

The
Mad
Adventures
of
Mr. Toad

Based on *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame
Dramatized by VERA MORRIS
Music & Lyrics by SCOTT DeTURK

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For preview only

MAD ADVENTURES OF MR. TOAD

CAST OF CHARACTERS (In Order of Appearance)

	<i># of lines</i>
MOLE..... lives along the riverbank	88
RAT..... his friend	92
BADGER..... wise old gentleman	82
FIELD MOUSE 1..... scared of weasels	16
FIELD MOUSE 2..... another	12
TOAD..... conceited chap, given to crazes	151
HOUSEKEEPER..... works at Toad Hall	15
CHIEF WEASEL..... nasty customer, hates Toad	18
FIRST WEASEL..... another	4
SECOND WEASEL..... another	6
THIRD WEASEL..... another	8
FOURTH WEASEL..... another	7
NEIGHBOR 1..... farm wife	11
NEIGHBOR 2..... another	10
NEIGHBOR 3..... another	10
SALESPERSON..... sells cars	5
NURSE..... for Toad	11
CYNTHIA..... out for a drive	13
BERTIE..... motorist	10
RED LION OWNER..... serves delicious luncheons	10
JUDGE..... servant of the court	13
CLERK..... another	10
POLICE OFFICER..... another	4
WIFE..... of prison warden	7
POLLY..... her daughter	30
WASHERWOMAN..... Polly's aunt	11
BARGEWOMAN..... travels the river	31
FOX 1..... sentry	9
FOX 2..... sentry	8
ADDITIONAL WEASELS, MICE... as/if needed	

SYNOPSIS OF MUSICAL NUMBERS

MC 1	Come to the Wood—Prologue	Company
MC 2	Mr. Toad.....	Toad
MC 2a	Come to the Wood—Reprise.....	Weasels
MC 3	The Good Life.....	Weasels
MC 4	A Danger to Society.....	Neighbors 1, 2, 3
MC 4a	A Danger to Society—Reprise 1 ..	Rat, Badger, Mole
MC 5	Down With Toad	Weasels
MC 5a	Mr. Toad—Reprise 1	Toad
MC 6	A Quiet Drive in the Country	Cynthia, Bertie
MC 6a	A Danger to Society—Reprise 2..	Instrumental
MC 7	Don't Do the Crime If You Can't Do the Time.....	Judge, Company
MC 7a	Entr'acte	
MC 8	A Sucker for a Pretty Face	Toad, Polly
MC 8a	Mr. Toad—Reprise 2	Toad
MC 8b	Mr. Toad—Reprise 3 (Chase)	Instrumental
MC 9	What Can be Done?	Rat, Badger, Mole
MC 9a	Down with Toad—Reprise	Foxes 1, 2
MC 9b	Mr. Toad—Reprise 4.....	Toad
MC 10	Let's Have a Feast.....	Housekeeper, Company
MC 10a	Come to the Wood—Finale	Company

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

PROLOGUE

ACT ONE

Scene One: The river bank

Scene Two: Night. The Wild Wood

Scene Three: A country lane (FORESTAGE)

Scene Four: Terrace at Toad Hall

Scene Five: Night. A country lane (FORESTAGE)

Scene Six: Toad's bedroom

Scene Seven: A country lane (FORESTAGE)

Scene Eight: A courtroom

ACT TWO

Scene One: A prison cell

Scene Two: Along the river (FORESTAGE)

Scene Three: The river bank

Scene Four: The tunnel (FORESTAGE)

Scene Five: Dining hall of Toad Hall

Scene Six: Dining hall of Toad Hall

EPILOGUE

MR. TOAD'S MAD ADVENTURES

PROLOGUE

AT RISE: ENTIRE COMPANY ONSTAGE. MUSIC CUE 1: "Come to the Wood—Prologue."

COMPANY: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood, the edge of civilization.
If you are good with powers of observation,
You'll see creatures abound,
Fantastic features astound.

FIELD MOUSE 1: (*Speaks in rhythm.*) Those funny whiskers,
Those funny ears,

FIELD MOUSE 2: (*Speaks in rhythm.*) Those funny muzzles,
You'll laugh to tears.

COMPANY: (*Sings.*)
There in the brush, you'll see them scitter and scatter.
Quiet now, hush, you'll hear their intimate chatter.
Such a marvelous sound,
Just keep your ear near the ground.
Under that log, is that a newt,
A toad or a frog?

