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## **Family Plays**

# **Striking Out!**

**(A Children's Play in Six Innings)**

**By**  
**Michael Bigelow Dixon**  
**and**  
**Valerie Smith**

# Striking Out!

**Comedy. By Michael Bigelow Dixon and Valerie Smith.**

**Cast: 8 boys, 6 girls (ages 8 to 16).** This comedy is a hilarious portrayal of a coed baseball team confronting the worst slump of the season—without the coach. A laughable production in six innings, this is a delightfully perceptive play about young America's favorite pastime—Little League. Set in the visitor's dugout, with monologues on the pitcher's mound and at home plate. The Angels brass out a real game against an imaginary team of powerhouse hitters. The result is frantic, funny and often touching, as the team discovers they have a lot to learn about themselves and the true spirit of baseball. The play offers challenges in mime, cheerleading and accurate, realistic characterization. *One ext. set. Approximate running time: 25 minutes. Code: SW3.*

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## LINE-UP

### *(Starters)*

TYRONE	Second Base
RHONDA	Catcher
HUSTLE	Pitcher
BUD	First Base
WAYNE	Center Field
MAX	Third Base
EDYE	Shortstop
YOLANDA	Right Field
KIM	Center Field

### *(Substitutes)*

CHEECH	For Tyrone at Second Base in the third inning.
KELLY	For Yolanda in Right Field in the fifth inning.
CHONG	For Kim in Center Field in the fifth inning.

### *(Little sister)*

DARLENE	Wayne's little sister.
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### *(Authority figures)*

DARTH	Umpire
FATHER	A voice from the stands.

## SETTING

The action takes place in the visitors' dugout at a school baseball game. A long bench stretches across the stage. The batters and fielders will appear in spotlight down front while the players on the bench watch the game. A slide screen hangs at the rear of the set for projections of the inning-by-inning scores, as well as diagrammatic slides of the baserunners in the sixth inning. Behind the bench stretches a length of chain-link fence. The ushers for the theatre can be dressed as ballpark vendors.

## TIME

The present.

## THE FIRST INNING

*(A beat-up, worn-out bench stretches across the stage. Children's hats, jackets, baseball gloves and other items litter the area. In the background is a large scoreboard, projected on a slide screen, marked off for six innings. It reads: Visitors/Angels, Home/Daredevils. As the houselights fade, music comes up. We hear, "TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME" on an organ. It plays through one verse in darkness, then the stage lights come up. KIM, BUD, and RHONDA enter from the field where they've been having batting practice. KIM is overly enthusiastic.)*

KIM: *(sings)*

Take me out to the ballgame,  
Take me out to the crowd. . . .

*(speaks)*

Come on, you guys. Let's show a little spirit!

KIM & RHONDA: *(sing)*

Buy me some peanuts and crackerjacks,  
I don't care if we ever get back. . . .

KIM: *(speaks)* Bud.

KIM & RHONDA: *(sing)*

And it's root, root, root for the home team,  
If they don't win it's a shame!

KIM: BUD!!!

KIM, RHONDA & BUD: *(sing)*

And it's one, two, three strikes you're out in the old ballgame!

KIM: That's the spirit!

*(The music continues under as CHEECH and CHONG, the team cut-ups, enter and improvise lyrics.)*

CHEECH:

We're the unbeaten Angels,  
We're the tops in the league.



CHONG:

We've won five games without losing one,  
When we're at bat you can bet that it's fun.

CHEECH & CHONG:

And it's root beer floats for the Angels,  
The team that cannot be beat!  
We got Kim, Rhonda and Bud on our side and that's why we're  
great!

*(Music continues under dialogue. MAX, a deaf child, enters carrying a bag of supplies and signs. CHEECH mouths the words to the song, giving MAX a hard time.)*

CHONG: Hey, Cheech, cut that out.

CHEECH: Ah, Max doesn't mind.

CHONG: You can't make fun of him just 'cause he's deaf.

