



Lois Walker's

SCRIPTS FOR SCHOOLS

Civilization Game

A Readers Theater/Choral Reading
Script Involving Six Important
Ancient Civilizations

Advanced Readers

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CIVILIZATION GAME

OVERVIEW: This script was written to introduce the names of six ancient civilizations to a classroom audience and to suggest just a few of the important attributes of each civilization. It is simply an introduction and is meant to stimulate further student interest in the subject. At the very least, it is a great way to insure that all students remember the names of all six civilizations! (*Hence the repetition of the six names throughout the script*).

The prose section at the beginning of the piece has been written to set up/explain the concept of making the six civilizations into "teams" that will compete with each other for a final vote from the audience members.

The following rhymed sections constitute the "games" and can be performed in any way your students like. Using a "rap" beat is only one of the options.

ALSO OPTIONAL:

Recorded music or rhythm backgrounds, the addition of costumes or costume pieces, stylized gestures, choreography, even creative lighting and set pieces. The script should work with or without these additions, but they are worth considering.

FORMATTING:

This script combines choral and prose text and is formatted for a performance group of any size. The opening prose section requires 7 solo readers. However, the size of each competing "team" depends on how many readers you have available.

ESTABLISHING THE RHYTHM:

To find the proper rhythm for the choral text, first read-aloud and clap through these parts 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. (*The choral sections may be performed like a rap, if that works for your reading group*).

NOTE: To help establish the correct rhythm and timing for the rhymed sections of this script, an mp3 voice recording is available at no charge. Simply email: loiswalker@hotmail.com and request that one be sent to you as an email attachment.

CIVILIZATION GAME
By Lois Walker

READER 1: Ladies and gentlemen, members of the _____ school community, and fellow classmates, today it is my pleasant duty to introduce you to six very important ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS!

READER 2: Ancient what?

READER 3: What's she/he talking about?

READER 4: I think it's something about ancient relations.

READER 5: Like my old aunt and uncle who live in Manitoba?

READER 6: No, no – he/she's talking about old civilizations! You know - people and places from long, long ago! This is history people!

READER 7: I hate history.

READER 5: I'm not too crazy about my aunt and uncle either.

READER 1: Hey, I'm talking about Egypt...

ALL
(Except 1): EGYPT!

READER 1: India...

ALL
(Except 1): INDIA!

READER 1: China...

ALL
(Except 1): CHINA!

READER 1: Greece...

ALL
(Except 1): GREECE!

READER 1: Rome...

ALL
(Except 1): ROME!

READER 1: AndMesopotamia.

READER 2: MESO...

READER 3: MESO...

READER 4: MESO...

ALL
(Except 1): WHAT????

READER 1: ...POTAMIA. Mesopotamia. Don't worry, you'll get it. It'll grow on you.

(Readers shake their heads and look confused. They are not convinced).

READER 2: I'm not too sure about that.

READER 3: Me either. Why do we need to know about these uh...

READER 4: ...ancient civilizations...

READER 3: Yeah. Why do we need to know about these ancient civilizations anyway?

READER 1: Because each of them invented, created, or introduced something to the world that influenced generations to come - and still influence us today.

READER 5: Oh come on! Someone from Meso - Meso - Meso...

ALL:
(Except 5): POTAMIA!

READER 5: Right. Someone from that place or something that happened in that place still makes a difference to my life here in _____? (*Your location*).

READER 6: I don't think so.

READER 7: Wait a minute! I may hate history, but I seem to remember hearing somewhere that a Babylonian King named Hammurabi was the first guy to think that maybe societies needed a few laws to help keep order.

READER 2: Yeah, I saw that on the History Channel. He was the "eye for an eye - tooth for a tooth" guy. The laws were called The Code of Hammurabi. Hey, without him, there'd be no jobs for the RCMP (*police/FBI/bounty hunters*) today.

READER 3: And think about those poor jobless lawyers.

READER 4: The mind boggles...

READER 1: NOW you're getting with the program! So, I want to divide us into six teams. We need one team for each of the six civilizations. Each team will try to convince the audience that their civilization is the best - *and* that *their* civilization offered the most important contributions to our way of life today.

(As each civilization is called out by ALL below, other readers from the class come on stage to join their teams. For example, readers who are taking part as the Mesopotamia Team, gather round Reader 7 as that name is called, and so forth. As they run in, they cheer and high five each other just as athletic teams might do on the field. By the end of this section, all 6 teams will be on stage. At this point in time, they may sit, and only stand and move when it is time for their individual teams to perform).

READER 7: OK, then I'll take Mesopotamia.

ALL: MESOPOTAMIA!

READER 6: And I'll take Egypt.

ALL: EGYPT!

READER 5: I've got India.

ALL: INDIA!

READER 4: Sign me up for China.

