

**THE CRAZY  
DESERT CRITTERS**  
**Created and Formatted for Readers Theater**  
**By Lois Walker**  
**Scripts For Schools**  
<http://www.scriptsforschools.com>

**PROPS AND COSTUMES**

PROPS OR COSTUME PIECES MAY BE USED AS EACH READER TAKES ROLE OF THE FUNNY OLD MAN. FOR EXAMPLE: STRANGE HAT, GLASSES WITH FALSE NOSE, AND WALKING CANE. AS READING BEGINS, PROPS AND COSTUMES ARE UNDER READER 1's CHAIR. THESE ITEMS WILL BE PASSED FROM READER TO READER AS THE READING PROGRESSES.

**SIGNS**

LARGE SIGNS WITH THE FOLLOWING WORDS PRINTED UPON THEM WILL ALSO BE NEEDED): ***SURPRISED, AMAZED, DUMBFOUNDED, BEWILDERED, ASTONISHED, SIDE-BLOTCHED LIZARD, ROUND-TAILED SQUIRREL, TORTOISE/REPTILE, KIT FOX, AND BOBCAT.*** SIGNS MAY BE GLUED TO HOLDING STICKS, IF DESIRED. THESE WILL BE KEPT ON FLOOR IN FRONT OF APPROPRIATE READERS UNTIL CALLED FOR IN THE SCRIPT.

**SEATING/READING ARRANGEMENTS**

FACING AUDIENCE, ALL READERS SIT IN A ROW ON STOOLS OR CHAIRS. SCRIPTS ARE HELD IN HANDS, LOW ENOUGH SO THAT FACES ARE EASILY SEEN.

**THE NARRATOR STANDS AND THE READING BEGINS:**

**THE CRAZY DESERT CRITTERS**  
**NORTH AMERICA/RT/Teacher/Intermediate/I-73**

2

**NARRATOR:** Late last Monday  
It happened, you see,  
A funny old man  
Shuffled up to me.

(READER 1 PUTS ON HAT AND GLASSES,  
TAKES CANE. THE FOLLOWING READERS  
STAND AS THEY READ THEIR INDIVIDUAL  
LINES:

**READER 2:** He pointed his finger

**READER 3:** And scratched his head.

(READER 1 STANDS AND BEGINS TO SHUFFLE  
DOWNSTAGE CENTER, PRETENDING TO BE  
THE OLD MAN).

**READER 4:** Then this is what the old man said,

(THE FOLLOWING WORD MUST BE SAID JUST  
AS IT IS WRITTEN: " EX-CUE-OOOOZ" IS  
PRONOUNCED AS THREE SYLLABLES.  
"OOOOZ" AND "ME" ARE EMPHASIZED.  
REHEARSE THIS BY ESTABLISHING A BEAT OR  
RHYTHM TO BE USED THROUGHOUT THE  
STORY WHEN THESE WORDS APPEAR).

**ALL:** **EX-CUE-OOOOZ ME!**

**THE CRAZY DESERT CRITTERS**  
**NORTH AMERICA/RT/Teacher/Intermediate/I-73**

3

(READER 1 POINTS CANE OR WAGS FINGER  
AT AUDIENCE DURING READING OF  
FOLLOWING POEM):

**READER 1:**

Is that your mama  
With blotches on her side,  
About 5 inches long  
And not very wide?

She moves pretty fast  
And I'll tell you too,  
That crazy critter looks a lot

(ALL READERS POINT TO AUDIENCE IN  
UNISON ON "LIKE YOU!").

**ALL:**

**LIKE YOU!**

(ALL READERS POINT TO AUDIENCE IN  
UNISON ON "LIKE YOU!" READER 1 RETURNS  
TO CHAIR AND PASSES PROPS TO READER 2).

**NARRATOR:**

As you can well imagine,  
I was

(READER 5 PICKS UP SIGN SAYING  
"SURPRISED." READER 5 STANDS, HOLDS  
SIGN ABOVE HEAD, AND SAYS):

**THE CRAZY DESERT CRITTERS**  
**NORTH AMERICA/RT/Teacher/Intermediate/I-73**

4

**READER 5:** Surprised!

(ALL READERS EXCEPT NARRATOR SIT.  
READER 5 PLACES SIGN ON FLOOR).

**NARRATOR:** I began to feel  
Scales, brownish and gray,  
Sprouting on my body  
Every which way.

Oh no! I cried.  
Then I shook and quivered.  
That desert critter is a

**ALL:** **SIDE-BLOTCHED LIZARD!**

(FROM SEATED POSITION, READER 4 HOLDS  
UP SIGN SAYING "SIDE-BLOTCHED LIZARD"  
AS ABOVE LINE IS READ. WHEN FINISHED,  
THE SIGN IS RETURNED TO FLOOR).

**NARRATOR:** Late last Tuesday  
It happened, you see,  
A funny old man  
Shuffled up to me.

**THE CRAZY DESERT CRITTERS**  
**NORTH AMERICA/RT/Teacher/Intermediate/I-73**

5

(READER 2 PUTS ON HAT, GLASSES, TAKES  
CANE. THE FOLLOWING READERS STAND AS  
THEY READ THEIR INDIVIDUAL LINES).

**READER 1:** He pointed his finger

**READER 3:** And scratched his head.

(READER 2 STANDS AND SHUFFLES  
DOWNSTAGE CENTER, PRETENDING TO BE  
THE OLD MAN. READER 2 FACES AUDIENCE).

**READER 4:** Then this is what the old man said,

(SAME DIRECTIONS AS EARLIER).

**ALL:** **EX-CUE-OOOOZ ME!**

(READER 2 POINTS CANE OR WAGS FINGER  
JUST AS READER 1 DID EARLIER)

**READER 2:** Is that your papa  
Dashing 'cross the trail?  
He's a white and sandy color,  
With a round skinny tail.

He's heading for his burrow  
And I'll tell you, too,