GIRLS: (*Sing.*) Or a salamander meandering by,

BOYS: (*Sing.*) His eye on some fly?

COMPANY: (*Sings.*) Down in that hole, is that a rat,
A weasel or mole?

BOYS: (*Sing.*) Or a fat old gopher,
A loafer is he.

GIRLS: (*Sing.*) Could he be a she?

COMPANY: (*Sings.*) Sometimes it's hard to tell,
Some move so fast,
Some have their smell,
Some have their fur,
Some have their scales,
Some have their warts,
Some have their tails.

CHORUS 1: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

CHORUS 2: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

ALL: (*Sing.*) And join the mad adventure!

CHORUS 1: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

CHORUS 2: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

ALL: (*Sing.*) You'll think you've entered into a dream.

CHORUS 1: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

CHORUS 2: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

ALL: (*Sing.*) And join the mad adventure!

You've lessons to learn before your return.

Things misunderstood... come to the wood.

COMPANY: (*Sings.*)

Come to the wood, where brooks all babble and bubble.

Just know you should try hard to stay out of trouble.

Nothing's quite what it seems.

It is the height of extremes.

FIRST WEASEL: (*Speaks in rhythm.*) They flap and flutter,

They croak and growl,

SECOND WEASEL: (*Speaks in rhythm.*) They swim and burrow,

They'll make you howl.

COMPANY: (*Sings.*)

Some creatures hop, others are slinky and slither.

Peaceful, then pop! They all scat hither and thither.

They can give such a start,

Venture if you're strong at heart.

There by that fern, is that a quail,

A teal or a tern?

BOYS: (*Sing.*) Or a baby otter...

GIRLS: (*Sing.*) With water so near,

It's clear she's no fear.

COMPANY: (*Sings.*) There by the trunk, is that a mouse,

A skink or a skunk?

GIRLS: (*Sing.*) Or a lazy 'possum,

An awesome display.

Just pray things will stay...

COMPANY: (*Sings.*) At peace one moment more.

Just hold your breath,

That silent roar

Is quick to burst.

Things soon will change

Into a world

That's very strange.

CHORUS 1: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

CHORUS 2: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

ALL: (*Sing.*) And join the mad adventure!

CHORUS 1: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

CHORUS 2: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

ALL: (*Sing.*) Your life will never be the same.

CHORUS 1: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

CHORUS 2: (*Sings.*) Come to the wood.

ALL: (*Sing.*) And join the mad adventure!

The rat and the mole will take you down in their hole.

The badger and mouse invite you into their house.

And if you are good while you're in their neighborhood,

You just might get to go on the road with the fabulous toad.

Come to the wood. (*MUSIC OUT. ALL EXIT.*)

END OF PROLOGUE

ACT ONE

Scene One

SETTING: The river bank.

LIGHTS UP: MOLE is standing DOWNSTAGE CENTER. He has a spyglass to one eye and is watching boats float downstream [audience].

MOLE: Oh, so many lovely boats floating on the water. How pretty, how charming. Who can think about house cleaning on a day like this?

RAT: (*ENTERS RIGHT. He carries a picnic basket. MOLE pockets spyglass.*) 'Allo, Mole. I thought I heard your voice.

MOLE: Hello, Ratty. Such a perfect day, I had to get out of the house and breathe some fresh air. Doesn't happen often.

RAT: You couldn't have picked a better time. Badger and I have hired a boat, and we're going to float downstream and enjoy a picnic lunch. (*Holds up basket.*) Care to join us?

MOLE: Badger? Haven't seen him in some time.

RAT: You know Badger. Doesn't like crowds as a rule.

MOLE: (*Interested.*) That's a fine-looking picnic basket. What have you packed?

RAT: Let me think. I don't believe I've forgotten anything. There's cold chicken, cold tongue, cold ham, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. (*MOLE licks his lips.*) Cold beef, pickles, salad,

French rolls, watercress, tea biscuits, potted meat, ginger beer, lemonade, soda water—

MOLE: Oh, stop, stop. Sounds too good to be true!

RAT: And for dessert, two kinds of pudding. Vanilla and butterscotch.

MOLE: A choice between butterscotch and vanilla! How delicious.