ALL: CHINA!

READER 3: What's left? Greece?

ALL: GREECE!

READER 2: OK, OK, I'm stuck with Rome.

ALL: ROME!

READER 7: Stuck with Rome? Well, I may hate history - but something tells me being stuck with Rome is NOT a bad thing.

ALL: NOT BAD AT ALL!

READER 1: OK, enough is enough. Is everyone ready?

(All teams respond in the positive, then sit).

READER 1: Then let the games begin!!!! After all the teams have competed, we'll ask the audience to vote and decide which team is the winner. First off is TEAM MESOPOTAMIA.

(Each group huddles as though they are making game plans, then turn in unison and shout):

ALL: MESOPOTAMIA!

(Mesopotamian team rises and takes center stage)

(Optional: Recorded rap beat is heard. Game teams can "rap" their verses to the same beat or a different beat may be used by each team. A bit of inventive choreography might also add more fun and visual interest to the verses. This is entirely up to the readers/performers and their view of the script).

(READER 7 leads this team. Solo lines may be divided up between members of the team or lines – or combinations of lines - may be read in duet, trio, quartet, or in unison):

In seventeen seventy two B.C.

The Code of Hammurabi was a guarantee

Of an “eye for an eye” and a “tooth for a tooth”

If you committed a crime or you told an untruth.

Two hundred and eighty two laws where the rule.

This Babylonian king was clearly - NO FOOL!

In addition to law, he also introduced

Other innovations not formerly produced

In agriculture, irrigation, engineering, and astronomy

That helped these ancient people and boosted the economy.

So, Mesopotamia passes the test.

This civilization is the best of the best!

(Everyone applauds as team leaves center stage)

READER 1: Thank you, Team Mesopotamia - but we'll have to wait for the audience vote to tell us who's best. Second on the roster is TEAM EGYPT.

(Group huddles as though they are making game plans, then turn in unison and shout):

ALL: EGYPT!

(Egypt team takes center stage)

(READER 6 leads this team. Solo lines may be divided up between members of the team or lines – or combinations of lines - may be read in duet, trio, quartet, or in unison):

No one can beat our Queen Nefertiti.

She was more than just a pretty face -more than just a sweetie!

She was a principal wife of Ramesses the Great -

A beautiful companion and a major fashion plate!

Make-up, jewelery, clothing, and hair

Became important to everyone, most everybody cared.

During her time, more concepts grew:

Religion - gods and goddesses - that everybody knew.

And the amazing idea that there was life after you died,

So they built majestic pyramids for pharaohs and their brides.

And if you like art, hieroglyphics abounded.

What else can you ask for? You must be astounded!

(Everyone applauds as team leaves center stage)

READER 1: Good work, Team Egypt. You were astounding. But it's time to move on to TEAM INDIA.

(Group huddles as though they are making game plans, then turn in unison and shout):

ALL: INDIA!

(India team takes center stage)

(READER 5 leads this team. Solo lines may be divided up between members of the team or lines – or combinations of lines - may be read in duet, trio, quartet, or in unison):

Way back in five hundred sixty three B.C.

A son was born to a royal family.

And as he grew, very soon he understood

That money would buy happiness, if it could -

But it couldn't! So he studied the religions of the day

And then became "enlightened" - the "middle path" way!

"Buddha" he was called and for the rest of his life

He taught the principles of Buddhism - a cure for earthly strife.

And so his "Dhamma", or his "Truth" was spread both far and wide,

A philosophy that still lives on and cannot be denied.

So, if you're seeking contributions that are still felt today,

We nominate the "Buddha"! Well, what more can we say?

(Everyone applauds as team leaves center stage)

READER 1: Enough said - and well said too! Next up is TEAM CHINA.

(Group huddles as though they are making game plans, then turn in unison and shout):

ALL: CHINA!

(China team takes center stage)

(READER 4 leads this team. Solo lines may be divided up between members of the team or lines – or combinations of lines - may be read in duet, trio, quartet, or in unison):

In China, have you heard of the famous Great Wall?

Well, the Chinese built that wall as protection for them all.

Their very first emperor announced the instructions.

The wall was made of earth and stones, as planned for its construction.

Qin Shi Huang, of the Qin Dynasty

Built this famous wall as a safety guarantee.

His other great achievement is not for the fainthearted.

Sculptures buried with him after he departed.

Not just a few, but thousands of terracotta pieces!

Soldiers, horses, chariots – the amazement never ceases!

Both of these accomplishments are wonders beyond measure,

So China gets our vote as an outstanding treasure.

(Everyone applauds as team leaves center stage)

READER 1: And thanks for the outstanding presentation. Next up is TEAM GREECE.

(Group huddles as though they are making game plans, then turn in unison and shout):

ALL: GREECE!

(Greece team takes center stage)