

15 Reasons Not To Be in a Play
A One Act Non-Play
By Alan Haehnel

(The cast gathers together on a bare stage—a group of kids in regular street clothes. The full cast will remain onstage throughout the play. As various characters narrate the action, cast members act it out around them. Cast members can also act as furniture and other set pieces where necessary.)

1: We are not here to put on a play.

2: If you came to see a play, it sucks being you.

3: We believe that putting on a play is a bad idea.

4: A horrible idea.

5: A rotten idea.

6: A putrid, stinking, slimy, greenish-liquid-oozing...

7: ...you'd-rather-kiss-your-brother-full-on-the-mouth-than-have-to-deal-with-this idea.

8: We aren't going to do it. Period.

9: So don't ask.

10: Don't plead.

11: And, whatever you do, don't beg. It makes us sick.

12: But we are out here, and you may wonder why.

13: We're out here with a message.

14: We're out here with a warning.

15: We're out here to teach you...

All: 15 Reasons Not To Be in a Play! Reason Number One...

Jake: Plays stink!

All: Reason number two...

Misty: When you were in second grade, you had a teacher named Miss Griswold. She was older than God and she smelled like stale coffee and gym socks. When she came in every morning she said...

Miss Griswold: Now, students, pay close attention. Focus, focus, focus is the key to success.

Misty: She invented amazing methods of torture using construction paper and popsicle sticks. She turned perfectly normal questions into sadistic games of chance that you would always lose.

Sharon: Miss Griswold, can I go to the bathroom?

Miss Griswold: I don't know. May you?

Sharon: What?

Miss Griswold: May you go to the bathroom?

Sharon: That's what I'm asking. Can I?

Miss Griswold: I am assuming that you can, but I don't yet know if you may.

Sharon: Miss Griswold, I really have to go.

Miss Griswold: Then you can go.

Sharon: Thank-you.

Miss Griswold: But you may not go until I have given permission.

Sharon: You just did!

Misty: By that time you had either made a puddle on the floor or had run out in desperation, a crime for which you paid by writing "I will not run out of the room in desperation" on the board 7 million times with her breathing on you until you got it done. Miss Griswold.

All (sinister intonations): Miss Grisowld!

Misty: You had Miss Griswold and she decided to put you in a play.

Alan: You were only in second grade, still in your formative years.

Misty: The play was about loving the earth and you spent weeks with your hands in paper-mache trying to put together the costumes and the props.

Alan: Only seven years old, and so terribly impressionable.

Misty: It was a play Miss Griswold wrote and it had lines in it like...

Emily: If we don't get busy and plant all those seeds,
The earth won't be able to meet all our needs!

Miss Griswold: No, no, Emily. Put more emphasis on the word "needs." I want you to really experience that word fully. I want you to taste it in your mouth, do you understand? Say "needs."

Emily: Needs.

Miss Griswold: Say it like you mean it.

Emily: Needs.

Miss Griswold: Say it like the most important thing in the world for you to do is to say the word needs.

Emily: Needs.

Miss Griswold: Emily, say it as if I'm going to take you home and throw you in a hot oven if you don't say it right!

Emily: Needs! Needs! Needs!

Miss Griswold: Much better.

Misty: You were small for your age. Everything was so intimidating to you, especially Miss Griswold.

All: Miss Griswold!

Misty: She made you put on a tree costume. It itched like you had lice all over your body. When you tried to turn your head you faced the inside of the tree and you couldn't see.

Pete (from inside the tree): Miss Griswold, I can't see.

Miss Griswold (to Emily): Remember now, how are you going to say "needs"?

Emily: With feeling! With passion! I don't want to go in your oven!

Miss Griswold: Stop crying. We're about to go on. Now where is my head of broccoli?

Pete: Miss Griswold, I can't...

Miss Griswold: Quiet! We're about to start!

Alan: You felt tiny and inconsequential in a huge, overwhelming world and she shoved you into a tree from which you couldn't escape!

