

NOAH AND THE ARKETTES

by Cindy Rogers



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Noah and the Arkettes

A large-cast rap play for children

by CINDY ROGERS

CAST OF CHARACTERS

NARRATOR

NOAH

GOD

NOAH'S THREE SONS

SONS' THREE DANCING WIVES

NOAH'S WIFE

37 ANIMAL PAIRS (adjustable):

Horses, Cattle, Donkeys, Pigeons, Cougars, Blue Jays,
Wolves, Gorillas, Rhinos, Turtles, Hippos, Crocodiles,
Kitty Cats, Bandicoots, Hummingbirds, Camels,
Wild Dogs, Fleas, Songbirds, Crows, Snakes, Sheep,
Goldfish, Chickens, Lions, Ducks, Horned Owls, Giraffes,
Elephants, Geese (Obadiah and Jezebel), Monkeys,
Hedgehogs, Leeches, Rabbits, Kangaroos, Roosters, Robins.

PRODUCTION NOTES

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS:

Narrator — Wears MTV-inspired rapper garb, such as baggy pants, a baseball cap worn backwards, and cool sunglasses.

Noah — Wears a biblical-looking long robe and sandals.

Noah's Three Sons — All wear similar clothing, such as tunics, robes, or even sweatsuits, but in different colors.

Sons' Three Dancing Wives — All wear brightly colored, similar clothing, such as long, full skirts and blouses, and spangly jewelry. They carry tambourines.

Noah's Wife — Wears a long robe similar to Noah's and sandals. Carries an autoharp for her "lyre," a harp-like instrument from Bible times (or lyre may be pantomimed).

Animals — Each pair of animals is simply costumed and has one physical characteristic that is descriptive of the animal being portrayed. The following suggestions are easy to do, but feel free to adapt them, as your group of children may come up with an added gesture or costume addition.

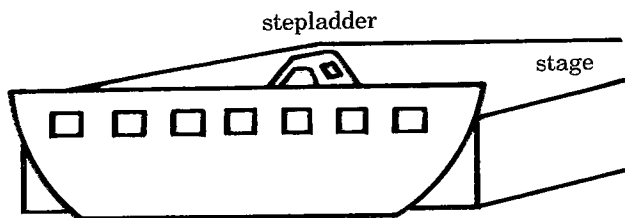
1. **Horses** — brown clothing; long yarn tail; rear and paw the air.
2. **Cattle** — brown clothing; sway, chew cud.
3. **Donkeys** — gray clothing; long, gray ears; sway.
4. **Pigeons** — white clothing; cuddle.
5. **Cougars** — yellow clothing; slink along stage.
6. **Blue Jays** — blue clothing; jab at each other, flap arms.
7. **Wolves** — gray clothing; lift heads back and pretend to howl.
8. **Gorillas** — black clothing; scratch under arms.
9. **Rhinos** — gray clothing; add horn to face; sway.
10. **Turtles** — green clothing; wear boxes on back; move head in and out as if snapping.
11. **Hippos** — gray clothing; add pillows to bodies.
12. **Crocodiles** — greenish-black clothing; arms outstretched, palms together, "snap" vertically and slither.
13. **Kitty Cats** — whiskers; lick paws.
14. **Bandicoots** — rat-like tails; hands to face; eyes darting.
15. **Hummingbirds** — multi-colored clothing; flit around stage.
16. **Camels** — tan clothing; a pillow hump on back; chew cud.

17. **Wild Dogs** — pointed construction-paper ears; sit on haunches; pant.
18. **Wee Fleas** — (tiniest children) dark clothing; scrunched up to jump.
19. **Songbirds** — red clothing; arms around each other; croon.
20. **Black Crows** — black clothing; flap arms.
21. **Snakes** — green clothing; slither and curl.
22. **Curly Sheep** — light-colored fur; munch.
23. **Goldfish** — orange clothing; “fins” with hands; pucker.
24. **Chickens** — white clothing; wave arm “wings” in and out.
25. **Lions** — long, wild hair fanned around face; paw air.
26. **Ducks** — yellow clothing; duck beaks; waddle.
27. **Horned Owls** — glasses; scrunch up; swivel necks.
28. **Giraffes** — (tall children) arm above head for long neck.
29. **Elephants** — gray clothing; vacuum cleaner tubes for waving trunks.
30. **Geese (Obadiah and Jezebel)** — white clothing; yellow construction-paper beaks attached with elastic.
31. **Monkeys** — brown clothing, pantomime swinging from trees.
32. **Hedgehogs** — brown clothing; coat pulled over head; curl up.
33. **Leeches** — gray clothing; attach selves to other animals.
34. **Rabbits** — long, pink ears; hop.
35. **Kangaroos** — large front pocket; leap.
36. **Roosters** — multi-colored, construction-paper tail; stilted walk.
37. **Robins** — deep orange shirt; flap arms.

