

The Wind In The Willows Junior

Junior Script

by

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CAST LIST**Narrators**

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Narrator 3

Narrator 4

Main Characters

Mole

Rat

Badger

Toad

Other Characters

Chauffer

Girl (Gaoler's Daughter)

Aunt

Engine Driver

Barge Woman

Chief Weasel

Chorus of:-

Riverbank

Rabbits, Hedgehog, Vole

Field Mice

Weasels Etc.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Staging

The show is intended for performance as a narrative, with cameos of the scenes taking place on the main stage area. Wherever possible, the characters referred to in the narratives should act out with mime or movement, the appropriate actions.

I have split the narrative into four parts but this can be performed by one or as many narrators as required.

A backdrop of a country scene, showing the river in the foreground and Toad Hall in the background could be used for the major part of the production. The chorus could assist in changing the feel of certain scenes by bringing on small pieces of scenery as suggested further on.

The opening scene as referred to above could remain in place until after Song Three 'Poop-Poop'. To create a more sinister feel for the wild wood, chorus members could carry on a few tree cut outs and hold them in place to conceal Toad Hall on the Back drop.

At the end of Song Four, the chorus remove the trees.

After Song Five, 'My Old Home' on Narrator 3's lines the scene needs to change into Mole's home. The chorus could bring on items such as a bench seat, old rickety dining table and a few chairs, a prop fireplace and maybe a wheel on a prop welsh dresser. If this is impractical, rostra arranged suitably to create shelving would suffice to cover the main set and create the feel of an interior of Mole's home. The characters then continue with their stage directions of making the fire etc.

As the scene changes after the song, into the following summer, the set pieces of Mole's home are removed returning us once again to Toad Hall. This can be done by the chorus members during Narrator 4's second speech.

Following Song Seven, the scene moves to Toad's bedroom. This could be achieved by small rostra placed in position with bedding placed on top for Toad to lie on.

As the scene moves on, we find Toad in gaol. The bed, mentioned above, could stay in place and the chorus could bring on a frame made to represent the gaol bars and place it in front of the bed with Toad behind it. The girl stands downstage of the bars and talks to Toad through them.

When Toad arrives at the railway station the bedding can be removed from the rostra and some more rostra added for the characters to stand on, as if on a platform. The chorus can carry on small flats representing a waiting room or ticket office which they should hold upstage of the rostra 'platform'.

As Narrator 1 mentions Toad making his escape, he jumps off the rostra and the chorus clear the railway station flats, leaving the rostra in position. Toad runs off stage and re-enters on to the rostra in time for the barge-woman to enter with a cut-out representation of her barge. Toad is on the rostra looking down on the barge-woman.

As the song commences, Toad jumps down off the rostra behind the cut-out as if landing in the barge. Toad eventually crawls back up onto the rostra as he drags himself out of the canal. The rostra and any other set pieces are removed during the dialogue in front of Toad Hall.

When the characters arrive at Toad Hall (just before Song Nine) if possible, a large refectory type table should be set for the ferrets' and weasels' banquet, enabling the weasels to dive under it on cue. A few smaller tables and chairs need to be set, perhaps by ferrets and weasels as they enter the scene, for the melee. This set remains in place to the end of the show.

Choreography

Movement and dance throughout this show will enhance the performance, creating the flow between the scenes. The melee in Toad Hall at the end of the show needs careful choreography to make it look effective. The backing track of song nine could be repeated to choreograph this movement.

Costume

The costumes should fit Kenneth Grahame's imagery as shown through Ernest Shepard's illustrations.

Toad, for the main part, wears a large check suit of beige/brown with a fawn shirt and red, striped tie. He changes to driving clothes for the cameo on Page 16. These should consist of a large overcoat with high, furry collar and a flat cap complete with bobble and peak, Gauntlets and goggles are required as are gaiters if possible.

Rat wears a grey suit and a grey or beige open necked shirt throughout. His shoes are brown leather.

Mole wears a dark grey or black three piece suit and a cravat or scarf.

Badger should be dressed in a sporting jacket and trousers and a check waistcoat over a collar and tie.

Field mice wear suitable country-style clothing and mufflers.

The other characters should be dressed to reflect their individual animal characteristics, with a strong emphasis on the country style.

Headpieces of the different animals should be worn to create the individual chorus characters.