MAX: *(mimes)* ("Give me a break!")

CHEECH: *(Reading gesture)* Give. . .me. . .a. . .break. See?

MAX: *(MAX pulls a bumpersticker from bag of signs)* "I (heart) baseball."

CHEECH: Max, you're all right.

TYRONE: Hi, guys.

CHONG: Hi, Tyrone.

TYRONE: You'll never guess who I saw coming around the corner with  
Wayne.

CHONG: Oh, no! Not. . . .

TYRONE: Yup. He brought the little "Oh No" with him.

CHONG: Hit it, Cheech!

CHEECH: *(sings)*

Keep her out of the dugout,  
Take her back to her house,

CHEECH & CHONG:

Buy her some peanuts and crackerjacks,  
We don't care if she never comes back.

CHONG:

Oh, I'd like to strangle Darlene,  
I'd like to set her aflame!

CHEECH: *(speaks)* Come on, everybody!

*(sings)*

'Cause it's one, two, three. . . .

CHEECH, CHONG, BUD, KIM, RHONDA & TYRONE:

She's bad luck!!!

CHEECH & CHONG:

In the old ball game!

*(Music continues under as WAYNE enters with his little sister, DARLENE.)*

WAYNE: Hi, guys

*(pause)*

Aw, come on! Bud. Tyrone!

*(MAX turns cap around and makes an exaggerated Umpire's "out" sign.)*

WAYNE: Max! Come on. I had to babysit. I threatened her. I made her promise to be good.

DARLENE: I'll be good.

*(DARLENE's fingers are crossed behind her back.)*

WAYNE: See guys?

BUD: Sure, Wayne.

TYRONE: Yeah, great.

WAYNE: Come on, Darlene. Sit on the bench and behave yourself.

DARLENE: I got to go to the bathroom.

WAYNE: All right . . . come on.

*(WAYNE and DARLENE exit.)*

HUSTLE'S VOICE OFFSTAGE: Everybody to the dugout!

CHEECH: *(sings)*

The game is just about starting,  
Here comes the rest of our team.

*(YOLANDA enters, followed by EDYE.)*

CHONG:

Yo-Yo's a flirt, and she just doesn't care.

YOLANDA: Thanks a lot!

CHEECH:

And Edye plays the game with her nose in the air!

EDYE: Grow up!

*(HUSTLE enters with vigor, pep and a clipboard. KELLY enters behind him)*

CHONG:

And then, there's team captain Hustle,  
If he don't win it's a shame!

HUSTLE: You got it!

CHEECH:

Kelly always sits on the bench, never plays in the game!

KELLY: Except today! You'll see. Coach said I get to start.

*(WAYNE reenters with DARLENE. The dugout is very chaotic.)*

HUSTLE: Is everybody here?

BUD: I'm here.

OTHERS: Me, too. . .count me. . .I'm here. . .etc.

HUSTLE: I mean, is anybody missing?

*(They all look around. MAX "acts out" message as KELLY looks on.)*

HUSTLE: What's Max doing now?

BUD: Oh, boy! Charades!

KELLY: First word. . .Fat. . .guy. Fat guy that smells. . .Fat smelly  
guy. . .cigar.

KIM: Fat guy with smelly cigar?

ALL: Coach!

*(MAX applauds.)*

OTHERS: Where *is* coach? Anybody seen coach? I haven't seen him. etc.

WAYNE: Hey! Maybe Coach got hurt in a car accident or something.  
Maybe coach is dead!

OTHERS: Yeah, coach always shows up. Dead? Do you think so? Do we  
have to play if he's dead? etc.

HUSTLE: Quiet!!! Coach must have just forgot or got lost or something.  
We'll have to play without him.

KELLY: Then who'll be coach?

HUSTLE: I'm team captain, so it only makes sense that I coach.

KELLY: You!!!

YOLANDA: Why do we even need a coach? He never does anything any-  
way.

OTHERS: Coach is a jerk. . .He is not. . .etc.