Misty: You could barely walk because the tree trunk was so small. You had to take tiny steps just to keep your balance. Only ten minutes into the play, Jesse Givens, who was dressed as a skunk, bumped into you. You fell.

Alan: At age seven, in second grade, you toppled down, down, down, and your short unhappy life flashed before your eyes!

Misty: You lay on the floor for the rest of the play because your arms were trapped at your sides. Miss Griswold was whispering frantically from the wings...

Miss Griswold: Keep going! Keep going, you little delinquents! There's an audience out there! Don't you dare stop!

Alan: No child should have to endure such trauma!

Misty: No one stopped the play to help you up and by the second act of this five-act epic called "Mother Earth is Your Patient and You Are the Nurse" everyone had forgotten you were inside the paper mache tree and they started to sit on you during their scenes.

Alan: Such stress!

Misty: The papier mache buckled over your face and you were sure your classmates dressed like skunks and chipmunks and flowers were going to come crashing through your costume and suffocate you! Hour after hour you could only lay there and stare at your own bark as your classmates recited their horrible lines!

Jane: Oh, earth, oh, earth, we love you like crazy. We're sorry we sometimes get sloppy and lazy.

Stewart: The trees all around, like maple, beech and ash
Just shouldn't have to put up with all of our trash.

Misty: When the play was finally over and everyone had taken their bows and had exited the stage, you were still left there, a fallen and forgotten tree feebly calling for help. By the time your mother found you, you had given up and gone to sleep. And in that sleep, you had your first nightmare where Miss Griswold was a giant tree coming at you with a thousand play scripts hanging from her branches and you couldn't run, you couldn't scream, you couldn't move. That dream came back night after night for weeks and months. Eventually, you had it less and less often but every time you have it, even last week, you wet your bed.

Alan: A classic case of post-traumatic stress syndrome. You poor, poor child.

Misty: So anytime you hear someone talk about a play you smell papier-mache and you see the inside of a tree and you hear Miss Griswold's voice saying...

Miss Griswold: Needs! Needs!

Misty: And you walk away, very, very quickly.

All: Reason Number 3!

Mandy: Plays take passion and devotion and commitment. You can't afford to expend any of those things on a play when Travis Thorburn is alive. Look at him! (The cast starts to hum a hymn of religious devotion.) All passion, all devotion, all commitment you must direct at him and him alone. Listen, Travis Thorburn is your everything. He is your sun and your moon and your breakfast cereal. He is your waking and your sleeping and your daydreams and your night-dreams. He is the taste of toothpaste. He is the cool breeze in your face. Every breath you take in should be exhaled with a single purpose: to say the name Travis.

All: Travis, Travis, Travis.

Mandy: Every thought you form should have but a single intention: to visualize Travis.

1 T: I think I see him!

2 T: He looks like a great silver cloud hanging in the sky, the sun streaming through him.

3 T: He looks like an enormous plate of lasagna, bubbling with cheese.

4 T: Like a Greek statue!

5 T: Like a Roman coliseum!

6 T: Like a ticket to the Super Bowl!

Mandy: Like...like...like Travis Thorburn.

All (sighing): Travis.

Mandy: Do you know what some people do at the end of a play? They bring flowers to the performers!

7 T: Here you go, Sweetie. Nice job!

Mandy: (grabbing the flowers, accosting the flower-bringer) That is a crime, a sin, an act of utter blasphemy because all of the flowers grown in this world are grown to be strewn at the feet of one person

and one person only (laying the flowers at his feet): Travis Thorburn. With Travis Thorburn in the world, can you take time to think about a play, practice for a play, memorize for a play, be in a play?

All: Heck, no!

Mandy: How can you even consider it? Look at him! Behold the great Travis! What more can you do than try not to faint when he walks into the room? And if he should ever say to you...

Travis: Get lost. I have a girlfriend.

Mandy: ...what more can you do than feel your aching heart burst into a billion bloody pieces? What more can you do than just lay down and die?

(The cast members lie down as if dead. After a second, they sit up suddenly.)

All: Reason number four!