Lighting and Sound

Lighting

Bright lighting to start the show with some warm colours to give the feeling that spring is in the air! As the scene changes to the Wild Wood after Song Three, the lights need to dim and, if possible, change to a more green and blue hue, creating a more sinister feel.

A glitter ball could be used in Song Four to create a snowfall effect.

The lighting changes after Song Five from the green/blue hue to warm yellow hues - but not too bright – for Mole’s old home. If possible, an off-stage light shining in from the wings would give the effect of the lantern carried by the field mice when the door is opened to them.

Light levels can increase for Song Seven.

After Toad escapes from Toad Hall the lighting should darken and move towards blue for the gaol scene.

When Toad escapes from gaol the lighting can return to that used in the opening scene until the characters prepare to storm Toad Hall.

As Narrator 1 informs the audience that it begins to grow dark, the lights should dim a little to confirm the passing of time into evening, returning to a bright, warm effect for Song Nine through to the finale.

Sound Effects (SFX)

There are few sound effects required in this show, but sounds can be added, subtly, to enhance certain scenes eg. River sounds at the start of the show, maybe an owl hooting occasionally in the Wild Wood, maybe a vintage car horn on cue of Narrator 3’s “Poop-Poop” as he describes the car bearing down on Toad.

A door-knocking sound effect is required after Song Six on the Narrator’s cue.

A steam train sound effect might be briefly played during Toad’s escape from gaol. Of course, all of the above can be dispensed with if resources do not allow.

The majority of the sound effects can be obtained from BBC Sound Effect CD's or from the internet.

Properties

Mole's Home

Duster Mole
 Tin of sardines, box of biscuits, sausage encased in silver foil Set pieces
 Lantern on a stick Field Mouse

Gaol

Gold sovereigns Table in gaol
 Cotton print gown, an apron, a shawl and a rusty black bonnet Washerwoman

Barge scene

Wash tub, dolly, scrubbing board etc. Toad

Toad Hall Scene

Walking stick Toad
 Swords, pistols, truncheons, lantern etc. Toad, Mole, Badger, Rat
 Set pieces of cutlery etc. On table

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

(A backdrop of a country scene, showing the river in the foreground and Toad Hall in the background)

TRACK 1: TALES OF THE RIVER BANK

CHORUS: IT'S THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS, A RIVERSIDE TALE,
THERE'S A RAT AND A MOLEY, A BADGER A TOAD,
A TALE OF ADVENTURES, A TALE OF THEIR DEEDS,
THIS RIVERSIDE LANDSCAPE,
WILL LAST A THOUSAND YEARS,
THIS RIVERSIDE LANDSCAPE,
WILL LAST A THOUSAND YEARS.

CHORUS: IT'S A TALE JUST FOR CHILDREN,
THAT GROWN-UPS ENJOY,
THERE IS SORROW AND SADNESS,
THERE'S FUN AND THERE'S JOY,
WE'LL TELL OF ADVENTURES,
WE'LL TELL OF THEIR DEEDS'
THIS RIVERSIDE LANDSCAPE,
WILL LAST A THOUSAND YEARS,
THIS RIVERSIDE LANDSCAPE
WILL LAST A THOUSAND YEARS.

CHORUS: IT'S THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS, A RIVERSIDE TALE,
IT'S A FINE SPRINGTIME MORNING
WHEN MOLEY AWAKES.
A DAY FOR ADVENTURES. A DAY TO EXPLORE.
THIS RIVERSIDE LANDSCAPE,
WILL LAST A THOUSAND YEARS,
THIS RIVERSIDE LANDSCAPE,
WILL LAST A THOUSAND YEARS.

NARRATOR 1: Mole joined the river bankers one fine spring day, many years ago. He had been spring cleaning his house when the urge got to him to go 'up top' and take the fresh air. Many other creatures were out and about.

MOLE: *(Entering)* Bother! O Blow! Hang spring cleaning!

NARRATOR 1: It was a perfect morning and so he scabbled and scraped working busily with his paws until, at last, his snout came out into the sunlight and he found himself rolling in the warm grass. Off he shot across the meadows, along the hedgerows, through the copses, finding flowers budding, leaves thrusting - everything happy. He thought his happiness was complete when suddenly he found himself down by the river.

MOLE: My, oh my! What's this? It shivers and shakes and glints and gleams.

