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Family Plays

A*B*C*

(AMERICA BEFORE COLUMBUS)



Comedy/Drama with optional music

Book by Joseph Robinette

Music by Kate Waring

A*B*C*

(AMERICA BEFORE COLUMBUS)

*Comedy/Drama with optional music. Book by Joseph Robinette. Music by Kate Waring. 7 to 30m. and w., flexible. Actors may be children or adults or some of each. A commedia-like troupe shifts cubes to represent various scenes in A*B*C* (America Before Columbus), which can be presented as a musical or a nonmusical. The play begins with two children stepping across the frozen Bering Strait 20,000 years ago. We see the first Americans learn to survive, to hunt, to fish, to farm, to continue to progress until that day in 1492 when those strange sails appeared on the horizon. An outline of American prehistory, it is full of humor and action to keep young audiences entertained. Approximate running time: 30 to 35 minutes. Code: AF8.*

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www.FamilyPlays.com

ISBN-10 0-88680-212-7
ISBN-13 978-0-88680-212-7



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A*B*C

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(America Before Columbus)

A Play for Young People

by

JOSEPH ROBINETTE

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

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JOSEPH ROBINETTE

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A*B*C* (AMERICA BEFORE COLUMBUS)

ISBN: 978-0-88680-212-7

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author(s) of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author(s) *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author(s), if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
Family Plays of Woodstock, Illinois”

A*B*C*

(America Before Columbus)

Cast

Sam (or Sally), the stage manager

Asha, a young girl

Baloe, a young boy

Ensemble Chorus

The **Chorus** is flexible. As few as seven or as many as 30 may be used to enact the numerous characters and episodes in this one-hour presentation of the 20,000-year history of America before Columbus. The **Chorus** may be all male or all female or any combination thereof.

In the text, numbers are arbitrarily assigned to chorus members (Actor 1, Actor 2, etc.) merely as a suggested guide for dividing the dialogue among the Chorus Members. The director may reassign the speeches at his/her discretion. The numbers are not meant to be consistent throughout the play; that is, “Actor 1” in the first scene does not have to be the same performer as “Actor 1” in the next scene.

NOTES ON THE PLAY

Who discovered America? Why, Columbus, of course! But wait . . . weren't there people on the shore to greet him when he arrived? And what about all that evidence that other Europeans had reached America before Columbus?

*A*B*C**, by one of America's best-known authors of scripts for children's theatre, is cleverly written and arranged to entertain child audiences with humor and action while teaching them something about the prehistory of the continent. The performers may be children or adults, or some of each. With very little scenery (a few cubes or boxes), *A*B*C** is ideal for touring.

The author suggests simple basic costumes of modern casual attire—blue jeans, sweat shirts, T-shirts, sneakers. Additions to the basic costume can suggest the various characters and animals (ears and horns to symbolize a buffalo, for example). Other types of costumes may be used, but the author is opposed to dressing all the characters in stereotyped caveman or early Native American costumes. The play is symbolic, not realistic. The author adds:

"There are virtually no ground rules for the director in this 'open theatre' approach to a very unusual subject—the REAL discovery of America."

Joseph Robinette is Director of Children's Theatre at Glassboro, N. J., State College. The author of 38 produced plays, he received the 1976 Chorpenning Cup, awarded annually by the American Theatre Association to an outstanding nationally known writer of children's plays.

*A*B*C** was well tested before publication, with professional productions at the Barter Theatre, Abingdon, Va.; A Company of Players, Jacksonville, Fla.; and the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission which toured to 75 Baltimore area schools; and with non-professional productions at several high schools and colleges, including the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and Appleton, Wis., West High School. Here are some comments to use in your publicity releases:

"The play is working extremely well... Resident director Owen Phillips—who joined Barter way back in 1935—came to the play and left raving about it, stating that it is the best children's script he has seen produced at the Barter."—Ken Robins, Barter Theatre

"*A*B*C** appealed to me upon first reading because it not only was a fun script, but because it was a teaching tool as well... [It is] certainly a show which tours easily... I've always contended that the true test of a good children's show is its appeal to a wide range of ages & types & here *A*B*C** fills the (cont. on p. 40)

PRODUCTION NOTES

Properties

Clipboard—Sam

All the following props are loaded in boxes or trunks:

Large folded red cloth (molten lava)

Large white sheet (glacier)

Sandwiches

Animal skins

Fish

Bag or basket of grain

Spears

Pieces of fur cloth (buffalo hides)

Cornstalk

Raw vegetables (beans, squash, lettuce, etc.)

