

1 PAUL: So, your natural color, blonde hair, or half an... half?
2 APRIL: So, what do you think, Paul?
3 BRANDI: Because believe me, your opinion counts here! More
4 than you realize!
5 PAUL: Let me think ...
6 APRIL: Take your time. There's no hurry here.
7 PAUL: Can I choose something else? Or does it have to be those
8 choices?
9 BRANDI: Go ahead. Choose something else.
10 PAUL: I'm thinking ... Bright red streaks.
11 NICOLE: I love that idea.
12 APRIL: You do?
13 BRANDI: I like it, too.
14 PAUL: I think that would look good on you, Nicole.
15 NICOLE: Thanks, Paul.
16 PAUL: No problem. Well, see ya. *(He exits.)*
17 NICOLE: *(In a dreamy tone)* See ya ...
18 BRANDI: So out with the blonde and in with the red.
19 NICOLE: *(Still looking dreamy in the direction PAUL left)* Maybe
20 I should dye my eyebrows red, too ... and wear red lipstick
21 and maybe some red pants and a red shirt ... and ... and
22 maybe he will really notice me ...
23 APRIL: *(Hollers as she exits.)* Hey, Paul! Can we have another
24 opinion over here?

24. The Laughing Technique

CAST: (1M, 1F) TARA, RANDY

SETTING: Classroom.

PROPS: Straws, scissors.

1 *(At rise TARA sits at a desk cutting straws. RANDY walks by,*
2 *stops, and watches her.)*
3 RANDY: Why are you cutting straws?
4 TARA: They're for my anti-smoking project.
5 RANDY: You're using straws?
6 TARA: Well, I can't actually use cigarettes, can I?
7 RANDY: What about those candy cigarettes?
8 TARA: Randy, they don't make candy cigarettes anymore! Now
9 they're called candy sticks.
10 RANDY: Oh. Bummer.
11 TARA: Bummer?
12 RANDY: I don't mean bummer they don't make candy
13 cigarettes anymore, which might encourage kids to
14 smoke, but bummer you have to use straws, which don't
15 actually look like cigarettes.
16 TARA: Well, it's the best I can do.
17 RANDY: *(Picks up a straw.)* So, what are you going to do? Walk
18 around pretending to smoke, and then go into a violent
19 coughing episode? *(Coughs.)*
20 TARA: No! But I am looking for volunteers to perform a skit
21 that I wrote. And Mr. Wilson, my health teacher, said he's
22 going to pick the three best skits to be performed at the
23 elementary schools.
24 RANDY: Sorry, Tara, but I can't act.

1 TARA: Too bad, because you get to miss school for an entire day,
 2 go eat pizza for lunch, and ...

3 RANDY: Miss school? Hey, you know what? I think I can act
 4 after all! (*Dramatically*) "Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art
 5 thou Romeo?"

6 TARA: (*Shaking her head*) That was bad.

7 RANDY: Oh. How about this! "Give me Liberty or give me
 8 Death! Smoke cigarettes and you die!"

9 TARA: Uh, I'm the writer and you're the actor. You have to say
 10 what I write.

11 RANDY: Sure, sure. (*Picks up a straw.*) But I might have a few
 12 helpful add-ons.

13 TARA: I don't need help with the skit, Randy. I just need actors.

14 RANDY: And an actor you have! (*Smoking the straw*) Sure, kids,
 15 you may think smoking looks cool as you strut around
 16 with a straw ... I mean, cigarette ... But let me tell you what
 17 this straw ... I mean, cigarette ... is really all about! (*Throws*
 18 *straw on ground and stomps on it. Pointing at the audience*)
 19 It will fry your lungs, that's what it will do! Smoking
 20 causes cancer, cataracts, lung diseases, heart attacks,
 21 asthma, and diminishes overall health! And studies have
 22 shown that during the years of 1995 to 1999, smoking
 23 caused 440,000 premature deaths! And that was annually!
 24 So listen to me, you bratty kids, don't smoke, because it's
 25 not cool! (*Tosses straw on the ground.*)

26 TARA: Wow.

27 RANDY: (*Proudly*) Good, huh?

28 TARA: I meant, wow, you really know your facts.

29 RANDY: Hey, I'm in health too.

30 TARA: Like I said, Randy, you have to follow my script. Not
 31 make up your own.

32 RANDY: OK, OK. I was just giving you a little sample. And here's
 33 something else you might want to add in that little skit of
 34 yours! (*Picks up another straw and pretends to smoke.*)
 35 Cigarette smoke stinks! (*Tosses straw to the ground and*

1 (*waves arms in the air.*) Yuck, yuck, yuck! (*Picks up another*
 2 *straw.*) So don't smoke! Unless you want to smell like a
 3 stinking ashtray!

