

STAMPEDE! Reader's Theater Script, by Laura Purdie Salas and Maddie Salas

CAST: TEACHER, KIDS 1-6, CHORUS (kids in the production OR the rest of the class)

The optional highlighted parts have students reading poems aloud from the book *Stampede! Poems to Celebrate the Wild Side of School*, by Laura Purdie Salas (Clarion Books, 2009)

STAMPEDE! POEMS TO CELEBRATE THE WILD SIDE OF SCHOOL

CHORUS:

Swarm

We crowd the empty schoolyard,
a flood of bumblebees.
We buzz and flitter-tumble,
trade gossip on the breeze.

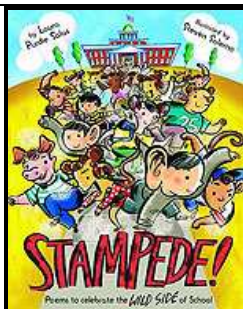
I brought a kickball—
Want to play?

I wonder what's
for lunch today.

When the doors swing open wide,
we bumblebees all fly inside.

TEACHER: Good morning, everyone! Let's stop buzzing around and start our day.

KID 1: Who are you?



STAMPEDE! POEMS TO CELEBRATE THE WILD SIDE OF SCHOOL
(Clarion Books, 2009)

by Laura Purdie Salas, illustrated by Steven Salerno

poet and writer for kids - www.laurasalas.com

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TEACHER: I am your substitute teacher. I work at the zoo 3 days a week, and I teach on the other 2 days. It is SO nice to work with real people!

KID 2: I'd like to work with animals.

KID 3: Did you know I have a dog?

CHORUS: (*All kids start shouting out what pets they have*)

TEACHER: Wow, this place is a zoo! It's great that you all have pets, but it's time to get started. Miss Jones left LOTS of work for us to do today.

CHORUS: (*Groans*)

KID 4: (*Tiptoes into room*) Um...

TEACHER: Please take out your science books...

KID 4: (*Whispers*) Um...

TEACHER: ...and turn to page 31.

KID 4: (*In soft voice*) Excuse me...

TEACHER: Oh! Hello! You're so quiet I didn't see you. Sorry about that!

KID 4: I'm new today. I got lost...the halls...they all looked alike...

[Optional: KID 4 reads *New Mouse*, CHORUS squeaks after poem is finished]

TEACHER: A new school can be scary, can't it? I even got a little bit lost! Don't feel bad. So, everyone look at the top of page 32—

KID 5: (*Coming into classroom*) Here's my pass.

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TEACHER: Wow! What happened to you?

KID 5: What?

TEACHER: Look at your shoes. And your shirt. And your pants. And your...hair?

KID 5: Oh. That. You know how it rained yesterday?

TEACHER: Yes.

KID 5: All that rain made great mud puddles.

TEACHER: Ah.

KID 5: So I jumped in the puddles, like this. And this. And—

[Optional: KID 5 reads *Whole Hog*, CHORUS oinks afterward]

TEACHER: I get the idea! You look like you rolled around in a pigpen. This place...

CHORUS: IS A ZOO!

KID 2: Is it lunch time yet?

TEACHER: Not yet. It's time for me to pass out an important paper. You need to bring it back tomorrow, because tomorrow is school picture day.

CHORUS: *(Mostly excited talking)*

KID 1: Tomorrow?

TEACHER: Yes, tomorrow. Isn't that exciting?

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KID 1: Oh no.....

TEACHER: What's wrong?

KID 1: Look at me. My hair and my teeth and, and, and everything! I don't want a picture taken.

[Optional: KID 1 reads Tomorrow Is Picture Day?]

TEACHER: You look just fine! I don't like to get my picture taken, either. Maybe this will help. This is just *one* picture of how you looked on *one* day from 3rd grade.

KID 1: (*Groans and runs away*)

TEACHER: Um, I guess that didn't help.

KID 2: Please, can we go to lunch now. Pleeeeeaaase?

TEACHER: OK, let's move along. It's time for lunch!

CHORUS: (*In a group, talking and giggling. They're touching walls and lockers.*)

TEACHER: Hands in, everybody. Have you seen ducklings follow their mama duck?

CHORUS: (*Some say yes, others say no*)

TEACHER: They march right along behind her and do whatever she does. So pretend you're ducklings and just follow me. I'm the mama duck!

[Optional: TEACHER reads Ducks in a Row CHORUS quacks afterward]

TEACHER: Please stop touching the locker. Everyone has to have their hands at their sides.

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KID 3: It's my brother's locker. He doesn't care.

TEACHER: Sorry, but that's the rule. Everyone keeps their hands to themselves.

KID 3: *(Mutters and looks mad)*

TEACHER: Aren't you prickly—like a porcupine. Haha. Get it? Porcupine--prickly!

CHORUS: *(Groaning)* We get it.

[Optional: KID 3 reads Prickly]

TEACHER: Let's walk. This place...

CHORUS: IS A ZOO! *(Everyone walks quickly)*

TEACHER: That's right! You guys are just like my dogs—you hear the word food and you get all excited! Have a good time at lunch and recess!

[Optional: KID 2 reads Here, Boy! CHORUS barks afterward]

[Optional: CHORUS reads King of the Jungle, then makes monkey noises]

TEACHER: Welcome back. I saw you all running and chasing and swooping and swinging. It looked just like the animal habitats at the zoo! Did you have fun?

CHORUS: *(Lots of yeses)*

TEACHER: Now, it's math time. Open your books to page 67, please. Miss Jones says you should do questions 14-30, evens only...Eeeuuuw. What on earth...That smell...

KID 6: Hey, don't look at me!

TEACHER: I wasn't.

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KID 6: Good, because it's not me. I don't know who it is. But it's not me. No way.

(Optional: KID 6 reads P.U.)

TEACHER: My. It's like being in the skunk house at the zoo. This place...

CHORUS: IS A ZOO!

TEACHER: Oh, the bell's about to ring. Well, it's been a fun day. A lot more like the zoo than I expected. Goodbye, kids!

CHORUS:

The last bell rings.
We spill outside,
like captives finally freed.

We're thundering, fumbling
elephants—
an after-school **STAMPEDE!**

CHORUS: *(Makes trumpeting elephant sounds)*

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