teagan: Yeah.

Timmy: Then you’re helpful. Go that way.

Susie: I’ll go this way.

Old Man: I’ll go that way.

Timmy: And I’m going this way – right up this ladder! (*smiles*) I love ladders!

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