Tobacco leaf (or can of pipe tobacco)

Tobacco pipe

Flint and steel (rock and small piece of metal, with a concealed match)

Stone tool (a sharp-pointed stone, or papier mache tomahawk)

Several pots (of unbreakable material painted to look like clay, perhaps with pre-Columbian designs)

3 small pennants

1 large pennant

Large frame symbolizing a TV screen

Rice

Large hook (like a shepherd's crook)

Large blue cloth (flood)

Skeins of string (for weaving)

Large sheet of brown paper with primitive drawings

Paint brush

Several umbrellas

Map

Bow and arrow

Moccasins

Animal skin

} may be mimed

} for Mound Builders—
may be mimed

Costumes and Make-up

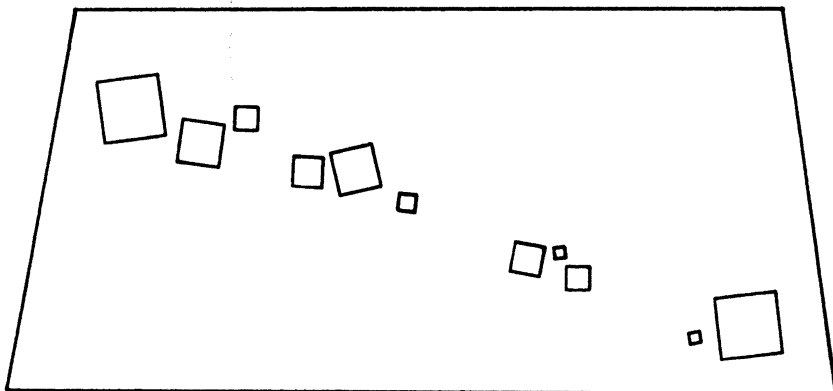
A simple basic costume, as suggested in the "Notes on the Play" (page 4), is recommended. The various characters and animals can be suggested with a simple addition—headpiece, cape, shawl, coat, fur cloth, animal ears, and so on. The basic make-up should also be simple. Additional make-up, such as animal whiskers, large eyes, etc., may be added to symbolize a certain animal or type of person. However, the play must not stop or slow down for costume or make-up changes. Posture, gesture, and pantomime can be as effective as costume and make-up for indicating character, including animals.

Special Effects

No special lighting or sound effects are called for, although the director is at liberty to use whatever technical equipment is available. Lighting and background music fitting the mood of each scene are possibilities as long as they do not take focus away from the actors. To keep young audiences entertained, the play must be lively and fast-moving.

The dances can be improvised—perhaps spread-eagle arms flying through the clouds for the eagle dance, corn stalks rising out of the ground (actors stooping and then rising, and then raising their arms as the leaves grow) for the corn dance, and stomping, running, and hopping with arms thrusting heavenward for the rain dance. Children are especially adept at improvising dances of this type.

Floor Plan



Several cubes of varying sizes scattered about the stage provide the only set pieces needed. These should be sturdy enough to support actors standing on them, yet light enough to move around and stack easily. One side of at least some of the cubes should be open so that they can serve as caves.

If the play is presented in a room or out of doors, several folding screens may be placed upstage so that actors not appearing in a scene may disappear behind them. Actors can also form a live backdrop by standing in a line upstage with their backs to the audience, turning in whenever they appear in a scene. On a proscenium stage, actors may, of course, exit into the wings.