4 TARA: That's not the approach I'm taking, Randy.

5 RANDY: (*Picks up another straw.*) And cigarette smoking
 6 pollutes! It's one of the most common forms of pollution
 7 on the planet! Jot this down, you miniature people! ETS!
 8 Yes, that's right! ETS! Environmental Tobacco Smoke,
 9 a.k.a. *pollution!* So, you want to go around polluting our
 10 environment? Huh? Huh? Do you? (*Tosses straw to the*
 11 *ground.*)

12 TARA: You're being a little harsh on the elementary kids, don't
 13 you think?

14 RANDY: No! Sometimes you have to do a little screaming and
 15 threatening to get your point across!

16 TARA: I was thinking I'd use the laughing technique.

17 RANDY: The laughing technique? What's that?

18 TARA: Where you get your point across using humorous
 19 examples. You know, make the kids laugh.

20 RANDY: Tara, cigarette smoking is no laughing matter!

21 TARA: I know, but ...

22 RANDY: (*Picks up another straw.*) Back to our little ETS study.

23 TARA: You really did pay attention in health class, didn't you?

24 RANDY: If I might proceed ... (*Picks up a second straw.*)

25 TARA: Randy, this is my skit, remember?

26 RANDY: (*Ignoring her*) If smoking is so cool, then why don't
 27 people walk around with one in each hand. Be double
 28 cool? (*Stands there and smokes from each straw.*) See? See
 29 how cool I am?

30 TARA: You look stupid!

31 RANDY: Of course I look stupid! (*Tosses the straws to the*
 32 *ground.*) Or better yet ... (*Picks up three straws and sticks*
 33 *one in his mouth and attempts to talk with it there*) Three!
 34 One in each hand and smoking at the same time! (*Looks at*
 35 *TARA.*) Don't I look cool?

1 TARA: No.

2 RANDY: (*Tosses the straws to the ground.*) Or if you want to look
3 really cool ... (*Sticks two straws in his ears*) You can try
4 smoking from your ears!

5 TARA: You look stupid, Randy.

6 RANDY: But why quit there? (*Puts straws in his nose.*) And then
7 you can stick one in your mouth and one in each hand ...
8 (*Turns to TARA*) And I look really cool, don't I?

9 TARA: No.

10 RANDY: (*Strutting*) And I can just strut around like this all day ...

11 TARA: Hope your hair doesn't catch on fire.

12 RANDY: Looking all bad ...

13 TARA: Bad is definitely the word.

14 RANDY: Spending all my money on ... Hey!

15 TARA: What?

16 RANDY: (*Pulls the straws from his ears and nose and tosses them*
17 *on the ground.*) That's another area you can cover.

18 TARA: What?

19 RANDY: While I was so focused on the health aspect and the
20 pollution, I didn't think about this!

21 TARA: What?

22 RANDY: The expense of cigarettes!

23 TARA: I've got that covered in my skit, Randy. In a humorous
24 way.

25 RANDY: Oh yeah? How's that?

26 TARA: Well, I have this homeless person begging on the streets
27 and ...

28 RANDY: A homeless person begging on the streets? That's
29 humorous?

30 TARA: You have to listen to the rest of it, Randy! Anyway, this
31 homeless person is begging for money so he can buy
32 cigarettes and this little old lady walks by and kicks him.
33 And then, as he's on the ground screaming in pain, she
34 yanks him up by his hair and whacks him a few times with
35 her newspaper. And then ...