NARRATOR 1: Never in his life had he seen a river before. He stopped and listened to it's mischievous chuckling as it flowed along its way. As he sat there and looked across the river, a dark hole in the bank opposite caught his eye.

MOLE: What a snug dwelling place that would make.

NARRATOR 1: Then, as he looked, a small face began gradually to appear, framed like a picture. It was the Water Rat.

RAT: *(Entering opposite side)* Hullo, Mole!

MOLE: Hullo, Rat!

RAT: Would you like to come over?

MOLE: Oh, it's all very well to talk.

NARRATOR 1: Well, Rat did no more than untie his little blue and white boat and scull smartly across to Mole on the other bank and pick him up. Mole stepped gingerly down into the boat.

MOLE: Do you know, I've never been in a boat before in all my life.

RAT: What? Never been in a... you never...well, I...what have you been doing then?

MOLE: Is it so nice as all that?

RAT: Nice? It's the only thing. Believe me, my young friend, there is nothing – absolutely nothing - half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats. Messing about, - in - boats; - or with boats.

TRACK 2: **MESSING IN BOATS**

CHORUS: MESSING IN BOATS, MESSING IN BOATS,
THERE'S NOTHING SO NICE AS
MESSING IN BOATS.
MESSING IN BOATS, MESSING IN BOATS,
THERE'S NOTHING SO NICE AS
MESSING IN BOATS.

RAT: IN BOATS, OUT OF BOATS,
I DON'T REALLY CARE,
NOTHING SEEMS TO MATTER,
SO LONG AS I AM THERE.
BIG BOATS, LITTLE BOATS,
THEY ALL HAVE THEIR CHARM,
ON A RIVER, IN A POND,
WATERS FAST OR CALM.

CHORUS: MESSING IN BOATS, MESSING IN BOATS,
THERE'S NOTHING SO NICE AS
MESSING IN BOATS.
MESSING IN BOATS, MESSING IN BOATS,

THERE'S NOTHING SO NICE AS
MESSING IN BOATS.

RAT: TO-ING, AND FRO-ING,
THERE'S SO MUCH TO DO,
FIXING, AND FID'LING.
TO BOATS OLD AND NEW.
BUSY DOING NOTHING,
BUT HAVING LOTS OF FUN.
SPENDING TIME BY WATERSIDE,
WHETHER RAIN OR SUN.

CHORUS: MESSING IN BOATS, MESSING IN BOATS
THERE'S NOTHING SO NICE AS
MESSING IN BOATS.
MESSING IN BOATS, MESSING IN BOATS,
THERE'S NOTHING SO NICE AS
MESSING IN BOATS.

RAT: WHAT A WAY TO SPEND A DAY,
GOING ON A TRIP,
HAVE A LOVELY PICNIC,
WITH LEMONADE TO SIP.
COOKED HAM AND COLD BEEF,
PICKLED GHERKINS TOO,
SALAD CREAM AND WATER CRESS,
ALL FOR ME AND YOU.

CHORUS: MESSING IN BOATS, MESSING IN BOATS,
THERE'S NOTHING SO NICE AS
MESSING IN BOATS.
MESSING IN BOATS, MESSING IN BOATS,
THERE'S NOTHING SO NICE AS
MESSING IN BOATS.

RAT: Look here Mole! If you've really nothing else on hand this morning,
supposing we drop down the river together and have a long day of it.

MOLE: What a day I'm having! Let us start at once!

NARRATOR 1: And so began the long friendship between Mole and Rat.

One bright summer morning, whilst Rat was sitting on the river bank,
singing a little song he had just composed, Mole approached him to
ask a favour.

MOLE: What I came to ask you was, won't you take me to call on Mr Toad? I
do so want to make his acquaintance.

RAT: Why certainly. Get the boat out and we'll paddle up there at once. It's
never the wrong time to call on Toad. Early or late, he's always the
same fellow. Always glad to see you, always sorry when you go!

NARRATOR 1: Well, they set off and before long they had turned the bend in the river and arrived at Toad Hall. They moored the boat in Toad's boat house and joined him on the lawn.

TOAD: *(Entering)* Hooray! How kind of you! I was just going to send a boat down the river for you, with strict orders that you were to be fetched up here at once, whatever you were doing.

MOLE: Delightful residence!