RAT: Doesn't have to be a choice. Have a china plate of each.

MOLE: A china plate of each! How generous. How neighborly. How friendly. I'd be delighted to join you.

BADGER'S VOICE: (*From OFFSTAGE RIGHT.*) I'm coming, Ratty. Be there in a moment.

BADGER: (*ENTERS RIGHT. He uses a cane or walking stick and moves rather slowly.*) Water rats are so lively on their feet. 'Allo. Who's this? Moley. How are you, Moley? Haven't seen you since last winter.

MOLE: Hello, Badger.

RAT: Moley's going to join us on our little picnic.

BADGER: Splendid.

MOLE: I had planned to clean house, but it can wait.

RAT: I went to Toad Hall. I thought Toad might join us. But the housekeeper said he was out. As usual.

BADGER: I hope he hasn't gotten himself into more trouble. I suppose you chaps know he smashed up that beautiful painted wagon he had.

BOTH: We heard.

BADGER: Galloping too fast. Reckless. Smashed a farmer's fence and scared the chickens.

BOTH: Tsk, tsk.

BADGER: As you know, before the wagon he had the boating fever. Managed to send a half dozen boats to the bottom. Smashing into rocks and sunken trees. That sort of thing.

MOLE: He does manage to take up crazes.

BADGER: His crazes always mean trouble for friends and neighbors. I've had several talks with Toad. Each time he promises to behave. But he never does. I wouldn't bother with him, except that I promised Toad's father I'd keep an eye on him. Toad's father and I were the best of friends.

RAT: Shall we find our boat and get started?

BADGER: Lead on, Ratty.

MOLE: It's a wonderful lunch you've packed. (*They start to move LEFT when two FIELD MICE scurry IN LEFT. Or they might be RABBITS and hop IN.*)

FIELD MICE: Hello, Badger. Hello, Ratty. Hello, Mole.

RAT/BADGER/MOLE: 'Allo.

MOLE: You field mice [rabbits] seem to be in a great hurry.

FIELD MOUSE 1: They were chasing us.

FIELD MOUSE 2: They're always chasing us.

FIELD MOUSE 1: They think it's fun.

FIELD MOUSE 2: But not for us.

MOLE: Who do you mean?

FIELD MOUSE 1: Need you ask?

FIELD MOUSE 2: The weasels who live in the Wild Wood.

MOLE: Ah, yes.

RAT: Nasty chaps, those weasels. You live in the Wild Wood, Badger, and I don't know how you do it.

BADGER: Those weasels wouldn't dare trifle with me. Besides, I've lived in the Wild Wood longer than any other animal. Long before the weasels showed up.

FIELD MOUSE 1: I wish they had never come to the Wild Wood.

FIELD MOUSE 2: Always scaring us. Daytime is bad enough. But nighttime is a terror.

BADGER: I rarely go out at night. If they continue to prove a nuisance, let me know. I know how to deal with troublemakers.

FIELD MOUSE 1: Thank you, Badger.

BADGER: Think nothing of it.

FIELD MOUSE 2: Don't trust them. No matter what they say.

BADGER: Leave everything to me. (*FIELD MICE EXIT RIGHT.*)

RAT: Do you really intend to speak to those weasels?

BADGER: If the situation warrants it. I can be quite aggressive at times. Don't let my age fool you.

MOLE: I never go in the Wild Wood. Place gives me the creeps. (*Shivers as if in fear.*) Sorry, Badger.

BADGER: No need to apologize. Although my home is in the Wild Wood, it's comfy and warm in winter and comfy and cool in

summer. I have no intention of moving. (*MUSIC CUE 2: "Mr. Toad."*)

TOAD'S VOICE: (*From OFFSTAGE LEFT. Sings.*)

The world has had many great heroes,
The history books have all showed.
But never a name to go down in fame
Can compare to that Mr. Toad! (*MUSIC continues under dialogue.*)

RAT/BADGER/MOLE: (*Speak.*) It's Toad! (*TOAD ENTERS LEFT and moves DOWN CENTER. He continues to sing and pose in the manner of a ham actor, first gesturing RIGHT then LEFT.*)

RAT: (*Speaks.*) I went down to Toad Hall, Toad. But you weren't home.