PROPS: Recording of thunder and rain; a microphoned podium for Narrator; floor microphone for Obadiah and Jezebel, the Three Sons, their Three Dancing Wives and Noah’s Wife; stepladder, bucket of rags, a baton or stick and lapel microphone for Noah; three tambourines for the Three Dancing Wives; autoharp for Noah’s Wife, if available; more rhythm instruments if desired.

SET: The entire front of the stage may be covered by a large brown cardboard cutout of an ark. The actors must be able to be seen above it. The stepladder is placed beside the animals

and should be turned to the side, which means Noah's back isn't turned to the audience and the animal performers may still see his conducting.



CASTING NOTES: A benefit of this play is that it may involve your entire Sunday school department, VBS, summer camp, or other large group. The number of animal performers used may be added or subtracted according to the number of available children. This play may accommodate anywhere from about 20 to 82 or more children.

If your group is smaller, you may creatively double the parts by combining pairs of animals with similarly-colored costumes; i.e., wolves and leeches, hippos and elephants, camels and kangaroos, crocodiles and snakes, cattle and monkeys, black crows and fleas, rhinos and owls, etc. If you do this, be sure that the children have time to go Backstage and make the minor costume changes needed when making the transition from one animal to the other. An easier option with a small group is to not attempt to portray every animal listed, but to select animals here and there, depending on the size of your group. All the children may then supply the animal noises while the Narrator raps the majority of the story. (Note: You must keep the blue jays and the goose pair, Obadiah and Jezebel, as they are important to the story.)

The Narrator should be a teenager or adult with a strong rhythmic voice. Noah should also have a strong voice and sense of rhythm, as he conducts the choir and keeps everyone together throughout the rap. A good choice for this part is your group's music leader. If the music leader happens to be a woman, no problem! This play is designed for fun. Just add a beard! The Off-stage voice of God should be a resonant, deep voice, or could be done by the Narrator. If there are some girls in your group who take dance lessons, cast them as the Three Dancing Wives, as a little choreography livens up the play.

BLOCKING: Animal partners should sit On-stage in the following order:

Row 1 — horses, cattle, donkeys, pigeons, cougars, blue jays, wolves.

Row 2 — gorillas, rhinos, turtles, hippos, crocodiles, kitty cats, bandicoots, hummingbirds.

Row 3 — camels, dogs, fleas, songbirds, crows, snakes, sheep, goldfish.

Row 4 — chickens, lions, ducks, horned owls, giraffes, elephants, geese.

Row 5 — monkeys, hedgehogs, leeches, rabbits, kangaroos, roosters, robins.

The Narrator stands off to the side at a podium with a microphone.

PERFORMANCE NOTES: All animals quietly act their parts (see notes on characteristics) until it is their row's turn to "perform." At that time, each row stands and raps the verses along with the Narrator. When the line that applies to a particular pair is said, the pair takes a step forward and makes its animal noise and/or gesture, then steps back into line. Each row sits after completing its two stanzas.

The animals should have their row's two stanzas memorized, plus the parts which call for all the animals in stanzas 1, 2, 5, 26, 27 and 28. They should also have the closing song (see suggested songs, page 10) memorized.

In rehearsals, establish a good rap beat. Use of a drummer, metronome, or electronic keyboard's rhythm section will help to establish the beat in rehearsals and the performance. The beat needs to be loud enough to be heard, but not so loud that it drowns out the rappers. Noah's conducting isn't just for show — it will actually help keep everyone together and on the beat. Don't make the mistake of setting the tempo too fast. The rappers may get off the beat, and the audience won't understand the words! The lines where the animals enter in are two beats each. Pause after each line for another two beats to allow each pair of animals to make its sound before proceeding to the next line — in effect, making each line four beats. Children may snap their fingers to the beat or clap to help keep time. It is helpful to pause between stanzas if the action is not continuous to give the rappers a chance to catch their breath.

1 *(NARRATOR stands off to one side holding a microphone.*
 2 *ANIMALS [including OBADIAH and JEZEBEL] enter in pairs*
 3 *from Stage Left, Stage Right and Center Stage. Disorder abounds*
 4 *as the animals move into their five rows Center Stage. When the*
 5 *rows are complete, all ANIMALS sit. Thunderstorm sound effects*
 6 *may be played during this time to establish the mood.)*

7

8 **STANZA ONE**

9 **NARRATOR:** *(To ANIMALS)* Are you ready?

10 **ANIMALS:** *(Together)* Uh-huh, uh-huh.

11 **NARRATOR:** Are you ready?

12 **ANIMALS:** Oh yeah.

13 **NARRATOR:** Are you ready?