HUSTLE: Quiet! Somebody's got to be in charge, right? All right. Now I say we go with the same line-up that won us our last five games.

KELLY: Hey, wait a minute! I was going to start today. Coach said!

HUSTLE: Did anybody hear coach say that?

*(pause)*

Tough beans, Kelly. We're going with the "Nifty Nine." Tyrone, you're up first. Rhonda's on deck. And, I'm in the hole.

RHONDA: Everybody gets to play, Kelly. It's the rules. You'll be substituted.

KELLY: That's easy for you to say.

MAX: *(Sits down next to KELLY, wipes away an imaginary tear and hands her a peach from his bag.)*

KELLY: Ah, thanks Max. You're a peach too.

KIM: Come on everybody. Let's have a cheer to start the game off right?

*(cheer)*

Two times four is half sixteen,  
All for the Angels stand up and lean!

ALL:

L-E-A-N, Lean-n-n-n-n-n!  
L-E-A-N, Lean-n-n-n-n-n!

*(KIM takes cheer to audience.)*

KIM:

Drink that coffee from the bean,  
All for the Angels stand up and lean!

ALL:

L-E-A-N, Lean-n-n-n-n-n!  
L-E-A-N, Lean-n-n-n-n-n!

*(DARTH UMPIRE enters and crosses stage. He is entirely dressed in black: black shoes, black socks, black pants and shirt, black gloves, black chest protector, black cap and black face mask covering his face.)*

DARTH UMPIRE: Play ball!

*(DARTH UMPIRE exits.)*

HUSTLE: All right, Tyrone. Your old man's out there so go get a hit, tiger.

*(TYRONE picks up a bat, puts on a batting helmet and exits. CHEECH grabs a bat and uses it as a microphone.)*

CHEECH: Hello sports fans, and welcome to Daredevil Stadium in Costa Mesa, California, where the unbeaten Angels take on the unbeaten Daredevils in a mid-season match that could determine the school league championship. I'm Cheech . . .

*(CHONG grabs the bat from CHEECH.)*

CHONG: . . .And I'm Chong, and we'll be bringing you the play-by-play action of this exciting baseball game, but first a word from our sponsor.

CHEECH: Sibling exterminator!

*(Pulling out water pistol).*

Just one squirt from our easy-to-use decorator decanter eliminates troublesome little sisters forever. Sibling exterminator is also available in large economy size hoses that attach to your faucets at home, for especially pesky little girls.

*(CHEECH squirts DARLENE.)*

DARLENE: Hey!

CHONG: And now, let's go down to the field. . .

*(The lights shift, leaving the dugout in darkness and illuminating TYRONE in the batter's box.)*

TYRONE: Look at their pitcher! That guy's big. I'll bet he takes hormone shots.

*(Watches a fast pitch fly past.)*

And those warm-up pitches are fast . . . and wild. It's really going to hurt! I hate being first up. It gives me hives.

DARTH UMPIRE'S VOICE OFF STAGE: Batter up!

TYRONE: Here goes nothing. Hi, dad! I wish he wouldn't watch. Every time he's there . . .

DARTH UMPIRE'S VOICE OFF STAGE: Steee-rike one!

TYRONE: I didn't even see it! I'm gonna strike out. Dad, go get a soda or something. Please. . . Oh! Why do I even play this stupid game? Why didn't I take up underwater photography. . .

DARTH UMPIRE'S VOICE OFF STAGE: Stee-rike two!

TYRONE: . . .or basket-weaving? I'm gonna strike out. I'm not concentrating. My dad's a jinx. I do fine when he's not here. But I've got to bear down now. That's it, bear down.

FATHER'S VOICE: Come on, Tyrone!!! Slug it, son.

TYRONE: Aw, dad.

DARTH UMPIRE'S VOICE OFF STAGE: Steee-rike three!

TYRONE: Great, dad.