Comments—for use in your publicity releases (continued from page 4)

bill. Very small children may not have fully grasped the history/plot of the show, but the quick action & bright colors kept them with us. Middle graders... enjoyed the crazy puns, the silly historical/hysterical suggestions of the cast members... & certainly the show's quick pace kept their interest. And...our largely adult audience let down those 'adult defenses' & laughed good & heartily at the humor they found at every turn...I was so very pleased with the show—the script, the performances, the company, the applause.”—Sue Molden, Appleton H. S. West

“Students and teachers alike are enthusiastic about A*B*C*.”—Jo Anne M. Uzel, Theatre Specialist, Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

“Always exciting, often moving. The adults enjoyed it as much as the children —the show had something for everyone. A totally unique script that kept the actors enthusiastic from opening rehearsal to final curtain.”—Rita Keller, Director, Delaware County Community College

“The UW-Whitewater Commedia Players and I are enjoying the marvelous opportunities which A*B*C* provides for actors to adapt the script to their talents. [My actors'] ages range from fifteen to twenty-six... Thank you for a script which meets our needs for theatre-in-the-park.”—Dr. Fannie E. Hicklin, Professor of Theatre, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

A*B*C*

(America Before Columbus)

[Several cubes of various dimensions stretch from Up Right to Down Left. The cubes will be used in many combinations throughout the play to become such diverse locales as the home of the cliff-dwellers, mounds of the Mound Builders, and, at the beginning, as the Bering Strait. Several folding screens are located upstage. When the actors are not part of the action, they will go behind the screens, although the director may wish to simply suggest exits by having actors turn away from the action and stand upstage.]

AT RISE: the houselights dim to half as a spot or "special" comes up Down Right. Stepping into the light is SAM (or SALLY) the Stage Manager. He is holding a clipboard and may be wearing a set of headphones. Although a bit nervous, he is in control!

SAM. Good morning (afternoon or evening). Welcome to our play. My name is Sam (Sally). I'm the Stage Manager. Most of you probably don't know what a stage manager does. Well, for one thing he starts the play. He tells the actors when to go on stage. He tells the lighting people which lights to turn on and off. *[He gives hand signals; the spotlight obeys]* If an actor is nervous and wonders what comes next, he goes to the Stage Manager and whispers— *[very loud]* "What comes next!?" Yes, the Stage Manager has lots of duties, but there's one job he doesn't like to do. And that's the one I'm doing right now—talking to you. Oh, don't get me wrong. I like *talking* to you. It's the *reason* I'm talking to you that I don't like. You see, if everything were ready, I wouldn't even be out here right now. I'd be backstage saying to the actors—"Places, please." That means get ready for the show. So, why am I not backstage saying, "Places, please"? I'll tell you. The actors aren't here yet. Oh, they're on their way. But until they arrive, who has to keep things going so you don't get bored? Me, good old Sam, the Stage Manager. Well, let me start by telling you a little about today's play. It's all about the discovery of America. *[Moving into the stage area as the stage lights come up to half]* You'll have to use your imagination quite a bit this morning— *[wryly]* especially if the actors don't get here. *[He goes to the cubes (see Floor Plan, p. 40)]* First of all, these boxes aren't just boxes. They'll be mountains, caves, hiding places and lots of other—

[From the rear and/or sides of the auditorium or from backstage, the ACTORS appear and yell, "We're here!"] Hello! *[Pleasantly, with a touch of sarcasm]* We're so glad you could come.

[The ACTORS rush down the aisles. They are carrying trunks and boxes loaded with props and costume pieces, if desired; however, the boxes and trunks may already be onstage. The ACTORS speak ad lib to the audience:]

ACTORS. Sorry we're late. / We lost our road map. / Got held up by the train. / The boys are such slow-pokes. / It took the girls an hour to get ready. / We'll just be a minute. / Bear with us. / This is so embarrassing. *[Etc., ad lib, as they ascend the stage. One ACTOR crosses to Sam]*

ACTOR. Are you the Stage Manager?

SAM Yes, my name's Sam. *[All greet him as they hurriedly don costume pieces]* Please hurry now. We're late already.

ACTORS. Okay, okay. / We're almost ready. Etc.

SAM. All set?

ACTORS. Yeah. / We're set. Etc.

SAM Places, please. Begin the show!

[The house lights go out as the stage lights come up full. SAM exits Down Right. ACTORS 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 step forward as each very dramatically delivers his/her line (numbers are assigned to the actors for convenience. Each director may re-assign the numbers to fit his/her cast):]

ACTOR 1. Hello, allow me to introduce myself. I am Christopher Columbus.

ACTOR 2. And I am Queen Isabella of Spain.

ACTOR 3. I am the captain of the great ship Pinta.

ACTOR 4. And I'm a no-good sailor on the Santa Maria.