TOAD: *(Boisterously)* Finest house on the whole river. Or anywhere else for that matter. *(Rat nudges Mole and Toad burst out laughing)*. All right Ratty. It's only my way, you know. And it's not such a very bad house, is it? Now look here, I need your help. It's most important.

RAT: It's about your rowing, I suppose.

TOAD: *(Interrupting)* Oh, pooh! Boating! Silly boyish amusement. I've given that up long ago. Sheer waste of time and energy. No I've discovered the real thing, the only genuine occupation for a lifetime. Come with me dear Ratty and your amiable friend, and you shall see what you shall see.

(All three exit.)

NARRATOR 1: Well Toad led them out into the stable yard and there stood his latest pride and joy – a gipsy caravan! Mole was tremendously interested and excited as Toad showed them around the caravan, pronouncing all of its virtues. Rat only snorted and thrust his hands deep into his pockets. To Rat's surprise, Toad declared that they were setting off that afternoon on an adventure.

NARRATOR 2: It all started off well and good; charged with excitement they ambled along country lanes, camped on commons and cooked on an open fire. But then disaster struck!

(The three companions enter.)

NARRATOR 3: They were strolling along the road, Mole leading the horse, Toad doing all of the talking and Ratty doing all of the listening, when a faint sound was heard behind them. Glancing back, they saw a small cloud of dust advancing on them, while from out of the centre of the dust came a faint "poop – poop!" wailing like an uneasy animal.

NARRATOR 2: Suddenly, with a blast of wind and a whirl of sound it was on them. They barely had a moment's glimpse of the motor car as it sped by, scattering the old grey horse and the caravan into the ditch at the side of the road.

(The three characters fall over.)

- RAT:** *(Jumping up and down with rage)* You villains! You scoundrels, you highwaymen, you – you – road hogs! I'll have the law of you! I'll report you! I'll take you through all of the courts!
- NARRATOR 1:** Toad sat straight down in the middle of the dusty road and stared fixedly at the disappearing motor car, muttering at intervals.
- TOAD:** Poop-poop!
- RAT:** Are you coming to help us, Toad?
- TOAD:** Glorious, stirring sight! The poetry of motion! The real way to travel! The only way to travel! Here today – in next week tomorrow! Villages skipped, towns and cities jumped – always somebody else's horizon! O bliss! O poop-poop!
- MOLE:** *(Despairingly)* O stop being an ass, Toad!
- TOAD:** And to think that I never knew! All those wasted years that lie behind me, I never knew, never even dreamt! What dust clouds shall spring up behind me as I speed upon my reckless way! What carts I shall fling carelessly into the ditch in the wake of my magnificent onset! With no more than a cursory 'poop-poop', I shall pass them by!
- RAT:** *(Matter of fact)* Poop-poop.
- MOLE:** Poop-poop?

TRACK 3: **POOP-POOP**

- TOAD & CHORUS:** POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, OH WHAT A SIGHT
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, SUCH A DELIGHT,
TEARING DOWN THE BY-WAYS, STIRRING UP THE DUST
THE RUSHING WIND, THE OPEN ROAD,
THE LOVE OF THAT I LUST!
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, OH WHAT A SIGHT,
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, SUCH A DELIGHT FOR ME.
- TOAD:** RECKLESS, CAREFREE, AS I SPEED ALONG MY WAY,
SCATT'RING CARTS, HORSES TOO. WAGONS FULL OF HAY.
HAMLETS SKIPPED, TOWNS TOO; ALWAYS RUNNING FAST,
KICKING UP THE DUST CLOUDS
AS I GO RACING PAST.
- TOAD & CHORUS:** POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, OH WHAT A SIGHT
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, SUCH A DELIGHT,
TEARING DOWN THE BY-WAYS, STIRRING UP THE DUST
THE RUSHING WIND, THE OPEN ROAD,
THE LOVE OF THAT I LUST!
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, OH WHAT A SIGHT
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, SUCH A DELIGHT FOR ME.
- TOAD:** WASTED YEARS, TIME GONE BY, LOTS OF ILL-SPENT TIME,
PURSUING POINTLESS PASSIONS, OH IT WAS A CRIME.
I NEVER KNEW, I NEVER DREAMT, OF ALL THAT LAY AHEAD,

BUT NOW I KNOW, I REALIZE,
MY PASSIONS WILL BE FED!