TOAD: (*Ignoring RAT, sings.*) The cleverest scholars at Oxford
Know all that there is to be knowned.
But they, none of them, know one half as much
As intelligent Mr. Toad!

I'm Toad, I'm Toad,
One of a kind, extremely unique.
I'm Toad, I'm Toad,
I boggle the mind whenever I speak.
I'm never among
Those holding their tongue,
Great gifts I've been bestowed.
The one, the only...Toad! (*MUSIC continues under dialogue.*)

RAT/BADGER/MOLE: (*Disapproving. Speak.*) Hmmmmm.

TOAD: (*Speaks.*) Do you like it, Badger? I wrote it myself, of course.

RAT/BADGER/MOLE: (*Speak.*) Of course.

BADGER: (*Speaks.*) A bit conceited, don't you think?

TOAD: (*Speaks.*) Conceited? I'm the least conceited person I know.
(*Ignores BADGER. Sings.*)

The queen and her ladies-in-waiting
All sat at the window and sewed.
The queen cried out, "Look! Who's that handsome man?"
They answered in unison, "It's Mr. Toad!" (*MUSIC OUT.*)

RAT/BADGER/MOLE: Hmmmmm.

TOAD: There are several more verses.

BADGER: I'm sure there are. Some other time perhaps.

TOAD: Ah, but you don't know what you're missing.

BADGER: I think I do.

MOLE: We're going on a picnic. Ratty packed a marvelous lunch.

RAT: Do join us.

TOAD: I am a bit hungry.

RAT: We've rented a boat.

TOAD: A picnic in a boat? How distasteful. What if the boat capsized and one fell into the water?

BADGER: You ought to know.

TOAD: I've quite finished with boats. Childish nonsense. Silly amusement. I've given that up long ago. I have a new craze.

BADGER: (*Stern.*) Toad, must I remind you of your brightly-painted wagon? The one you smashed. That, too, was a new craze.

TOAD: Pish-posh. I have finally discovered what I'm meant for.

MOLE: What's that, Toad?

HOUSEKEEPER: (*ENTERS LEFT.*) Beg pardon, sir, but there's a salesman at the hall. Says you're expecting him.

TOAD: I am? I wonder who he could be? I have such a bad memory.

HOUSEKEEPER: He's brought a motorcar with him. A handsome vehicle it is, too. Red, trimmed in silver.

TOAD: (*Elated, dances about.*) It's here! It's here! My new motorcar. Red's my favorite color. (*OTHERS are shocked.*)

BADGER: Toad, you don't mean motoring is your new craze?

TOAD: The only way to travel.

MOLE: But it's dangerous.

HOUSEKEEPER: What shall I tell the salesman, sir?

RAT: What about our picnic?

TOAD: We'll have the picnic at Toad Hall. No gentleman would dine in a boat on my river.

RAT/BADGER/MOLE: It's everybody's river.

TOAD: (*To HOUSEKEEPER.*) Take the picnic basket and tell the salesman I'll be there in a moment or two.

HOUSEKEEPER: Yes, sir. (*She takes the picnic basket and EXITS LEFT.*)

BADGER: (*Frowns.*) Motoring in a motorcar.

MOLE: We much preferred your rollerskating craze.

TOAD: *(Skips about, completely enthralled by his new craze.)*
Glorious, stirring sight! The poetry of motion.

MOLE: Toad, don't be a fool.

TOAD: What dust clouds shall spring up behind me as I speed on my reckless way.

RAT: Toad, you must stop this. You really must.

TOAD: Think of all the hay wagons I shall fling carelessly into the ditch as I drive my marvelous new motorcar. *(He pretends to hold the wheel of a car as he begins to EXIT LEFT.)* Out of the way, roadhogs! Here comes Toad! King of the road! *(Pretends to honk a car horn.)* Honk, honk. Honk, honk. *(He's OUT. The OTHERS stare after him.)*

RAT: He's off again.

MOLE: What are we going to do with him?

BADGER: I'm afraid there's nothing to be done. His latest craze will simply have to wear itself out. In the meantime, I suggest we have our lunch. *(They EXIT LEFT after TOAD.)*

End of Scene One

Scene Two

SETTING: The Wild Wood. Night.

LIGHTS DIM UP SLOWLY, revealing a shadowy view. **MUSIC CUE 2a:** "Come to the Wood—Reprise." As the **MUSIC** continues under, we hear **STRANGE, EERIE SOUNDS**. **WEASELS ENTER**, tiptoeing **IN** sneakily.

