

At the end of each play is a section called “Talk Back!” with discussion questions. These questions are catalysts for class discussions and projects. The plays do not make moral judgments. They are intended to spark students to use their imaginations and create their own code of ethics. Even if you’re not in school, “Talk Back!” can give you some additional ideas and interesting subjects to discuss.

Lastly, there are four extras in the Appendix: Character Questionnaire for Actors, Playwright’s Checklist, Scene Elements Worksheet, and Exploration Games. Each activity adds dimension and depth to the plays and is intended to appeal to various learning styles.

Enjoy!

Kristen Dabrowski

The Stain

3F, 2M

WHO

FEMALES



Jody
Libby
Sandy

MALES

Andy
James

WHERE In school.

WHEN Afternoon, present day.

-  See how different and clear you can make your character from the others. How is James different from Andy? Each character is very individual!
-  This play is about embarrassment at school. See if you can write a short play on this topic. I could probably write twenty-seven!

Scene 1: The Pants

SANDY: You're late!

ANDY: I know, I know!

SANDY: Where were you?

ANDY: I'm having a really bad day. I missed the bus and had to walk to school. And when I was walking to school, it started raining. And after it started raining, a car drove by and got me soaking wet. And then . . . Well, it's been a really lousy day, Sandy. What did I miss? Did Mrs. Ashcroft ever find that spider we put in her desk? It's got to be dead by now. Poor Spidey. He didn't deserve to die so young. Why do you girls think that spiders are scary even though they're, like, smaller than your smallest toe? I totally don't get that. Girls don't make any sense. *(Beat.)* Hey, how great is it that I got to school just in time for lunch today? My day is looking up!

SANDY: You smell funny.

ANDY: Thanks a lot.

SANDY: You're welcome.

ANDY: I was being sarcastic.

SANDY: I know. I'm smarter than you—remember?

(JODY enters.)

JODY: Anyone seen my lunch?

SANDY: Nope.

ANDY: Nope.

JODY: What's that smell?

SANDY: Andy.

JODY: Andy? How come you smell?

ANDY: A car drove by me, getting me soaking wet—

SANDY: And?

JODY: I don't get it.

ANDY: I wasn't done talking. The car that drove by me, getting me soaking wet, also drove over a skunk.

JODY: You got sprayed by a skunk?

SANDY: That's disgusting.

ANDY: I *know*.

JODY: P.U.!

ANDY: *(To Sandy.)* I told you I was having a bad day.

SANDY: Sounds like the worst day ever.

JODY: So nobody saw my lunch, right?

SANDY: No. And I am outta here! You smell, Andy.

ANDY: I *know*!

JODY: Help me find my lunch!

SANDY: What's in your lunch?

JODY: An egg salad sandwich, chocolate pudding—

SANDY: Yum! If I find it, can I have your pudding?

JODY: No way!

(SANDY and JODY exit.)

ANDY: I'm hungry.

(JAMES enters.)

JAMES: Hey, how come you're sitting alone?

ANDY: I smell.

JAMES: So?

ANDY: So, that's why.

JAMES: Oh. *(JAMES sits next to ANDY.)* How come you just got to school?

ANDY: Long story.

JAMES: Oh. Well, you missed a great math class.

ANDY: Really? Well, that just figures. Every day there's a boring math class. And the one day I get to school late—

JAMES: I was kidding. It was totally boring.

ANDY: Oh. Good.

JAMES: I wish I got to school late. I hate school.

ANDY: Me, too.

JAMES: You do smell.

ANDY: I know.

JAMES: What is that smell?

ANDY: Skunk.

JAMES: How come you didn't change?

ANDY: 'Cause I was gonna miss the bus.

JAMES: So, if you got the bus, why are you late?

ANDY: Because I missed the bus anyway.

JAMES: So why didn't you go home?

ANDY: Because the last time I missed the bus, I went home and my mom got really mad at me.

JAMES: Oh.

ANDY: Yeah. Worst day ever.

JAMES: Every day is the worst day ever for me.

ANDY: I wouldn't be so sure.

JAMES: How come you're not eating lunch?

ANDY: A dog ate it.

JAMES: Seriously?

ANDY: Yeah.

JAMES: When?

ANDY: After the skunk sprayed me, I took a shortcut through somebody's yard.

JAMES: And they had a dog.

ANDY: Right. Who chased me.

JAMES: And ate your lunch.

ANDY: Yeah.

JAMES: Man, that's really bad.

ANDY: I know. I'm hungry.

JAMES: Well, I gotta go. I'm gonna play baseball.

ANDY: Can I play, too?

JAMES: Sure.

(ANDY and JAMES stand up.)

ANDY: I feel weird.

JAMES: Why?

(JODY and SANDY enter.)

SANDY: We still can't find Jody's lunch.

ANDY: Um, I think I found it.

JODY: Where?

ANDY: *(Pointing to his backside.)* Here. I sat on it.

JODY: Gross!

SANDY: I don't want your pudding anymore.

JODY: Neither do I!

JAMES: Ha, ha! It's stuck to your pants!

ANDY: I am the unluckiest person on the planet. Why can't anything go right for me? Everyone's going to laugh at me. I'm ruined. This is a disaster. I have to sit through the rest of school with dirty water, skunk spray, egg salad, and chocolate pudding on my pants! *(Beat.)* They won't let me go home, will they? Of course they won't! Because that would be good, and nothing good ever happens to me. Jeez, oh man! I have to find a way to keep my dignity. I've got to pull myself together. I can't let a little stain get in my way, right? Maybe everyone will leave me alone for the rest of the day. It'll be nice. Peaceful. I bet the teachers won't even ask me any questions. They'll feel sorry for me! This is going to be a great day! I love this day!