ACTOR 5. I am the first Indian to greet Christopher Columbus when he discovers—

SAM *[Entering]* Wait a minute—wait a minute—cut— *[To the audience]* "Cut" means stop. *[To the actors]* I'm sorry, but I thought this play was about the discovery of America.

ACTOR 1. It is. *[Dramatically]* I am Christopher Columbus.

ACTOR 2. I'm Queen Isabella.

ACTOR 4. I'm a no-good sailor on the Santa—

SAM. Yes, yes, I know. But the *real* discovery of America—the one we're set up for—began a long time before Christopher Columbus.

ACTOR 3. It did?

ACTOR 1. How long before Christopher Columbus?

SAM. About 20,000 years before.

ACTORS. *[In unison]* Twenty-thou—!

ACTOR 3. We can't do a 20,000-year play in one hour.

SAM. You can't do *everything* that happened, but you can act out a few of the interesting things.

ACTORS. *[Not sure]* I don't know about this. / This isn't what we planned at all. / I don't think we can do it. Etc.

ACTOR 5. Sam, we don't even know about America before Columbus. *[The others agree]*

SAM. Well, the audience probably doesn't either. And that seems to me a pretty good reason for doing it.

ACTOR 2. He may be right.

ACTOR 1. Let's talk about it.

ACTOR 3. Excuse us, please. *[They huddle]*

SAM. *[Wearily]* The job of a Stage Manager is no bowl of M and M's I tell you. *[The ACTORS break the huddle]*

ACTOR 1. Sam, we agree it might be fun to do a play about the real discovery of America, but there's one problem.

SAM. What's that?

ACTOR 1. No play.

SAM. Then we'll improvise. *[To the audience]* "Improvise" means we'll make it up as we go along.

ACTOR 5. But how?

SAM. *[Indicating the clipboard]* I have some notes here that may help.

ACTOR 3. Notes?

SAM. Sure, when I heard you were doing a play about America, I studied up on the subject and made some notes.

ACTOR 4. Great! Where do we start?

SAM. How about—at the beginning?

ACTOR 2. Terrific idea. Why didn't I think of that?

SAM. Okay, all set? Now, according to my notes, there was a time—many years ago when—

ACTOR 4. Shucks.

ACTOR 5. What's wrong?

ACTOR 4. I wanted to be—a no-good sailor on the Santa Maria.

SAM. In the play we're going to improvise, you'll get to act many parts—be many people.

ACTOR 4. Yeah?

SAM. Good people, not-so-good people, even animals.

ACTOR 4. Okay, but I want to be at least one not-so-good person.

SAM. I guarantee it. Now, as I was saying—there was a time, many years ago, when ice and snow covered much of America. And nobody—nothing else—was here.

ACTOR 3. Not even a McDonald's?

ACTOR 2. *[Gouging him]* Shhh!

SAM. Nothing at all. Just snow— *[The ACTORS mime falling snow with their fingers]* And ice— *[The ACTORS are “frozen”]* And chilling winds— *[They make sounds of wind]*

ACTOR 1. Was there anybody anywhere in the world?

SAM. Oh, yes. There were some people in Asia.

ACTOR 5. Asia? Is that close to Philadelphia? *[NOTE: Any city or town may be substituted]*

SAM. Asia is another country. To the northwest, it's next to America. The Asians were the first people to come to this country.

ACTOR 5. How did they get here?

ACTOR 2. In airplanes, silly.

ACTOR 3. Airplanes? Twenty thousand years ago?

ACTOR 2. Yeah. I guess that was a little before airplanes. How about . . . trains?

ACTOR 1. She's hopeless. They came in . . . boats?

SAM. Nope.

ACTOR 3. They swam?

SAM. They walked.

ACTOR 5. From Asia? You can't walk to America from Asia.

SAM. You can't today. But you could then.

ACTOR 5. How?

SAM. By crossing the Bering Strait.

ACTOR 2. What's the Bering Strait?

SAM. Today it's water. But back then it was a little piece of land—actually more like a path of ice—that connected Asia and Alaska.

ACTOR 1. Alaska? You mean the state—Alaska?

SAM. Exactly. Of course it wasn't a state then. There were no states. Or America. It was just—this land.

ACTOR 2. What should we call it then?

