



Preview Script

Animal Ark

A one act musical for schools

by Les Emmans

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NOTE : This is a preview version, and does not contain the full script.

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Animal Ark

Synopsis

The government of a country, possibly in Africa, has decided to build a hydroelectric dam to provide electric power. The idea is to build an enormous concrete dam across a river valley so that the water builds up to a high level behind it. The water is then allowed to flow through giant pipes and turn the blades of turbines which in turn drive electric generators.

Unfortunately, flooding the valley means that the people and animals living there must be moved to a new home. Great care is taken to move out the people and also round up all the animals living there.

However, some animals manage to avoid being taken and are left behind when the valley is flooded. As the waters begin to rise they realise that they are trapped and must find a way to escape. They decide to build a raft which they call 'Animal Ark', after a story they heard humans tell about a man called Noah, who built an 'ark' to save people and animals from a great flood.

They face various problems, including sabotage by Hyena, but eventually sail away in their ark and arrive safely on dry land.

Cast

The Council of Ministers (*Chorus*)
Minister of State (*Chorus and dialogue*)
Minister of Power (*Chorus and dialogue*)
Opposition Leader (*Chorus and dialogue*)
Lion (*Song and dialogue*)
Hyena (*Song and dialogue*)
Monkey (*Spoken*)
Elephant (*Spoken*)
Rhino (*Spoken*)
Animal 1 (*Spoken*)
Animal 2 (*Spoken*)
Animal 3 (*Spoken*)
Animal 4 (*Spoken*)
Chorus of animals

Note: The actors playing Animals 1, 2, 3 and 4 may choose their animal.

The First Production

Animal Ark was written as the result of a "Composer in Residence" project. The children concerned researched the background of the given story, and with the help of the composer, planned lyrics, dialogue and music. Their efforts were brought together by Les Emmans into the present format.

The children made animal masks and suitable costumes and also constructed an ark, waves, flames etc out of cardboard boxes. A separate chorus and instrumental group provided the music while a cast acted out the story.

Lyric Sheets

The lyrics set out on pages 7, 8 and 9 may be copied by schools that provide full-time education to students aged 18 or below. This concession does not apply to any other page.

ANIMAL ARK

Scene 1 - A Government Office

The Council of Ministers is holding a meeting.

MUSIC #1 – ‘WE NEED A DAM’

Chorus *"We need a dam", said the Minister of Power.
"Our energy resources are getting weak and lower".
"We must flood the valley" said the Minister of State.
"We need to build a dam at a very early date".
"But what about the people" said an opposition voice.
"We'll have them all removed, we haven't got a choice".
"And what about the animals" shouted out another".
"We'll shift the ones we can, the rest, we shouldn't bother!"*

Min of State The people are complaining that their electricity goes off far too often.

Min of Power Well, the reason for that is we just do not have enough power stations to do the job. The only way is to build a hydroelectric dam, and get it done very quickly.

Min of State We know that to do this we will have to move the people and animals from the valley, we have no choice. We will try to make sure that no-one is left behind, and will provide them with good new homes away from the valley.

Opp'n Leader What if they don't want go, or if some of the animals evade capture?

Min of Power We will do our best for them, but I am afraid that some may suffer. It can't be avoided.

Opp'n Leader That's not good enough. I demand that you try and find another way to solve our problems.

Min of State We have given the matter careful thought, but I am afraid there is no other way. Now, we must take a vote. Those in favour? (*Several hands go up*) Those against? (*One or two hands go up*). That's settled then, we go ahead with the dam.

MUSIC #2 – ‘WE’RE GOING TO BUILD A DAM’

Chorus *We're going to build a dam. and ev'ry one's agreed
That hydro-electric power is exactly what we need.*

Scene 2 - The Valley

The lion enters, followed by several other animals.

MUSIC #3 – ‘I STALK AND I PROWL’

Lion *I stalk and I prowl as I hunt my prey.
I find my food in the light of the day.
I run and I jump and I pounce to kill my food for the day, as a lion will.
I am famous for my speed, as the antelopes take heed.
My menu's always meat. That is all that I can eat.*

Animal 1 Excuse me, Mr Lion, but have you noticed that we seem to be surrounded by water, and its getting closer every day?

Lion Yes, of course I have. I expect its the heavy rains we've been having recently.

Animal 2 No it isn't. Its those horrible humans who have been building that big wall. The water can't get past it, so its getting deeper here all the time.

Animal 3 I heard them say that they would flood the valley.

Animal 1 Yes, and have you noticed that all the humans have left and many of the animals have been taken away in those big lorries.