14 **ANIMALS:** Uh-huh, uh-huh.

15 **NARRATOR:** Are you ready?

16 **ANIMALS:** Let's go!

17

18 **STANZA TWO**

19 **NARRATOR:** *(To audience)* For many a day and many a night,

20 The rain had poured, coverin' all in sight.

21 The earth and the sky were stormy and dark,

22 'Twas one vast sea and a large damp ark.

23

24 **STANZA THREE**

25 *(NOAH enters and stands Center Stage.)* The captain of the
 26 ark, Noah by name,

27 Had been called by God with one grim aim:

28 **GOD:** *(From Off-stage or NARRATOR can do)* "Go save your kin
 29 and the beasts of earth,

30 For there's little else of value and worth."

31 **ANIMALS:** *(Softly)* The flood, the flood.

32 Here comes the flood!

33 The flood, the flood.

34 Here comes the flood! *(OBADIAH and JEZEBEL move to*
 35 *Stage Left from their spot in row 4. NOAH shuffles along,*

plugging imaginary leaks in the ark with his bucket of rags.)

STANZA FOUR

NARRATOR: On the thirtieth day of this great flood,
As the animals slumped in the ark with the mud,
Obadiah, the goose, said,

OBADIAH: I've had enough! (*OBADIAH and JEZEBEL waddle to NOAH.*)

NARRATOR: He waddled to Noah in a down-filled huff!

STANZA FIVE

OBADIAH: (*Upset*) Jezebel and I, you may have guessed,
Love creeks and lakes, though ponds are best.
We like to dive and backwater float,
But we're goin' nuts in this leaky boat!

JEZEBEL: Yeah! We're goin' nuts in this leaky boat!

STANZA SIX

JEZEBEL: Achoo!

NARRATOR: Sneezed Jezebel at his side. (*She wipes beak.*)
She wiped her beak, said,

JEZEBEL: I must confide
The animals here are all so bored,
They want this vessel grounded and moored!

ANIMALS: (*Together*) We want this vessel grounded and
moored!

STANZA SEVEN

NOAH: No way! (*NOAH takes a rag from his bucket and plugs a leak.*)

NARRATOR: Said Noah, as he plugged a leak.

NOAH: It's gonna rain for another whole week,
And then we'll wait 'til the earth is dry.
The days'll be long, I can't deny. (*OBADIAH, JEZEBEL and NOAH confer in a huddle.*)

1 **STANZA EIGHT**

2 **NARRATOR:** But the geese and Noah, they thought for awhile

3 As the great vast sea grew mile by mile.

4 A party to plan? A game to inspire?

5 **NOAH:** I know!

6 **NARRATOR:** Said Noah.

7 **NOAH:** Let's make us a choir!

8 **JEZEBEL and OBADIAH:** (*Ad lib four beats*) Hey, great idea!

9 A choir — awesome!

10

11 **STANZA NINE**

12 **BLUE JAYS:** (*Standing from their spot on row 1 with their hands*
13 *on hips, looking displeased*) What?

14 **NARRATOR:** Squawked the jays in startled dismay.

15 This wasn't their dream for a fun-filled day. (*BLUE JAYS*
16 *sit and whisper to the animals beside them who in turn pass the*
17 *word along, like the game "Telephone."*)

18 But the word, like the rain, spread throughout the group:

19 Old Noah was formin' a musical troupe! (*NOAH takes*
20 *"baton" and climbs ladder. OBADIAH and JEZEBEL return to*
21 *their places in row 4.*)

22

23 **STANZA TEN**

24 **NARRATOR:** Noah waved a stick from a ladder tall.

25 **NOAH:** (*Waving his arms as if conducting*) I'd like a sound from
26 each and all.

27 Let's hear row one — let your voices soar!

28 Ah one, ah two, ah two, three, four . . . (*ROW 1 ANIMALS*
29 *stand.*)

30

31 **STANZA ELEVEN**

32 **NARRATOR and ROW 1:** The horses neighed, (*HORSES step*
33 *forward, paw the air, and neigh two beats*)

34 The cattle mooed, (*CATTLE step forward and moo two beats*)

35 The donkeys brayed, (*DONKEYS step forward and bray two*

1 *beats)*

2 **While the pigeons cooed.** (*PIGEONS step forward and coo*
3 *two beats.*)

4

5 **STANZA TWELVE**

6 **The cougars growled,** (*COUGARS “slink” forward and growl*
7 *two beats)*

8 **The jays complained,** (*BLUE JAYS “fly” forward and noisily*
9 *chirp two beats)*

10 **The gray wolves howled,** (*WOLVES step forward and howl*
11 *two beats)*

12 **And the rains rained.** (*ROW 1 sits.*)