1 RANDY: And this is supposed to be humorous?

2 TARA: You didn't hear the rest of it, Randy!

3 RANDY: (*Staring at her*) OK.

4 TARA: OK, so the little old lady is whacking him across the
5 head like this. And then this superhero appears.

6 RANDY: A superhero? Superman?

7 TARA: Not Superman, just a superhero.

8 RANDY: Shouldn't your superhero have a name?

9 TARA: I'll think of a name, OK? So anyway, the little old lady is
10 whacking him across the head and the superhero
11 appears.

12 RANDY: The superhero with no name.

13 TARA: And the superhero pushes the old lady away ...

14 RANDY: The superhero pushes an old lady?

15 TARA: And then the superhero picks up the homeless man and
16 carries him to the moon ...

17 RANDY: Carries him to the moon?

18 TARA: Because there's no smoking on the moon! Duh!

19 RANDY: Who said?

20 TARA: Randy, it's just a known fact!

21 RANDY: Well, I mean, if the superhero gave the homeless man
22 a cigarette and he wanted to light up on the moon ...

23 TARA: With no oxygen?

24 RANDY: Well, that's a good point.

25 TARA: So anyway ...

26 RANDY: Back to the superhero whisking the homeless man to
27 the moon.

28 TARA: So, the superhero and the homeless man are on the
29 moon ...

30 RANDY: Does the homeless man have a name? Or is he
31 nameless, too?

32 TARA: He doesn't have to have a name for my skit.

33 RANDY: But the superhero should have a name.

34 TARA: I'll give the superhero a name, OK?

35 RANDY: OK.

1 TARA: So, anyway ...

2 RANDY: The superhero and the homeless man are on the moon

3 ... I'm still waiting for the comic relief here.

4 TARA: So the superhero tells the man he now owns the moon!

5 I mean, he now owns the entire planet!

6 RANDY: A planet he can't breathe on?

7 TARA: Randy, that's not the point!

8 RANDY: It will be the point if the homeless man dies. *(Grabs*

9 *throat.)* Air! Air! I can't breathe!

10 TARA: The point is ...

11 RANDY: Yes?

12 TARA: The point is ...

13 RANDY: The point is ... ?

14 TARA: The point is that there's no smoking on the moon! *(Pause*

15 *as RANDY stares at her.)* And he's not poor anymore! *(Pause)*

16 And the superhero saved the day!

17 RANDY: Uh, question. Where's the comic relief? You know, the

18 laughing technique you were talking about?

19 TARA: Randy, it's when the old lady was hitting the homeless

20 man with her newspaper!

21 RANDY: Oh. *(Pause)* That was funny?

22 TARA: Yes!

23 RANDY: Looks like you may need a little more help than you

24 realize, Tara. Can I see your anti-smoking script?

25 TARA: I'm still working on it. Actually, it's just in my head right

26 now, but I just need to write it all down.

27 RANDY: Well, why don't you leave the superhero part out and

28 try a different angle.

29 TARA: But I want to do comedy.

30 RANDY: *(Picks up straws.)* Well, you're off to a good start with

31 these. I know, why don't you not cut them in half and let

32 the characters walk around like this? *(Smoking a long*

33 *straw)* I look stupid, don't I?

34 TARA: Yes.

35 RANDY: *(To the audience)* So don't smoke, unless you want to

1 look stupid!

2 TARA: I want to make sure the kids understand that smoking

3 makes you sick.

4 RANDY: Yes, I look stupid and ... *(Falls to the ground, smoking*

5 *the straw.)* I'm sick! I'm sick! *(Coughing)*

6 TARA: And if you smoke, you'll die.

7 RANDY: *(Smoking and coughing)* I'm dying! Dying!

8 TARA: Please.

9 RANDY: Dying! Dying! Dying!

10 TARA: Hurry up and die, will you?

11 RANDY: *(Smoking and coughing as he lies on the ground)* Dying!

12 Dying!

13 TARA: Will you die already?

14 RANDY: These cigarettes ... they ... they ... killed me! *(Collapses.*

15 *A long pause as TARA continues cutting straws. He lifts his*

16 *head.)* That was funny, wasn't it?

17 TARA: No.

18 RANDY: I thought it was. *(Sits up.)*