Rob: The play might have a part where you're supposed to hold hands with the person next to you and the person next to you might have these wart-like things on their fingers and you'll feel them as you're holding hands with them and you'll be thinking the whole time you're holding hands with them how their hand feels like a toad and you'll be worrying that the wart-like things might be contagious and you'll start seeing yourself covered with these wart-like things from head to toe, I mean, every body part including your face and your elbows and even your navel and you'll practically puke! So it's definitely not worth the risk.

All: Reason number five!

Megan: Because rehearsals and performances will make you run the risk of not monitoring your cell phone and your e-mail on a regular basis. That's very dangerous. Because, yeah, most of what you get are meaningless bits of gossip and Viagra ads, but you never know! The one cell phone call might come, the one e-mail that has to be replied to within five minutes, the one message that will completely change your life. Okay, so it's never happened to you before and it's never actually happened to anyone you know but that doesn't matter. It could happen! (Her cell phone rings.) Hello? No, this isn't Carma's Tattoo Emporium. No, I do not want to get a tattoo there, thank-you. (She hangs up, looks back out at the audience.) It could happen!

All: Reason number six!

Bill: Because meteorologists tell us that the beating of a butterfly's wings in South America can trigger a chain reaction that can eventually cause a hurricane to develop half-way across the world.

Weatherman: We can expect sunny skies for the next three days—absolutely gorgeous weather, with a tanning index of 10. Our weather right now is dominated by a sweet and generous high pressure system that should keep us happy for a good long time.

Bill: Putting on a play, with its lines and movements and all, will generate a significant amount of wind and hot air. By consulting the National Bureau of Weather Predicting Guys, with their numerous large computers and clipboards...

Geek 1: If we take the barometric pressure and divide it by the average rainfall of the eighth most arid region of the Sahara Desert...

Geek 2: And we take the inverse proportion of the geometric isometric idiosyncratic quadratic equation...

Geek 3: and two plus two equaling four....

Geek 4: I think it's going to be a nice day.

Bill: And by consulting with all of the old people sitting on the park benches gumming tuna fish sandwiches...

Old 1: Say, you remember back in '54 when we had that big hailstorm that took the roof off the old McGiven's place?

Old 2: That wasn't in '54, you ninny! That was in '58. '54 was the year we had the ice storm that took the tree down next to the turpentine factory.

Old 3: Well, all I can tell you is we're gonna have good weather for the next couple of days. My bunions ain't aching.

Old 4: And my scalp ain't itching.

Old 5: And my arthritis ain't flairing up.

Bill: And by consulting with your step-brother who recently almost passed his tenth year of high school...

Reed: Uh...No clouds. Guess I'll go outside today.

Bill: By consulting all of these expert opinions on the weather, you can see the kind of disastrous weather that putting on a play will trigger.

Weatherman: So if you've been planning on getting some vacation time, you should certainly take it...Wait a minute! This just in! A sudden disturbance in the air flow has radically changed the forecast. Forget all that I just said! We've got a massive storm coming our way! Rain, snow, sleet, hail, high winds, all are about to clobber us in less than twenty-four hours! Expect massive power outages! Normally, I would tell you not to panic, but, in this case...panic!

Geek 1: These numbers can't be right! According the algorithmic confabulation of the tenth power of the 39th parallel...

Geek 2: ...adding in the square root of pi in which the numerator sub-dissects the denominator...

Geek 3: ...and putting the hard-drive into overdrive we see that...

Geek 4: We're gonna get clobbered!

Old 1: Oh, boy, I'm aching!

Old 3: Mother McCree, my bunions are about to explode.

Old 4: Feel that vein on my forehead! Feel it pulsing! It hasn't pulsed like that since the Winter of '02!

Old 2: Run for your lives, you old coots! Head for the Bingo Hall and crawl under a table if you know what's good for you!

Reed: Uh...Getting cloudy. I'll stay inside.

Bill: Mother Nature's fury unleashed...

W 1: Listen to that wind howl!

W 2: Look at the size of that hail!

