



**Lois Walker's  
SCRIPTS FOR SCHOOLS**

**IT'S ARBOR  
DAY!**

**A Choral Reading / Speaking  
Script:  
The Origins of Arbor Day**

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## **SAMPLE PAGES: 82 IT'S ARBOR DAY!**

*A Choral Reading/Speaking Script: The Origins of Arbor Day*

*By Lois Walker*

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### **FORMATTING:**

*This script was written as a choral reading/speaking piece and is formatted for ALL, ALL GIRLS, ALL BOYS and lines for 1 SOLO READER reading the part of Julius Sterling Morton.*

### **ESTABLISHING THE RHYTHM:**

*To find the proper rhythm, first read-aloud and clap through the piece as you go. Each underlined word or word part falls directly on a beat. As you read, clap on each underlined word, keeping the rhythm steady. Be careful not to read too fast! This is a rehearsal technique and readers will not clap throughout the entire piece during performance.*

### **HISTORY OF ARBOR DAY:** <http://arbor-day.net/>

*"The first Arbor Day took place on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska. It was the brainchild of Julius Sterling Morton (1832-1902), a Nebraska journalist and politician originally from Michigan. Throughout his long and productive career, Morton worked to improve agricultural techniques in his adopted state and throughout the United States when he served as President Grover Cleveland's Secretary of Agriculture. But his most important legacy is Arbor Day.*

*Morton felt that Nebraska's landscape and economy would benefit from the wide-scale planting of trees. He set an example himself planting orchards, shade trees and wind breaks on his own farm and he urged his neighbors to follow suit. Morton's real opportunity, though, arrived when he became a member of Nebraska's state board of agriculture. He proposed that a special day be set aside dedicated to tree planting and increasing awareness of the importance of trees. Nebraska's first Arbor Day was an amazing success."*

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ALL: *Back in Nebraska, eighteen seventy two, (1872)  
Julius Sterling Morton voiced his point of view.  
He brought folks together, then named appointees,  
And said...*

SOLO: *"Pitch in! Let's plant some trees!"*

ALL GIRLS: *Is that the way it happened? Yes, as sure as you're born!*

ALL BOYS: *He didn't plant taters, and he didn't plant corn.*

ALL: *Some suggested spinach, but he said...*

SOLO: *"No Way!  
This is all about trees - It's ARBOR DAY."*

ALL: *Back in Nebraska, eighteen seventy two, (1872)  
Julius Sterling Morton saw his whole plan through.  
He planted fruit orchards on his very own farm  
Saying...*

SOLO: *"Trees are great- and they do no harm".*

ALL GIRLS: *Is that the way it happened? Yes, that's what they say!*

ALL BOYS: *He didn't plant asparagus and didn't plant hay.*

ALL: *Some suggested turnips, but he said...*

SOLO: *"No Way!  
This is all about trees - It's ARBOR DAY."*

ALL: *Back in Nebraska, eighteen seventy two, (1872)  
Julius Sterling Morton knew exactly what to do.  
He planted new shade trees - trees galore!*

SOLO: *"More shade trees than I'd ever seen before."*

ALL GIRLS: *Is that the way it happened? Yes, that's the way it seems.*

ALL BOYS: *He didn't plant carrots and didn't plant beans.*

ALL: *Some suggested cabbage, but he said...*

SOLO: *"No Way!  
This is all about trees - It's ARBOR DAY."*

ALL: *Back in Nebraska, eighteen seventy two, (1872)  
Julius Sterling Morton didn't over-do.  
He just planted his trees, didn't preach, rant, or trample.*

SOLO: *"Folks planted trees too, and followed my example."*

ALL GIRLS: *Is that the way it happened? Yes, sakes alive!*

ALL BOYS: *He didn't plant parsnips or leafy endive.*

ALL: *Some suggested peppers, but he said...*

SOLO: *"No Way!  
This is all about trees - It's ARBOR DAY."*

**CONTINUED...**