WEASELS: *(Sing.)*

Come to the wood if you are dauntless and daring.
Come if you should enjoy some haunting and scaring.
We've got lots to go 'round,
With sneaky plots to confound.

Here in the dark, a little growl,
A grunt or a bark.

CHIEF WEASEL: *(Sings.)*

Or some nasty shrieking
Wreak havoc all night.

FIRST WEASEL: *(Sings.)* Delight in the fright!

WEASELS: (*Sing.*) We love to make 'em squirm.
They have the backbone of a worm.
We watch them turn
Their tails and run.
It's such a hoot,
It's so much fun!

HALF OF WEASELS: (*Sing.*) Come to the wood.

SECOND HALF OF WEASELS: (*Sing.*) Come to the wood.

ALL: (*Sing.*) After the sun's been banished.

HALF OF WEASELS: (*Sing.*) Come to the wood.

SECOND HALF OF WEASELS: (*Sing.*) Come to the wood.

ALL: (*Sing.*) Things aren't exactly what they seem.

HALF OF WEASELS: (*Sing.*) Come to the wood.

SECOND HALF OF WEASELS: (*Sing.*) Come to the wood.

ALL: (*Sing.*) After the moon has vanished.

It's like a bad dream, you'll wake with a scream.

A fun neighborhood... come to the wood. (*MUSIC OUT. FIELD MICE scurry IN from RIGHT. They're frightened. As they speak, WEASELS tiptoe in the background, paws held high.*)

FIELD MOUSE 1: (*Worried. Speaks.*) Now we've done it. Out at night in the Wild Wood...

FIELD MOUSE 2: (*Reacts to WEASEL SOUND.*) What was that?

FIELD MOUSE 1: What was what? (*Another WEASEL SOUND.*)

FIELD MOUSE 2: That.

FIELD MOUSE 1: Let's pretend we didn't hear anything.

FIELD MOUSE 2: That won't be easy.

FIELD MOUSE 1: What was that?

FIELD MOUSE 2: What was what?

FIELD MOUSE 1: I thought I saw something.

FIELD MOUSE 2: Let's get out of here.

FIELD MOUSE 1: Let's. (*They take hands and move LEFT as the CHIEF WEASEL moves toward DOWNSTAGE LEFT and stops them.*)

CHIEF WEASEL: Good evening, little Field Mice. Out for a stroll, are we? (*The FIELD MICE gasp and move RIGHT, only to be stopped by the FIRST WEASEL, who has moved DOWNSTAGE RIGHT toward them. [NOTE: The WEASELS are dressed like*

common thugs. Turtleneck sweaters, caps, black masks over eyes, blackjacks hanging out of pockets.])

FIRST WEASEL: I say we give them a bite. Give them a nip. Teach them who's boss here in the Wild Wood. *(WEASEL laughter.)*

FIELD MICE: Oh! Oh! *(They move for UPSTAGE, only to be met by OTHER WEASELS who advance on them in menacing fashion.)*

SECOND WEASEL: Weren't planning to run away, were you? That ain't sociable.

THIRD WEASEL: No, it ain't. *(WEASEL laughter.)*

FIELD MOUSE 1: *(Summoning courage.)* If you harm us in any way, you'll have to answer to Badger. *(WEASELS pull back. The name of BADGER has an effect on them.)*

THIRD WEASEL: Badger?

FOURTH WEASEL: We don't want no trouble from him.

CHIEF WEASEL: Shut your yap.

FOURTH WEASEL: What'd I say?

CHIEF WEASEL: Come here.

FOURTH WEASEL: *(Guardedly crosses to CHIEF WEASEL who takes FOURTH WEASEL'S cap off and whacks him on the head with it.)* Ow!

CHIEF WEASEL: Never question authority. Got that?

FOURTH WEASEL: Yeah, yeah, whatever you say, Chief Weasel. You're the boss. *(Puts on his cap. FIELD MICE take advantage of the distraction and run OFF RIGHT.)*

FIRST WEASEL: Hey! They're getting away. *(WEASELS start after the FIELD MICE.)*

CHIEF WEASEL: Let them go. Wasting time on field mice ain't dignified.

SECOND WEASEL: Since when?