W 3: We're never going to survive this!

Bill: ...causing massive power outages...

(The lights go out.)

All: Who turned out the lights?

(The lights come back up.)

Bill: ...food shortages, fear and trembling, panic in the streets, weather-induced chaos and pandemonium, all because...

Television Reporter: Clean-up after the biggest storm of the century has barely begun. The governor estimates damages will be measured in the billions of dollars, not to mention the untold lives disrupted. The nagging question, of course, is what triggered this massive storm? What disturbance in the air could have started it? We have here an expert in the field, Reed Brown, who recently almost passed his tenth year of high school. Norbert, to what do you attribute this disaster?

Reed: Uh...somebody put on a play.

All: Reason Number Seven!

Jake: Plays stink!

All: Reason Number eight!

Cecily: Because you're just, you're just, you're just too shy. You...you can barely get two words out of your mouth in front, in front of, of an audience. Whenever you have oral presentations in class, you, you, you, you just take a zero. If somebody tries to force you, you start to cry. A play? Oh, no, no, no. You're painfully shy. That would kill you. You would just die from embarrassment, staring out at those lights, knowing that people are sitting there, judging you—judging what you're wearing, what you're saying, the way you're standing. You'd be mortified! I mean, it's a completely unreasonable request, to ask you to be in a play. They might as well tell you to stand against the wall so they can assemble a firing squad and have you shot, right? You're shy, remember? Hands-freezing, armpits-dripping, knees-knocking, head-pounding shy! Is that a problem? Is it? Just because you're shy, can't you be allowed to just stay in a corner and be that way, or does this society absolutely require that, no matter how traumatic it might be, you have to get up on stage and do whatever some script requires? You're shy, darn it! Shy, shy, shy! So what, if the script says sing the ABC's like an opera star, do you have to go ahead and start singing away? (singing like an opera star) A-B-C-D-E-F-G! That's way too much to ask of a shy person, I'm telling you! If the script should require that you grab some strange guy (she grabs a boy and interacts with him through this next segment) and hold him close to you like he's your favorite teddy bear; if it command that you stroke his hair and grab his shirt as if you can't live without him...are you supposed to just go ahead and do that? No! You're too shy! If they script calls for you to kiss him passionately...(She moves as if she is going to do that. The boy breaks away.)

Boy: No, no, no. I'm saving myself.

Cecily: You see! He's too shy for that and so are you! You can't be in a play and you can't sing opera and you can't grope some guy and you just can't possibly make a fool of yourself in front of a crowd full of people because (screaming, emphasizing every word with huge energy) YOU ARE JUST WAY TOO AMAZINGLY, INCREDIBLY, PITIFULLY...(suddenly pausing, realizing the irony, and backing off to a whisper)...shy.

All: Reason number nine!

Mavis: Your mother wrote you a note that said, "Mavis is allergic to plays. If she is in one, she will break out in hives. Her legs will swell to five times their normal size and she will begin to sneeze uncontrollably. Please excuse her."

All: Reason Number 10!

Zach: Because you'll get all done with the play. You'll be in it and you'll think you did a good job. You'll be feeling okay about the whole thing, thinking "Hey, that wasn't too bad." You'll go out with the cast to get some pizza and you'll hang around with them for a little while talking about how it went and everybody will pretty much agree that the whole thing was a kick. Then you'll go home. You'll walk in the door and you'll have this conversation with your mother:

Chris: Hi.

Mom: Well, you're home.

Chris: I'm home.

Mom: You're a bit later than I thought you would be.

Chris: The pizza took a long time.

Mom: You had pizza.

Chris: Yeah.

Mom: I hope you didn't have any pepperoni.

Chris: Yeah.

Mom: Yeah, what? Did you have pepperoni?

Chris: I don't remember.

Mom: You did.

Chris: I don't remember.

Mom: If you're telling me you don't remember then you went ahead and had the pepperoni which always gives you the gas.

Chris: Okay, so I had pepperoni. I'll try not to get the gas.