SANDY: You've lost your mind.

JODY: You smell awful!

JAMES: You've got a huge stain on your butt!

ANDY: I *know!*

Scene 2: The Test

(ANDY sits alone.)

ANDY: Stupid social studies! No one said there was a test. Teacher didn't say so. How can everyone else know about it but me? I pay attention!

(LIBBY enters.)

LIBBY: You're talking to yourself.

ANDY: Did you know about the test?

LIBBY: Uh-huh.

ANDY: How did you know?

LIBBY: Teacher said so yesterday.

ANDY: When?

LIBBY: In class.

ANDY: I didn't hear it.

LIBBY: I did.

ANDY: Stupid social studies!

LIBBY: It's just a test. Take it easy.

ANDY: I can't!

LIBBY: So why are you here?

ANDY: Nobody came to pick me up. I'll probably be here forever.

LIBBY: I don't think so. I don't think you could be here forever.

ANDY: I didn't mean—

LIBBY: I think at some point *someone* will pick you up from school, Andy. They'll probably remember when it's time to eat dinner. Don't they yell at you to do your homework and go to bed? Because they might remember then. Besides, even if they didn't pick you up ever, you can only go to school for so many years. Unless you're dumb and you have to take the same grade over and over again. I can see you being really old with liver spots and no hair, still sitting right here, waiting to get picked up from school. Moaning just like now. "Oh, what a bad day! I didn't know about the test! Poor me! Nobody loves me!" And you'll be wearing those same smelly pants with the stain, only they smell even worse because you've been wearing them forever, and there's a hole in the butt because you've gotten bigger and fatter and split them. I feel so sorry for you.

ANDY: Shut up already! Thanks a lot. That's great. Now I feel really bad.

LIBBY: I'm sorry, but you need to be prepared. Maybe you should just drop out of school now and get a job.

ANDY: People don't give jobs to kids.

LIBBY: They might.

ANDY: It's against the law.

LIBBY: People break the law all the time.

ANDY: So you're saying I should quit school and work for criminals.

LIBBY: Well, you've only been in school a few years. It's not like you can be a doctor or anything.

ANDY: Well, maybe I'll go to Africa to be a photographer.

LIBBY: You don't have a camera.

ANDY: I'll get one.

LIBBY: No, you won't.

ANDY: How do you know?

LIBBY: I know.

ANDY: No, you don't.

LIBBY: Yes, I do.

ANDY: No, you don't.

LIBBY: You smell.

ANDY: I *know*!

LIBBY: No one's going to give you a camera.

ANDY: I'll buy one.

LIBBY: You don't have a job, remember?

ANDY: I'll steal one.

LIBBY: See? I told you you'd be a criminal.

ANDY: I'm not old enough to be a criminal!

LIBBY: Sure, you are.

ANDY: Listen, someone's going to pick me up from school.

LIBBY: Good.

ANDY: Any time now.

LIBBY: Right. (*Beat.*) Unless they forgot. (*Beat.*) Or if they don't like you.

ANDY: My parents like me!

LIBBY: Don't get mad. I didn't do anything.

ANDY: You're annoying.

LIBBY: That hurt my feelings.

ANDY: Well, I'm sorry, but you're really depressing, Libby. And you're a know-it-all.

LIBBY: I was just trying to be nice.

ANDY: Well, you weren't being nice. *What's it like to be perfect and know everything, Libby? Because to me it seems obnoxious and boring. To me, it seems like*

a stupid waste of my time. I'm already thinking that I'm going to be stuck at school forever. I'm aware of that possibility. I don't want to think about it. I don't want to walk home in the rain. I hate walking home. But I'm trying to be positive here, and you do nothing but make me feel bad. *(Beat.)* Now you're pouting like I did something mean. Give me a break, Libby. *You're* the pain in the butt here. I was just sitting here minding my own business. *You* came by and started talking to me. *You* told me I smell and that no one likes me, *which is not true*. Why don't you just go away and bug someone else? I've got my own problems and I don't need you making them worse. I'm having a bad day: I have a stain on my pants, I smell because of it, I'm stuck at school, and I don't need you reminding me of all of it!

(LIBBY turns her back on ANDY. Beat.)

LIBBY: You hurt my feelings. You're a jerk.

ANDY: If you didn't—

LIBBY: Don't talk to me, Stain Boy!

ANDY: Don't call me Stain Boy!

LIBBY: OK, Stain Boy.

ANDY: I'm not Stain Boy.

LIBBY: You're Stain Boy forever.

ANDY: Am not!

LIBBY: Are too! You're Stinky Stain Boy!

(ANDY stands and walks over to LIBBY.)

ANDY: Take it back!

(LIBBY screams and runs away.)

ANDY: I just need to go home now! This day has to end!

(LIBBY pops her head back in.)

LIBBY: The gym teacher found some shorts for you to wear. *Girl shorts*. Size extra small.

ANDY: You're kidding. And it's not funny.

LIBBY: Yes, it is.

ANDY: No, it's not.

LIBBY: Yes, it is.

ANDY: So, you're kidding, right?

LIBBY: Nope!

(LIBBY exits.)

ANDY: Aaaaaah! I *hate* this day!