

Harmony Tree International Speech Festival (HTISF)
2025-2026 Set Pieces for Asia Division

FINAL

Dramatic Duologue
Born in 2016-2017

Choice A
Time Limit:
3 minutes

Remote

By Stef Smith

(ANTLER has just come out of a house and enters holding a mobile phone. Antler flings the phone to the ground, stamps on it and climbs a tree in the park. Antler doesn't want to be found by anyone, but DESK has just stumbled across Antler sitting in the tree.)

DESK: What you doing up there?
ANTLER: What?
DESK: I said what you doing up there?
ANTLER: I'm thinking.
DESK: Can't you just think down here?
ANTLER: Can you leave me alone please?
DESK: It's dangerous being up there so high. At least without ropes. I mean, if you had ropes it would definitely be safer. But you don't have ropes, so it really isn't safe. I'm Desk. Who are you?
ANTLER: Your name is Desk? Weird name.
DESK: What's your name?
ANTLER: Antler.
DESK: Antler? Why you called Antler?
ANTLER: It's a long story.
DESK: Have you got somewhere else to be?
ANTLER: Can you just go. I'm having a private moment here.
DESK: I'll go once you tell me.
ANTLER: Why are you called Desk?
DESK: Because it's my name.
ANTLER: Not much of a name is it?
DESK: Works for me.
(Desk looks up at Antler and Antler looks down at DESK. They pause in that moment.)
ANTLER: What? Stop watching me. Just move along.
DESK: You just seem a little old for climbing trees.

ANTLER: No age limit on climbing trees - is there? No age limit at all.

DESK: How long are you staying up there?

(There's silence while Antler thinks of an answer).

ANTLER: It's a protest. You're not meant to know how long a protest is.

DESK: A protest? Have you just decided that?

ANTLER: No.

DESK: What's it about then?

ANTLER: It's private.

DESK: I don't think protests are meant to be private.

ANTLER: Well, this one is.

DESK: Shouldn't people know why you are protesting so they know what it is you want done?

ANTLER: It's not that kind of protest.

DESK: Don't you want something changed or fixed?

ANTLER: Yes.

DESK: Well. What is it then?

ANTLER: How many times do I need to stay it's private.

DESK: I don't think you're very good at protesting.

ANTLER: And I don't think you're very good at listening. This has nothing to do with you.

DESK: Can I come up then?

ANTLER: Look. I'm sorry but go find something else to climb.

DESK: Well. You don't own the tree. No one can own trees.

ANTLER: Yeah? So?

DESK: So I'm coming up.

- The End-

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Choice B
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The Twits

by Roald Dahl, an adapted version

(Mr & Mrs Twit are a horrible couple who are constantly playing nasty practical jokes on each other because of their mutual hatred. In this scene, Mr Twit convinces Mrs Twit that she has 'the shrinks' and will soon disappear into nothingness.)

- MR TWIT:** That stick's too long for you. *(Picking up the stick and examining it closely.)*
- MRS TWIT:** Why so it is! I've had a feeling there was something wrong but I couldn't for the life of me think what it was.
- MR TWIT:** There's something wrong all right.
- MRS TWIT:** What can have happened? It must suddenly have grown longer.
- MR TWIT:** Don't be a fool! How can a walking stick possibly grow longer? It's made of dead wood, isn't it? Dead wood can't grow.
- MRS TWIT:** Then what on earth has happened?
- MR TWIT:** It's not the stick, it's you! It's you that getting shorter! I've been noticing for some time now.
- MRS TWIT:** That's not true!
- MR TWIT:** You're shrinking, woman!
- MRS TWIT:** It's not possible!
- MR TWIT:** Oh yes it jolly well is. You're shrinking fast! You're shrinking dangerously fast! Why, you must have shrunk at least a foot in the last few days!
- MRS TWIT:** Never!
- MR TWIT:** Of course you have! Take a look at your stick, you old goat, and see how much you've shrunk in comparison! You've got the shrinks, that's what you've got! You've got the dreaded shrinks!
- MRS TWIT:** Aaaaaaagh!
- MR TWIT:** There you are! You're sitting in your old chair and you've shrunk so much your feet aren't even touching the ground! Just look at you sitting there in your same old chair — you've shrunk so much your feet are dangling in the air!

MRS TWIT: Oh no! Ah! Help me!

MR TWIT: You've got the shrinks! You've got them badly! You've got the most terrible case of shrinks I've ever seen! I suppose you know what happens to you when you get the shrinks?

MRS TWIT: What? What happens?

MR TWIT: Your head shrinks into your neck... And your neck shrinks into your body... And your body shrinks into your legs... And your legs shrink into your feet. And in the end there's nothing left except a pair of shoes and a bundle of old clothes!

MRS TWIT: I can't bear it!

MR TWIT: It's a terrible disease. The worst in the world.

MRS TWIT: How long have I got? How long before I finish up as a bundle of old clothes and a pair of shoes?

MR TWIT: At the rate you're going, I'd say not more than ten or eleven days.

MRS TWIT: But isn't there anything we can do?

MR TWIT: There's only one cure for the shrinks.

MRS TWIT: Tell me! Oh, tell me quickly!

MR TWIT: We'll have to hurry!

MRS TWIT: I'm ready. I'll hurry! I'll do anything you say!

MR TWIT: *(Giving her another grizzly grin)* You won't last long if you don't.

MRS TWIT: What is it I must do?

MR TWIT: *(Grabbing hold of MRS TWIT and starting to stretch her)*
You've got to be stretched!

MRS TWIT: *(Screaming out in pain)* Aaaaaaaah!

- The End-