TOAD & CHORUS: POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, OH WHAT A SIGHT
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, SUCH A DELIGHT,
TEARING DOWN THE BY-WAYS, STIRRING UP THE DUST
THE RUSHING WIND, THE OPEN ROAD,
THE LOVE OF THAT I LUST!
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, OH WHAT A SIGHT,
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, SUCH A DELIGHT FOR ME.

TOAD: CARAVANS, HOUSE BOATS RACING ROWERS TOO,
EXCITING MOMENTS, SEEKING OUT,
PLEASURES OLD AND NEW,
WATERWAYS, OPEN HEATHS, THE QUIET AND THE CALM
BUT MOTOR CARS, THAT'S THE LIFE,
THE POWER, SPEED AND CHARM.

TOAD & CHORUS: POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, OH WHAT A SIGHT
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, SUCH A DELIGHT,
TEARING DOWN THE BY-WAYS, STIRRING UP THE DUST
THE RUSHING WIND, THE OPEN ROAD,
THE LOVE OF THAT I LUST!
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, OH WHAT A SIGHT,
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, SUCH A DELIGHT FOR ME.

TOAD: I FEEL IT FLOWING IN MY VEINS,
IT SURGES THROUGH MY BLOOD,
A NEED TO BE BEHIND THE WHEEL,
THE URGE IT FEELS SO GOOD,
TO RACE AWAY DOWN LEAFY LANE,
RECKLESS WITHOUT CARE,
MAJESTIC MOTOR, KING OF ROAD,
YOU ARE MY LOVE AFFAIR.

TOAD & CHORUS: POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, OH WHAT A SIGHT
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, SUCH A DELIGHT,
TEARING DOWN THE BY-WAYS, STIRRING UP THE DUST
THE RUSHING WIND, THE OPEN ROAD,
THE LOVE OF THAT I LUST!
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, OH WHAT A SIGHT,
POOP-POOP, POOP-POOP, SUCH A DELIGHT FOR ME.

NARRATOR 1: There was nothing to be done with Toad. He was now possessed. He had a new craze, and it always took him that way, in its first stage.

RAT: *(Sharply)* Now look here Toad! As soon as we get to the town you'll have to go straight to the Police Station and see who that motor car belongs to and lodge a complaint.

TOAD: *(Dreamily)* Police Station! Complaint! Me complain of that beautiful, heavenly vision. You can't think how grateful I am that you came on this trip. I might never have gone without you.

NARRATOR 1: Rat did his best to persuade Toad to go to the Police Station and report the motorist, then get the caravan repaired, but he was wasting his time, Toad would hear none of it. All he could think of, from that moment on was motor cars. The thought of them flowed through his veins, he was spellbound, entranced, bewitched. When they reached the town they went straight to the station and deposited Toad on a slow train that went close by Toad Hall. The very next day Toad went up to town and ordered a very large and very expensive car.

(Toad & Mole exit. Rat moves to otherside of stage and sits in front of fireplace.)

NARRATOR 2: Mole had long wanted to make acquaintance with the Badger but whenever Mole mentioned his wish to Rat, he always found himself put off with comments like "Badger'll turn up someday or other".

One winter's day when Rat was fast asleep, Mole decided he would go to explore the wild wood himself and maybe strike up an acquaintance with Badger. *(Mole enters downstage alone).*

At first entry, there was nothing to alarm him. Twigs crackled under his feet, logs tripped him, but that was all fun. As he penetrated further, everything became still and dusk gathered in behind him.

NARRATOR 3: He quickened his pace, telling himself to stop imagining things. He hurried forward, panic setting in. He began to run aimlessly into things, over things, under things, anywhere! Eventually he took refuge in the deep dark hollow of an old tree. *(Crouches down upstage.)*

Rat meanwhile dozed by the fireside, dreaming of his beloved rivers, when suddenly a coal slipped, sending up a spurt of flame. With a start he awoke and looked around, gathering his senses. He realised Mole was not about when he called him.

RAT: Moly, Moly!

NARRATOR 2: Receiving no answer, he went looking about the house for him. Something was wrong he sensed. He set off for the wild wood at brisk pace.

RAT: Moly! Moly! Moly! Where are you? It's me – its old Ratty!

MOLE: Ratty! Is that really you? I've been so frightened, you can't think!

NARRATOR 2: Rat fully understood and after resting, they prepared to set off for home. Stepping outside of the old tree, they soon discovered it was snowing hard.