Mom: It doesn't make any difference if you try or not; you'll get it. You won't be able to help it in your sleep.

Chris: Okay, okay, I'll close the door.

Mom: Like that will help. You'll just bottle it up all night and when I open the door in the morning, I'll be killed.

Chris: It's not that bad.

Mom: You should not eat the pepperoni. Promise me you'll never eat the pepperoni. It's not good for your system.

Chris: I promise, I promise. So...how did you like the play?

Mom: Oh, it was good.

Chris: How did I do?

Mom: You did just fine.

Chris: And?

Mom: And what?

Chris: You might as well go ahead and say it.

Mom: Say what?

Chris: Say what you didn't like about it, what you didn't like about my performance.

Mom: I didn't say I didn't like anything about it. I said it was good. I said you were fine. What's wrong with being good and fine?

Chris: Your good and fine always has a "but" attached to it. So go ahead and tell me.

Mom: What? I don't have a but, except the one I'm sitting on.

Chris: Very funny. Tell me, Ma.

Mom: I don't have anything to tell you. The play was good. You were good. You were good in the good play.

Chris: But...

Mom: Why does there have to be a "but"?

Chris: I don't know why there has to be a "but," but there always is a "but" and you can't stand not to tell me about it so if you don't tell me now you'll probably come in at 1:00 in the morning and wake me up to tell me or you'll decide you'll have to tell me just as I'm heading out the door to go someplace important so go ahead and tell me now.

Mom: Well, maybe, just maybe, Mr. Smart Aleck, I don't have any "but" this time.

Chris: Oh, now I know you do. If you try to deny it, it's big.

Mom: Oh, really.

Chris: Yes, really. A majorly huge "but" is now hanging in the air above us.

Mom: Well, it will just have to hang because...I don't have one.

Chris: Uh-huh.

Mom: That's right.

Chris: The play was good.

Mom: It was.

Chris: I was good.

Mom: You were.

Chris: Great. I feel good about myself, then. I'm glad you enjoyed it. Thanks for coming, Ma. I'm going to bed.

Mom: There was one thing.

Chris: I knew it!

Mom: I didn't say "but"!

Chris: "There was one thing" is the same as a "but"!

Mom: It is not!

Chris: It is so!

Mom: All right, fine, it is! What do you want, perfection? I'm your mother, a thinking human being, believe it or not, so when I go to a play or any other function, I just might have a criticism or two. Is that a crime?

Chris: I am so tired.

Mom: So go to bed. I'll tell you about my "but" in the morning.

Chris: No, no, go ahead now.

Mom: You're tired.

Chris: I'm fine! I am fine! Just like I was in the play—fine! Except, there was at least one little problem, wasn't there? Wasn't there?

Mom: Well...no, you go to bed.

Chris: Let me help you, Mother. Repeat after me: I liked the play.

Mom: I liked the play.

Chris: I liked your performance.

Mom: I liked your performance.

Chris: But...

Mom: But...

Chris: Now fill in the blank. I'm listening.

Mom: Well, there are a few things, actually.

Chris: Oh, goody.

Zach: And then you will be up until two thirty in the morning listening to the woman take that good feeling you had and twist it and twist it like a dirty Kleenex until you never want to hear the word play again.

All: Reason Number 11!

Jake: Plays stink!

Nora: Jack, that was reason number one and seven. Can't you tell us anything more?

Jake: Yeah. Plays stink to high heaven!

Nora: Could you be more specific?

Jack: You want me to be more specific? All right, I'll be more specific. Plays stink because they're full of...(Someone claps a hand over Jack's mouth as he goes off, screaming obscenities.)

Censor: This monologue has been reviewed by the National Script Board and found unfit for adolescent consumption.

Jake (breaking free for a moment): You can take all of your plays and you can shove them...(hand back over his mouth)

Censor: If you wish to read an unedited version of Jack's monologue, you can find it on the Net at www.playsstink.edu.

Jake (free again): And that's why plays stink!

All: Reason number 12!