Animal 2 I saw them, but they couldn't catch me, I'm far too fast for them!

Animal 3 That's all very well, but what shall we do if the water keeps on rising?

MUSIC #4 – ‘THE WATER IS RISING’

Chorus *The water is rising, what on earth shall we do?
We'll drown if we stay here, but we've nowhere to go.
Nowhere to go.*

MUSIC #5 – ‘WHAT CAN THEY DO?’

Chorus *The wise old tiger is getting very worried.
His wise old brow is getting hot and florid.
The waters seem to rise ev'ry second of each day.
But what can they do to get away?*

*The kind old monkey then called them to a meeting.
We stand a chance! My idea will take some beating!
We'll build ourselves a raft in a weekend and a day.
Then all climb aboard and sail a-way.*

Monkey I've seen humans build things they call "rafts" which float on the water and carry them along. We could build something like that ourselves.

Animal 1 Don't be silly! Animals don't build things.

Animal 2 Some of us do! We build shelters, and the birds build nests. It shouldn't be too difficult.

Animal 3 We can collect logs from under the trees and tie them together with creepers.

Monkey Now that's more like it. Come on everybody , let's get to work!

Animal 2 Humans give names to the things they sail on the water. We should give our raft a name.

Monkey Yes! Good idea. I've listened outside that building some of the humans go into on Sundays, and I once heard a story being told about a human who built a thing called an ‘ark’, which floated on the water and carried the people and animals to safety when the floods came. His name was ‘Noah’ and they called his ark ‘Noah's Ark’.

Animal 3 And we can call our raft ‘Animal Ark’.

All Yes, yes, the very thing!

Monkey Come on, let's not waste any more time. Get working everybody.

MUSIC #6 – ‘WE’RE GOING TO BUILD AN ARK’

Chorus *We're going to build an ark.
We're going to build an ark.
The water's coming to drown us,
So we're going to build an ark.*

*We're going to build a boat,
We're going to build a boat.
We'll launch it on the water
And we're sure that it will float.*

*We're going to build a raft,
We'll build it strong and stout.
We'll bind it tight together
And we'll keep the water out.*

*We're going to build an ark.
We're going to build an ark.
The water's coming to drown us,
So we're going to build an ark.*

The animals collect materials together and get on with building the ark as the song is sung. If more time is needed, repeat the accompaniment. As the animals complete the work and stand back to admire it, the hyena arrives.

Hyena It looks as if you've been busy!
Monkey Yes, and its no thanks to you!
Hyena I had business to attend to, but I'm sure you'll let me join you when you sail away on that thing.
Animal 1 You must be joking! You've done nothing to help us, so why should we help you?
Animal 2 Anyway, we don't like you, or your ways, taking other animal's food and slinking around looking for trouble.
Animal 3 We just don't want you with us. Go away.
Elephant But we can't just leave him here to drown.
Animal 1 Don't worry about him. You can be sure he'll get away safely.
Animal 2 We know all about you, Hyena, and we just don't trust you with us, so go away!
All Yes, go away!

Hyena slinks away.

Monkey I don't know about you lot, but I feel pretty tired now after our hard work. Let's get some sleep, and then we can set sail in the morning. Rhino! You'd better take first guard duty, and then I'll take over later.
Rhino Yes, monkey. You can rely on me!

They all settle down and soon fall asleep. Rhino keeps a lookout for a little while, but soon he/she is also asleep.

MUSIC #7 – 'SLEEPY MUSIC'

Hyena comes slinking on, and seeing them all asleep, starts to laugh softly to him/herself.

Hyena So they thought they could get rid of me, did they? Well I'll show them! I'll use this box of funny wooden sticks just like the humans do, and make fire. I'll burn their silly ark, then they can all swim for the shore, just the same as they expect me to do.

The Hyena sings, and while he sings he/she sets fire to the ark. When it starts to burn he rushes away, laughing to him/herself.

MUSIC #8 – 'HYENA'S SONG'

Hyena *Ha, ha, ha, ha, ho, ho, ho. I'm having the time of my life.
And when I've ruined their little plan,
Those builders of that ark will drown!
When the time is right I'll swim away
And find the rest of my clan.
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ho, ho, ho. I'm having the time of my life.*

Animal 1 *(Waking up)* I can smell burning. *(Seeing the ark burning, he/she calls out)* Fire! Fire! Quick, the Ark is on fire, do something!

Elephant quickly gets up, dips his trunk in the water and squirts out the fire.

... in this Preview Script, the remainder of the text has been deleted from here ...

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