THIRD WEASEL: Since they said they'd tell Badger on us.

CHIEF WEASEL: You.

THIRD WEASEL: *(Points to himself.)* Me?

CHIEF WEASEL: Come here.

THIRD WEASEL: *(Warily steps to CHIEF WEASEL, who takes off THIRD WEASEL'S cap and whacks him with it three times.)* Ow! Ow! Ow! *(CHIEF WEASEL returns the cap. THIRD WEASEL puts it on.)*

CHIEF WEASEL: I'll deal with Badger when the time is right.

FOURTH WEASEL: When will that be? (*CHIEF WEASEL shoots him a dirty look.*) I know, I know. (*He takes off his cap and whacks himself several times with it. Puts cap on his head.*)

CHIEF WEASEL: (*Gestures to ALL.*) Gather round. (*WEASELS surround CHIEF WEASEL.*) We have to be careful with Badger. He's well respected. And he's wise. Besides, it's that dumb Toad we're after. Never forget it.

WEASELS: Never.

CHIEF WEASEL: Why should a fool like Toad live in that great manor house? We're smarter than he is. At least I am.

WEASELS: Right.

CHIEF WEASEL: He don't appreciate what he's got.

FIRST WEASEL: No, but we do. (*WEASEL laughter. MUSIC CUE 3: "The Good Life."*)

CHIEF WEASEL: (*Speaks.*) One day I'm going to sit in his chair and put my feet up on his table. And you chaps will be with me. (*Sings.*) I'll soil his clean, white linen,
Dabbing a drip of Hollandaise sauce
That's dropped upon my chin,
Slopping a boat of gravy about his fancy porcelain.

I'll soak in his regal bathtub,
Leaving a ring of weasely grime
Around its fancy rim,
Wearing his fav'rite slippers and robe, pretending to be him.

I'll drink his imported brandy,
And chase it with French champagne.
I'll eat caviar like candy,
Then pour everything that's not to my liking down his gilded drain.

It's the good life, boys.
Time we had a chance to taste
The good life, boys.
All of that finery going to waste.
A little mistake, a moment of haste,
And we will all be graced with the good life. (*MUSIC continues under dialogue.*)

WEASELS: (*Ad lib.*) Yeah, why should he have so many nice things? We deserve it more than he does. The slimey little miser!

FIRST WEASEL: (*Sings.*) I'll sleep in his satin bed-sheets,
Sipping my morning coffee in bed
Until the crack of noon,
Slurping the stuff that spills in the saucer with his silver spoon.

SECOND WEASEL: (*Sings.*) I'll go through his drawers and closet
And wear what I fancy best.
The rest I will just deposit
In messy old piles, all over the floor whenever I get dressed.

ALL: (*Sing.*) It's the good life, boys.
All the things that we deserve.
The good life, boys.
Staff o' domestics all ready to serve
A fine canapé, a yummy hors d'oeuvre.
We'll taste the vim and verve of the good life. (*MUSIC OUT.*)

CHIEF WEASEL: One of these days Toad will be history. He's too stupid to last much longer. When that happens, we'll move in. (*WEASEL laughter. As the LIGHTS FADE, the WEASELS slink OFF RIGHT.*)

End of Scene Two

Scene Three

SETTING: A country lane [FORESTAGE].

LIGHTS UP: MUSIC CUE 4: "A Danger to Society." NEIGHBOR 1 AND NEIGHBOR 2, farming types, ENTER FORESTAGE from DOWN RIGHT. They are wearing shawls and carrying baskets.

NEIGHBOR 1: (*Sings.*) It's a public scandal.
Everyone for miles around is talking about him.
He's so hard to handle.
He's a threat to everybody's property, a threat to life and limb.

NEIGHBOR 2: (*Speaks.*) I always liked Mr. Toad, but this time he's gone too far.
(*Sings.*) He scares my chickens, they won't lay an egg.

NEIGHBOR 1: (*Sings.*) He spooked my horses, one broke her leg.

NEIGHBOR 2: (*Sings.*) My rooster crows at the oddest hour.