Becca: Because you've got a little sister, three years old. You watched her last night when your mom was trying to get her to eat her peas.

Mom 2: Come on, Sweetie; eat the little green things. They're good for you.

Baby: No.

Mom 2: You like peas. You ate them all up last time. They'll make you grow big and strong. Here come the peas, Honey. Open up, now.

Baby: No! No, no, no!

Mom 2: What's the matter? Why don't you want the peas?

Baby: I don't want yucky peas!

Mom 2: They're not yucky. You like peas. Why won't you eat them?

Baby: Don't wanna! Don't wanna!

Mom 2: You have to eat the peas if you want some dessert.

Baby: Don't wanna! (Throwing a tantrum) I don't want yucky peas! No, no!

Becca: You watched your little sister throw a fit over the peas and you thought, "That's a beautiful thing." No reasoning, no logic, just pure reaction.

Mom 2: Honey, why are you doing this!?

Baby: I hate peas! I hate them! Waaaa!

Becca: You think, “Wow, wouldn’t that be nice, to go back to that way of thinking?” Somebody comes to you and asks you to do something and your first thought, for no reason at all, is, “No. I don’t wanna.” And you go with it.

Director: You should be in a play.

Norm: No.

Director: Why not?

Norm: Don’t wanna.

Director: But it’ll be good for you. You used to like being in plays. It’ll help you grow big and strong.

Norm: No, no, no!

Director: Why not?

Norm: Because I don’t wanna! I don’t wanna because I don’t wanna.

Director: That’s no reason.

Norm: Don’t wanna, don’t wanna, don’t wanna!

Director: Everyone, Bobby is being completely unreasonable. Come on, let’s be in a play.

All (falling down into a mass tantrum): Waaa! No play! Stinky play! Yucky play! Waaa!

(Suddenly, it all stops.)

Becca: Wasn’t that beautiful?

All: Reason Number 13!

Butch: Because when you’re in a play the makeup people sometimes tell you, a guy, you have to wear lipstick and blush. (beat) And they never have the colors that set off your natural skin tones.

All: Reason Number 14!

Mindy: Though you cannot prove it, you suspect you are the most important person in the world. Though you don’t know why, you suspect that you are surrounded by spies and assassins whose only mission in life is to eliminate you. Everywhere you go, you catch glimpses of them scurrying around, watching you, observing you every moment of every day. Though you cannot prove it, you heavily suspect that, if you should let down your guard for just a second; if this silent, stealthy army of enemy infiltrators should catch you unawares and take you down, the consequences will be dire. Not only will your family suffer, but so will your community, your state, your nation...your elimination will create a massive domino effect that will lead to the demise of the entire world economy! People will live on the streets and beg for scraps of food the world over if you are not absolutely and completely careful. Though you cannot prove it, you are almost certain that these insidious watchers are just waiting for you to be in a play. They are holding their breaths--fingers poised on triggers, eyes trained on sights—anticipating that one moment at the climax of the play when you will forget that you are the world’s most important person and then...poof! In an

instant, it will be over. The devastation will begin. Though you cannot prove it, you're certain it will happen if you make the fatal mistake of being in a play.

All: Reason Number 15!

(Long pause)

1: Go. Go!

2: I don't have Number 15. She has it!

3: I do not. You said you did!

4: You're insane! I never said I had Number 15. Who said I had 15?

5: Wait, wait—I've got it!

6: Great. All right, then.

All: Reason Number 15!

7: The play might have a part where you're supposed to hold hands with the person next to you...

8: No, no, we already had that one! You can't do repeats!

7: Oh, we did? That's right, we did, didn't we? Oops. Sorry.

9: This is terrible!

10: What happened to it?

11: Somebody's got to have Number 15. Everybody, look around. Reason Number 15 has got to be here someplace.

12: Wait a minute, wait a minute. Why do we have to have 15? What's the big deal about 15? We already gave the 14 good ones. Heck, 10 would have done the trick! Or two, for that matter! Let's just leave it at that.

13: We can't just leave it at that! We told them we had 15. We gotta come up with 15.