ACTOR 4. How about Acirema?

ALL. Acirema?

ACTOR 4. That's America spelled backwards.

ALL. *[Giving him the business]* Aw, go on. / That's ridiculous. Etc.

ACTOR 5. Let's call it North Mexico. *[ALL stare at him]* Well, we are—north—of Mexico. Forget it.

ACTOR 1. How about East Asia.

ACTOR 3. But we're west of Asia.

ACTOR 1. No, we're not. We're—

ACTOR 5. Wait a minute. Why not the new—the new—

ACTOR 1. Earth? Uh, country, uh, world. That's it—the new world. *[ALL think about it]*

ALL. Not bad. / Sounds good. Etc.

SAM. *[Making a note on his clipboard]* Very well. The “new world” it is. Now let's get started. Okay? Everybody, go to Asia. It's offstage up there. Now when you get to Asia pretend to be an animal.

ACTOR 2. An animal?

ACTOR 4. Why should we be animals?

SAM. Because animals came to the new world before people did.

ACTOR 4. Okay, all you Asian animals—let's go! *[They exit upstage, ad-libbing the names of animals they wish to be. ACTOR 3 calls from offstage]*

ACTOR 3. What kind of animals were there, Sam?

SAM. According to my notes there were lots of different kinds. *[A drum cadence is heard offstage as the “ANIMALS” begin to cross Down Left and exit as they are announced]* Trumpeting elephants . . . fierce wolves . . . roaming buffaloes . . . proud peacocks . . . trotting camels . . . graceful tigers . . . galloping horses. *[The ANIMALS are gone]* We don't know who the first people to come here were, but it's almost certain that they were following the—

[A girl, ASHA—pronounced AH-shah—and a boy, BALOE—pronounced BAY-low—enter hurriedly]

ASHA. Come, Baloe, we must catch at least one of the animals so it can take us back home.

BALOE. Slow down, Asha. We'll never catch them. They are too fast and too clever for us. We've chased them much too long already. That's why we are lost.

ASHA. Oh, Baloe. We are not lost. Home is right over there.

BALOE. No. It's in that direction.

ASHA. Are you sure?

BALOE. Yes. I mean—I think so. I mean—I don't know.

ASHA. Very well, silly. We'll go *my way*. [*They begin to walk*] Now there was this little strip of land. All we have to do is to retrace our steps and— [*They exit in different direction from which they came*]

SAM. Well, as you can see, those two children aren't going back the way they came. They *are* lost. Soon they'll find out that things are different here than back home in Asia. In the early days, Mother Nature was pretty ferocious here in the new world. There were volcanoes! [*Several ACTORS enter and create a "cone" with their outstretched arms. They make rumbling noises as they hoist aloft another ACTOR who holds a large folded red cloth. ASHA and BALOE enter and watch spellbound. The ACTOR leaps to the floor, unfurling the cloth which symbolizes molten lava. The others take hold of the "lava" and rush precariously close to ASHA and BALOE, who are frightened and jump out of the way. The "volcano" exits as the noise reaches a crescendo and subsides*] Glaciers! [*Two other ACTORS, holding a large white sheet, enter and chase ASHA and BALOE across the stage*] Icy glaciers! [*ASHA and BALOE stack up several cubes and crouch beneath them as the "glacier" exits*] Earthquakes! Mighty earthquakes! [*Several ACTORS enter quickly and crash into the cubes. They fall, narrowly missing Asha and Baloe. The ACTORS exit. ASHA is near tears*]

ASHA. Come, Baloe. We *must* find our way home! [*She takes his hand, and they exit*]

SAM. Despite the problems and difficulties here, it wasn't long till more people came to the new world.

ACTOR 2. [*Entering*] Sam, with all these dangers, why didn't the people just stay in Asia?

SAM. Different reasons I suppose. Some probably came looking for food.

ACTOR 1. [*Entering*] Hey, I just saw a big juicy woolly mammoth crossing the Bering Strait.

ACTOR 2. Big deal.

ACTOR 1. If we can catch him, we can have some barbecued woolly mammoth steaks.

ACTOR 2. Hey, that is a big deal. But hold the wool, will you?

SAM. Some came for new opportunities, I guess.