NEIGHBOR 1: (*Sings.*) I milk my cow and the milk comes out sour.
(*MUSIC continues under dialogue.*)

NEIGHBOR 3: (*ENTERS FORESTAGE DOWN LEFT. Speaks.*)
Good morning, ladies. Have you heard the latest? (*They meet CENTER.*)

End of Script Sample

PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES

ACT ONE

BROUGHT ON, Scene One: Spyglass (MOLE); picnic basket (RAT); cane (BADGER).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Two: Blackjack, cap, sweater, mask (WEASELS).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Three: Basket, shawl (NEIGHBORS).

ON STAGE, Scene Four: Large wicker chair.

BROUGHT ON, Scene Four: Pocket watch (MOLE); long coat, gauntlet gloves, goggles, motoring cap, scarf (TOAD).

ON STAGE, Scene Six: Chair, small table with circular top.

BROUGHT ON, Scene Six: Blanket (TOAD); apron, cap, thermometer (NURSE); tray with bowl and sandwich (HOUSEKEEPER).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Seven: Sign reading "Red Lion Inn" (CHIEF WEASEL); apron (INN OWNER).

ON STAGE, Scene Eight: Optional desk, optional stool, optional benches.

BROUGHT ON, Scene Eight: Ledger and quill (CLERK); white wig or white handkerchief, black robe, papers, gavel (JUDGE); nooses (WEASELS).

ACT TWO

ON STAGE, Scene One: Small table and chair.

BROUGHT ON, Scene One: Wide belt with ring of dangling keys (JAILER'S WIFE); tray with mug and plate (POLLY); prison jacket, wallet with bills, handkerchief (TOAD); bundle with long dress, shawl, bonnet, apron, rope (WASHERWOMAN).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Two: Pole, small laundry tub, scrub board, laundry, optional small stool (BARGEWOMAN).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Three: Large envelope (CLERK); helmets, rifles (FOXES).

ON STAGE, Scene Four: Table, stools, chairs.

BROUGHT ON, Scene Four: Broom, lantern (BADGER); mop (MOLE); broom (RAT); broom/mop (TOAD).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Five: Mugs (WEASELS); pitcher (HOUSEKEEPER).

BROUGHT ON, Scene Six: Trays, waiters' towels (WEASELS); golf ball, golf club (TOAD); golf bag (CHIEF WEASEL).

SOUND

Car approaching, car horn, car smashup, car starting up.

CASTING

Most roles can be played either female or male. This includes MOLE and RAT. The following roles, if possible, should be portrayed by male actors: TOAD, BADGER, CHIEF WEASEL, BERTIE, JUDGE, POLICEMAN.

For a larger cast, add more FIELD MICE and WEASELS. For a smaller cast, double, even triple some roles. For example, NEIGHBOR 1 might also portray PRISON WARDEN'S WIFE, NEIGHBOR 2 could double as WASHERWOMAN, NEIGHBOR 3 as BARGEWOMAN. SALESPERSON could also be the CLERK or another WEASEL. BERTIE and POLICEMAN could double as SENTRIES, etc. A line change here and there is all that's required.

MISCELLANEOUS

The basic set is the open stage with the few stage props carried on and off as required. However, you may wish to have a backdrop. This can be a simple rural scene. The actual time of the play is about 1905 to 1915, but don't let that pin you down.

In costuming, just about any period works and periods can be mixed together. TOAD, BADGER, RAT and MOLE are dressed as human beings, but they should have animal characteristics. Whiskers for RAT, maybe dark glasses for MOLE, etc. TOAD might wear a bathing cap with large bug eyes atop. Much of the fun is making the animals "human-like."

The blackjacks the WEASELS have need be nothing more than stuffed black socks. If you don't want to have the WEASELS use real masks, simply paint on a black mask, which will give the creatures a raccoon effect.

If tying up WASHERWOMAN with the rope presents a problem, simply tie her hands behind her back. In the Red Lion Inn scene, the front of the motorcar might edge into sight. TOAD will then, supposedly, back it off. Or you might go all the way and have the complete car appear (a cutout). TOAD will pretend to get behind the wheel and the car will back OFFSTAGE [pulled by unseen STAGEHANDS].

The play is episodic, but there should be no breaks. Once the play begins, it should zip right along, with the pause between scenes as brief as possible. If you have the resources, LIGHTING can play a big factor in making the play visually interesting; for example, use STROBE LIGHTS when the WEASELS are attacked, DARK GREEN LIGHTING for the Wild Wood and DIM LIGHTING for the prison cell, etc.

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