*(The lights fade to black.)*

**END OF INNING ONE**

## THE SECOND INNING

*(A slower version of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" plays while a slide flashes on the screen, showing score at the end of the first inning: Angels - 0, Daredevils - 5. The lights fade up on the team sitting on the bench. They are talking, eating, drinking cokes, flipping baseballs cards and tossing Good 'n Plenty's at one another. HUSTLE attempts to get their attention.)*

HUSTLE: Hey! Quiet down!

*(noisy pause)*

I SAID QUIET!!!

*(silent pause)*

You guys are playing like a bunch of girls.

EDYE: We are girls!

OTHERS: Yeah. . .Look who's talking. . .We are not. . .etc.

HUSTLE: Quiet!

WAYNE: Don't get all bent out of shape, Hustle.

YOLANDA: Geez, it's just a dumb game.

KELLY: We're all friends, Hustle.

HUSTLE: There's nothin' in the rules about having to be friends. . .especially if it gets in the way of winning. If we want to win, we're gonna have to play smart baseball.

CHONG: That leaves Bud out!

BUD: Whadda ya mean?

HUSTLE: Pay attention. I'm going to be at third base giving the batters signals. You guys remember the signals, don't you?

MAX: *(Holds two-fingers up behind EDYE's head.)*

HUSTLE: Cut it out, Max! Bud, what's this one mean?

*(HUSTLE touches the bill of his cap and then taps belt and slaps his thigh.)*



BUD: Uh. . . . .

HUSTLE: Well?

*(CHEECH sneaks behind HUSTLE and mimes “swing.”)*

BUD: Swing!

HUSTLE: No wonder we’re losing! This *(repeats action)* does not mean ‘swing,” Hulk. It means, “don’t swing!” I want to see everybody do it. So you remember.

*(HUSTLE repeats action as others imitate him – except Wayne.)*

HUSTLE: You too good for this Wayne?

WAYNE: You didn’t say “Simon Sez.”

HUSTLE: Oh, brother. How about this one? Anybody?

*(HUSTLE touches cap, belt, elbow, and slaps back of neck.)*

DARLENE: Somebody got ya in the back of the neck with a Good ‘n Plenty?

HUSTLE: *(ignoring Darlene)* Come on, come on! It means to “bunt!” This *(repeats action)* means to “bunt.”

DARLENE: Whatsa bunt?

HUSTLE: Everybody repeat the signal for “bunt” after me.

WAYNE: “Simon Sez?”

HUSTLE: Yeah, “Simon Sez!”

*(Team mimics HUSTLE’s actions.)*

HUSTLE: All right. What about this one?

*(HUSTLE kicks dirt, scratches nose, rubs cheek, taps elbow and pulls up sock.)*

HUSTLE: Anybody? Ah, come On! Where have you people been this season? This means “steal.”

DARLENE: Steal what?

HUSTLE: Wayne, you want to keep your sister under control?

WAYNE: You're the big cheese. You keep her under control.

HUSTLE: I've got enough on my hands, trying to win this game. If you weren't such a wimp. . . .

WAYNE: Who're you calling a wimp?

HUSTLE: You heard me, Wimp!

DARLENE: Whatsa wimp?

WAYNE: Shut up, Darlene. Look fathead, how'd you like a smack in the chops?

HUSTLE: Who's a fathead?

DARLENE: What's a fathead?

WAYNE: Shut up, Darlene!

CHONG: All right. A fight!

MAX: *(Immediately pulls out pad and dollar bills. Sets up betting action with CHEECH and CHONG.)*

DARLENE: Beat him up, Wayne.

CHEECH: Two bucks on Wayne. Any takers?

EDYE: Will you guys grow up!?!?

*(DARTH UMPIRE enters and crosses stage.)*

DARTH UMPIRE: Play ball!

*(As DARTH UMPIRE exits, RHONDA blows loudly on whistle.)*

RHONDA: Come on, you guys. Break it up. Now the line-up's Bud, Wayne and Max.