ACTOR 3. [*Entering with ACTOR 4*] Yep, this looks like a land of opportunity all right.

ACTOR 4. [*Not enthusiastic*] Yeah. With all these volcanoes and glaciers and earthquakes, you'll probably have the opportunity to get killed.

SAM. And others may have come—just because it was here.

ACTOR 5. [*Entering with ACTOR 6*] I don't know why you had to drag us to this place. What was wrong with Asia?

ACTOR 6. It was getting too crowded. Last year I must have seen ten or twelve people. I'm looking for an out-of-the-way place.

ACTOR 5. I think you just found it.

ACTOR 1. Hey, some of the ice and snow seems to be melting.

ACTOR 2. You're right. It's not quite as cold as it was.

ACTOR 3. It's not a bad neighborhood.

ACTOR 4. It may not be perfect. But it could be a lot worse.

ACTOR 6. Let's stay. [*ALL agree*]

ACTOR 1. Where will we live, Sam?

SAM. [*Looking at the clipboard*] It says here you'll dwell in caves for the first few thousand years.

ACTORS. [*Running to various cubes*] This is my cave. / I'll take this cave. / My cave is right here. Etc.

ACTOR 4. [*Tidying up a cube*] It takes a heap o' livin' to make a house a cave I always say.

ACTOR 3. [*With his "wife" as they talk to a "real estate salesman"*] This is a nice cave.

SALESMAN. You won't find a better cave anywhere. The price is rock bottom. Get it? Uh, you're no more than a stone's throw from anything. Get it—stone's throw? Uh, just look at this cave—don't take it for granite. Get it—don't take it for *granite*.

ACTOR 3. [*Not impressed by the jokes*] We'll buy it.

SALESMAN. [*Shaking hands with him*] Thank you—thank you. [*To the audience*] Works everytime. When I hit 'em with my jokes, they just—cave in. Get it? Cave in!

ALL. We got it. [*The ACTORS are now settled into their caves. ASHA enters with BALOE*]

ASHA. Baloe, look. People! [*They go to a "cave" and knock*]

ACTOR 1. Who is it?

ACTOR 2. Probably the Welcome Wagon. They're everywhere, you know. [*Going to the "door" and seeing the children*] Oh, hello.

ASHA. We're terribly sorry to bother you, but—

BALOE. We're lost.

ACTOR 2. Where did you come from?

ASHA. Asia.

ACTOR 2. So did we.

ASHA. Then you must know the way back home.

ACTOR 2. Sure. It's that way—or maybe it's—that way—gee, I seem to have forgotten. Maybe we can phone the Triple-A for directions. *[SAM shakes his head]* Oh, yeah. No phones . . . no Triple-A either. Look. Go north and turn left at the glacier. That oughta get you to the Bering Strait. After that, it's just a hop, skip, and slide back home.

ASHA. Thank you very much.

ACTOR 2. Say, even though we're almost out of food, here's a couple of sandwiches for your journey. *[She gives them the sandwiches]*

BALOE. Thank you. What kind of sandwiches are they?

ACTOR 2. Buffalo-burgers. S'long. *[ASHA and BALOE bid him good-bye and exit]* Boy, I hope those kids make it home okay. I also hope we can find something to eat around here. Sam, we're outta food. What do we do?

SAM. *[Looking at the clipboard]* According to my notes, people started moving around so they could find food. Some became hunters. *[Two or more ACTORS become hunters]*

HUNTERS. That's us. / We'll be the hunters. Etc.

SAM. Others became fishers.

FISHERS. Come on. / Let's be fishers. Etc.

FISHER. You clean 'em, I'll cook 'em.

SAM. And the rest became food gatherers.

FOOD GATHERERS. *[Getting together]* Come on, food gatherers. / I'll gather nuts. / I'll gather berries—

FOOD GATHERER 1. And I'll gather cracker jacks and fruit loops and—

FOOD GATHERER 2. *[Hitting him with a basket]* You're nothing but a fruit loop yourself.

SAM. For a while, everyone was very happy.

HUNTERS (1st CAMP). The hunters.

FISHERS (2nd CAMP). The fishers.

FOOD GATHERERS (3rd CAMP). And the food gatherers.

ALL. All live together in peace . . . *[they sing a cappella and in harmony]* AND HAR-MO-NY!

