



# The Bridge

Friday

Vrijdag

3-7-1992

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**"THE BRIDGE"**  
 A Musical Play about the Environment  
 Recommended: Grades 3 -8  
 Running time: 45 min  
 Outline

SCENE 1 - OPENING: THE SUN, THE WIND & THE CELEBRATION

	<u>Approx. Time</u>
DIALOGUE - The Sun and the Wind comment on the celebration about to start on the Earth.	(0:30)
SONG #1: "INTERNATIONAL WORLD" (Full cast w/choreography- chorus optional)	(3:00)
DIALOGUE - "Earth Day" in a future time, celebrants discuss major issues. "Drop in" section is included.	(3:00)
DIALOGUE - The Sun and Wind continue commentary.	<u>(0:30)</u>
TOTAL TIME	(7:00)

SCENE 2 - THE STORY OF THE TWO VILLAGES

DIALOGUE - The Sun and Wind begin the story of the rich villagers and the poor villagers who live on either side of the river.	(5:00)
SONG #2: "SAY YOU LOVE THIS WORLD" (Solos by Earth Children)	<u>(2:00)</u>
TOTAL TIME	(7:00)

SCENE 3 - THE STORM

DIALOGUE - Villagers discuss effects of the storm. The river speaks to the Earth Children, who alert their villages about mud slide.	(7:00)
SONG #3: "PLEASE LISTEN TO ME" (Solos by Earth Children)	(1:30)
DIALOGUE - Children slip away to rescue the river.	<u>(1:00)</u>
TOTAL TIME	(9:00)



## THE BRIDGE

A Musical Play about Children and the Environment

By David Woolfcombe

Adapted by Carlo Grossman

And children of the Peace Child Chapters of Palo Alto & Santa Cruz, California

Music and lyrics by David Gordon and Rickey Payton

Recommended: Grades 3 - 8

CAST LIST: 14-26 actors required (Roles may be combined to reduce number)

### Permanent Roles

The Sun\*  
The Wind\*  
The River\*  
The Earth\*  
Rich Earth Child  
Poor Earth Child

\*May be performed as  
unseen voices

### Multiple Roles

Rich Adult Villagers (3)  
Poor Adult Villagers (3)  
Rich Children (3)  
Poor Children (3)  
Speakers (2)  
International Children (8)  
Fishermen (2)

Rich President  
Poor President  
Rich Newsreporter  
Poor Newsreporter  
Rich Tennis Kid  
Ice Cream Person  
Pharmacist  
Rich Mother  
Poor Mother  
Rich Doctor  
Poor Doctor  
Rapper

### SET:

There are two sets of risers on either side of the stage shaped like small mountains. A cardboard cut-out forest surrounds one mountain and a cardboard cut-out city skyline surrounds the other mountain. There is a space between them where a wide strip of blue plastic or material indicates a river. The risers are on the back half of the stage to allow space to perform on the front half.

### COSTUMES:

The Sun & Wind\*: costumes or clothing that indicate their roles.

The River\*: blue hooded sweatshirt or poncho that attaches to material used for river

The Earth\*: green hooded sweatshirt or poncho- or appropriate costume

Rich villagers: hip clothes from the actor's own wardrobe

Poor villagers: sacks with twigs or leaves tied to it- or plain clothes from actor's wardrobe

Presidents: ties

### PROPS:

Walkmans, sunglasses, Perrier bottles, tennis racket, doctor's coats (2), apron, ice cream scoop, fishing poles, conch shell, cardboard cars, trash cans marked "trash"

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### SCENE 1- OPENING: THE SUN, THE WIND & THE CELEBRATION

OPENING: In the darkness we hear a swerling, mysterious sound. As two spotlights lights come up, there appear two people, one sitting on each mountain. They are the Sun and the Wind. They are wearing appropriate costumes.

SUN: Look at them, Wind. Look at all those happy people down there on the Earth.

WIND: I can hear them, Sun. Their voices carry on me, you know. Certainly is a big turn out this year! It looks wonderful down there.

Sun: Yes, I plan to shine very bright today!

Wind: Shhhh.. The celebration's about to begin!

(We hear music as the children enter on to the stage from every direction. They are cheering and greeting each other. Many are carrying brightly colored banners and signs saying things like: Earth Day, Peace With The Earth, No Endangered Species, A Healthy World for Everyone, etc. As the last child enters the stage, the song and choreography begin.)