13

14 **STANZA THIRTEEN**

15 **NOAH:** (*Becoming more and more involved in his directing as the*
16 *choir builds until he is practically dancing on the ladder)* **I feel**
17 **a beat! Let’s tap our feet!**

18 **Hey, what a treat — we’re a singin’ fleet!**

19 **NARRATOR:** **No’h waved his stick and said, doublequick,**

20 **NOAH:** **Row two, your pick. Let’s give it some kick!** (*ROW 2*
21 *stands.*)

22

23 **STANZA FOURTEEN**

24 **NARRATOR and ROW 2:** **The gorillas rapped,** (*GORILLAS*
25 *step forward, scratch under arms and say “Ooo, ooo”)*

26 **The rhinos muttered,** (*RHINOS step forward and make low*
27 *muttering sounds for two beats)*

28 **The turtles snapped,** (*TURTLES step forward and stick their*
29 *heads in and out; could say “Snap, snap”)*

30 **As the hippos guttered.** (*HIPPOS step forward and make low*
31 *guttural noise for two beats.*)

32

33 **STANZA FIFTEEN**

34 **The crocodiles snooted,** (*CROCODILES slither forward and*
35 *snap with their arms outstretched, clapping their palms*

1 *vertically, and make snuffling noises for two beats)*
 2 **The kitty cats purred,** (*KITTY CATS step forward and meow*
 3 *and purr for two beats)*
 4 **The bandicoots cooted,** (*BANDICOOTS step forward and*
 5 *“coot” for two beats)*
 6 **And the hummingbirds whirred.** (*HUMMINGBIRDS step*
 7 *forward and twirl around; say “Whirrr!” for two beats. Row 2*
 8 *sits.)*

9

10 **STANZA SIXTEEN**11 **NOAH:** You're in the groove — you can really move!

12 Your musical sound is the best around!

13 **NARRATOR:** Noah tapped his toe and waved his bow.14 **NOAH:** OK, third row, let's give it a go! (*ROW 3 stands.*)

15

16 **STANZA SEVENTEEN**17 **NARRATOR and ROW 3:** The camels spit, (*CAMELS step*
 18 *forward and to the side so their humps are visible and make*
 19 *sputtering noises for two beats)*20 **The wild dogs barked,** (*DOGS step forward with hands up*
 21 *like paws and bark twice)*22 **The wee fleas bit,** (*FLEAS crouch down and jump forward,*
 23 *can say “Chomp, chomp”)*24 **While the songbirds larked.** (*SONGBIRDS “fly” forward with*
 25 *arms outstretched and chirp melodically two beats.)*

26

27 **STANZA EIGHTEEN**28 **The black crows cawed,** (*CROWS “fly” forward, arms*
 29 *outstretched, and caw two beats)*30 **The snakes hiss-hissed,** (*SNAKES slither forward and hiss*
 31 *two beats)*32 **The curly sheep baaed,** (*SHEEP step forward and baa two*
 33 *beats)*34 **And the goldfish kissed.** (*GOLDFISH use their arms like fins*
 35 *and “swim” forward, pucker up and make kiss noises two beats.*

1 *ROW 3 sits.)*

2

3 **STANZA NINETEEN**

4 **NOAH:** Don't stop yet! Keep your feet in check.

5 Oh, what the heck! There's rhythm on deck.

6 Rock to and fro; it's touch and go.

7 Fourth row, go! It's now your show! (*ROW 4 stands.*)

8

9 **STANZA TWENTY**

10 **NARRATOR and ROW 4:** The chickens cackled, (*CHICKENS*
11 *step forward and cackle two beats*)

12 The lions roared, (*LIONS step forward and roar two beats*)

13 The ducks quackled, (*DUCKS waddle forward and "Quack.*
14 *quack"*)

15 While the rains poured.

16

17 **STANZA TWENTY-ONE**

18 The horned owls hooted, (*OWLS step forward and "Hoo. hoo"*)

19 The giraffes wheezed, (*GIRAFFES step forward with one arm*
20 *above their heads and wheeze two beats*)

21 The elephants tooted, (*ELEPHANTS step forward. raise their*
22 *"trunks" and toot two beats*)

23 And the geese sneezed. (*OBADIAH and JEZEBEL step*
24 *forward and sneeze ["Achoo! Honk!," etc.] for two beats. ROW*
25 *4 sits.*)

26

27 **STANZA TWENTY-TWO**

28 **NOAH:** Oh, sneedle dee dee and sneedle dee dum,

29 You'll be the best in the kingdom come!

30 **NARRATOR:** He nodded his head at row number five.

31 **NOAH:** Give it some whirl and give it some jive! (*ROW 5 stands,*
32 *moving to the beat. The MONKEYS go to NOAH's ladder and*
33 *pretend to dangle from it.*)

34

35 **STANZA TWENTY-THREE**



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