FOOD GATHERER 1. We trade with each other.

HUNTER 1. Here is one skin.

FISHER 1. *[Taking the skin]* In exchange for one fish. *[He gives it to the hunter]*

FOOD GATHERER 2. In exchange for one measure of grain. [*He takes the skin and gives the grain to the Fisher*]

ALL. We live in peace . . . [*singing*] AND HAR-MO-NY! [*The camps separate slightly and engage in quiet activities*]

SAM. But before long, things were not so peaceful.

FOOD GATHERER 1. [*Approaching a hunter*] Excuse me.

HUNTER 1. Yaz?

FOOD GATHERER 1. Those buffalo you chased through here yesterday—

HUNTER 1. Yaz?

FOOD GATHERER 1. —destroyed my grain.

HUNTER 1. Yaz. Well, your grain shouldn't be in the path of the buffalo. [*The FOOD GATHERER angrily returns to his camp only to be confronted by a FISHER*]

FISHER 1. Pardon me.

FOOD GATHERER 1. Uh-huh?

FISHER 1. You know those reeds by the river that you make blankets with?

FOOD GATHERER 1. Uh-huh.

FISHER 1. Well, the fish need those reeds to spawn in.

FOOD GATHERER 1. To what in?

FISHER 1. To spawn in—to have children in. And children fish grow into big fish and that's what fishers eat.

FOOD GATHERER 1. Well, you should be grain-eaters like us. We need those reeds, so your fish can just find somewhere else to spawn. [*The FISHER angrily returns to his camp and mimes casting for fish. A HUNTER approaches*]

HUNTER 2. Hey, you.

FISHER 1. Yeah?

HUNTER 2. You fishers are always fishing at the biggest fishing holes.

FISHER 1. That's the general idea.

HUNTER 2. Well, that's where the buffalo get their water. You scare them off.

FISHER 1. We wouldn't hurt a fly.

FISHER 2. Much less a buffalo.

HUNTER 2. *They* don't know that.

FISHER 2. Then tell 'em. We're not budging. Hey, I think I've got a bite.

HUNTER 2. You're gonna get a bite, all right.

FOOD GATHERERS. *[Joining them]* If there's any biting around here, we'll do it.

FISHER 2. *[As the others arrive]* Oh, yeah! *[They fight]*

SAM. Cut! *[They freeze]* There seems to be a little trouble here.

HUNTER 1. Just a—friendly disagreement. But we still live together...

ALL. *[Singing]* IN HAR-MO-NY! *[A HUNTER steps on the foot of a FISHER, who yells in pain and gouges a GATHERER. He winces and hits the HUNTER. Suddenly they are fighting again]*

SAM. Cut! I have a suggestion. Maybe you need a little vacation from each other. After all, you've been living together for several hundred years now.

ACTOR 1. We have?

ACTOR 2. They say time flies when you're having fun.

SAM. Let's try this and see how it works. You fishers go to the east—land of forests and streams. *[The FISHERS break camp, perhaps taking a cube or two with them and go to extreme Down Left]*

FISHERS. Bye, hunters; bye, food gatherers.

OTHERS. Yeah, so long.

SAM. Hunters to the Great Plains—land of wild animals.

HUNTERS. *[Heading toward Up Right Center]* See ya, food gatherers.

FOOD GATHERERS. Right, take it easy.

SAM. Food gatherers, to the west, south of the mountains where there is plenty of grain and seeds.

FOOD GATHERERS. *[As they start Down Right]* Bye, everybody—oh, yeah, there's nobody left. *[The new camps are assembled]*

FISHERS. Having—

HUNTERS. Wonderful—

FOOD GATHERERS. Time . . .

ALL. Wish you were here—

FISHER 2. Living in . . .

ALL. *[Singing, somewhat sadly]* HAR-MO-NY!

SAM. *[To the audience]* And that gives you a pretty good idea of how people became spread out all over the new world. *[Applauding the actors]* You played your parts very well, actors.

ACTORS. Thanks, Sam. / It was fun. Etc.

ACTOR 1. What comes next?

SAM. *[As they gather around the clipboard]* Hey, this looks like fun. Get ready now. *[The others agree and go to the trunks to get ready for the next segment]* First of all, we need a husband—