14: Says who?

15: Says your mother.

14: What are you saying about my mother, you...

1: All right, all right, back off. Look, we don't have to panic. We just have to come up with a 15th reason. She's right. We promised it; we should deliver. Now, who saw it last?

Jake: Plays stink!

2: No, no, no...you can't do that one again, either!

Jake: Why not? I did it before. And they still stink.

3: It was cheating before; it's worse cheating now.

Jake: Whatever.

4: All, right, look—we obviously lost it, but we can come up with something. Come on, think! Reason Number 15 why not to be in a play!

5: Because...

6: Because...

7: The piranhas!

8: What about the piranhas?

7: They have...teeth! Lots of them.

9: And?

7: And they...they...they're biting little fishies.

10: And?

7: And...the piranhas will...

11: Go on!

7: Will...forget it. I lost it.

12: All right, keep trying! Reason 15!

13: Because...

14: Because...

15: Because...

1: (singing from "The Wizard of Oz"): Because, because, because, because, because! Because of the wonderful things she does! We're off to see the wiz....Sorry. I love that movie.

2: Could we please concentrate?

(Long pause as they think.)

Ending 1:

Gina (starting tentatively): Because if you're in a play, you'll go through the whole thing and you'll get near the end. You'll be in, like, the last scene and you'll realize, Hey, I like this. With the lights on bright and with the audience sitting out there and all the actors up on stage with you, you'll realize this isn't so bad. It isn't bad at all. In fact, you'll realize that, for the whole time you've been in the play, you've felt a kind of...a sort of...aliveness that you just haven't ever felt before. You'll tell yourself you're out of your mind. You'll fight it. When you look at the bulletin board and you see the next audition notice, you'll think, "Nah. Uh-uh. No way!" But it'll eat at you and the next thing you know, you'll be in another play. And another. And another. One will barely get over before you'll feel the itch to be in the next. You'll be addicted! And everybody knows that's no good. So...don't do it!

1: Did you come to see a play?

2: Suckers!

3: Didn't happen, did it?

4: Oh, well.

5: Sorry about that.

6: Whoops!

7: Tell you what, though. This hasn't been a waste of time like plays always are.

Jake: Plays st...

9 (cutting him off): Thank-you, Jake; we know.

10: You won't be walking out of here with empty brains, will you?

11: When you walked in, you might have thought, "Plays are fine. Maybe I'll be in one."

12: But you're smarter now than when you walked in.

13: 'Cause now you know...

All: 15 Reasons Not To Be In a Play!

The End

Ending 2:

2: Could we please concentrate?

(Long pause as they think.)

3: Because being in a play is ordinary.

4: Go on.

3: I mean, practically everybody does it, at one time or another.

5: I hear you.

3: Whether it's kindergarten or second grade or high school or whenever it is, somebody gets you to try it, right?

6: That's right!

7: It happens to us all!

3: So, if everybody's doing it, why should you?

8: Oh, yeah!

9: Now you're cooking!

3: You're an individual!

10: Sing it out, now!

3: You're not a sheep for the herding!

11: Oh, no; that's right!

3: You make your own choices in the world, don't you?

12: You better believe it!

13: You've got that right!

3: So when somebody says, "Hey, be in this play," you just say no!

All: No!

3: That's right! No, no, no! And why? I'll tell you why.

1: Yes, ma'am!

3: Because plays are ordinary. Story, character, setting, lights, makeup...all of that is old!

2: Old as the hills, baby!

3: All of that is dead!

15: Deader than my uncle's canary! He died last year.

3: You want new? You want exciting? You try this: You try getting up in front of an audience and telling them, "We're not putting on a play. In fact, we're just going to spend the next half hour telling you why we're not putting on a play. And you, my friends, are just going to have to love it."

14: Did they?

3: Did they what?

14: Love it?

3: I don't know. Should we ask?

12: No...let's just...let's just bow. If they clap, we'll figure they loved it.

11: Cool.

(They all gather and bow.)

The End