SONG: "INTERNATIONAL WORLD" (everyone)

SPEAKER 1: Welcome everyone to the Earth Day celebration. It's been thirty years now since the children of the Earth gathered at the United Nations.

SPEAKER 2: It was on that day that the children and the leaders of our world finally declared their commitment to have a peaceful world and a healthy Earth. (Crowd cheers)

SPEAKER 1: It's time now for the State of the Planet Report! Let's begin with world population.

CHILD 1: Total World Population is... 8.2 billion! That's a lot, but the rate of growth is down and that's good news. (Crowd cheers)

**SPEAKER 2: Resources!**

**CHILD 2:** It could be better. There's still some deforestation despite a world ban on cutting virgin woods. But thousands of trees are being planted every day.

**CHILD 3:** Total reserves of oil and natural gas are low, but alternative energy supplies are taking up the slack, especially solar power. (Cheers)

**SUN:** It's about time they started using more of my great energy!

**WIND:** Shhhhhh...!

**SPEAKER 1: Pollution!**

**CHILD 4:** All dangerous emissions from cars and factories are down, and the CFC output is so low, it's almost off the chart. The ozone layer is looking much better.

**CHILD 5:** Topsoil depletion has been halted and the total ban on ocean dumping has helped increase the fish catch this year.

**SPEAKER 2: Poverty.**

**CHILD 6:** Unfortunately, for many millions of people around the world life is still very hard. They need more housing and jobs and better health care.

**CHILD 7:** We must not forget them! They need our help!

**DROP IN SECTION #1:** Here 4 or 5 performers write their own resolutions or suggestions on how to help the needy people. Perhaps, children representing various countries can state what they are doing in their country.

**SPEAKER 1: Resolved:** This year we will work harder to improve the lives of all people! And now the report on peace.

**CHILD 8:** Good news! Military expenditures are at the lowest level ever and there hasn't been a war in nearly twenty years! (Cheers)

**SONG:** Reprise final chorus of "INTERNATIONAL WORLD"

(As the song ends, Everyone exits the stage waving to each other in slow motion.)

**WIND:** Well, Sun they're doing a great job aren't they?

SUN: Yeah, their hard work is really paying off.

WIND: I'm so glad that River finally brought them to their senses.

SUN: Hey, Wind. What about them?

WIND: What about who, Sun?

SUN: Them. (To the audience) Those people out there looking at us.

WIND: (Looks out at audience) What about them?

SUN: Maybe we should tell them the story of the River and the Two Villages. They may not remember the story, you know.

WIND: Impossible! Why everybody knows...(Looks out at audience) On second thought you maybe right. You start, Sun. (We hear the mysterious swerling sound.)

## SCENE 2 - THE STORY OF THE TWO VILLAGES

SUN: Once upon a time, not so many years ago there were two very different villages. One village was very rich and industrialized and the people only wore designer clothes and drank Perrier.

(Rich villagers enter wearing hip clothes, sunglasses, holding bottles of Perrier, walkmans, etc. They form a tableau and freeze.)

WIND: And the other village was surrounded by a rain forest. The people there were mostly poor farmers and fishermen. They made their own clothes and very few of them owned a skateboard or a walkman.

(Poor villagers enter wearing sacks covered with twigs and branches. Some carry fishing poles. Perhaps someone is listening to a seashell, snapping fingers. They form a tableau and freeze.)

SUN: Now it so happened that a beautiful deep river flowed between the two villages. But, it may as well have been a wide ocean. The villages were so different. Beacuse of this, they never talked to each other and they made up stories about what the people on the other side of the river were like.

WIND: On one side of the river the factories put CFC's and other chemicals into the air. That put me in a foul mood as I remember. They dumped their garbage everywhere. And they drove their cars constantly instead of walking.

(Several rich kids come out of their freeze drive around in pretend or cardboard cars making varoom sounds... Rich children sing.)

(Make up your own tune.)

Burn, burn, burn that gasoline  
Drive, drive, drive that limousine  
Got the biggest engine in town,  
Got the fastest car around  
I just wanna keep on burning that gasoline

(Cars and drivers exit, while a couple of rich kids dump pretend garbage from trash cans, marked "trash", into the river. Then all rich villagers exit.)

#### (POOR SIDE)

(The poor villagers come out of their freeze. Fishermen are fishing in the river.)

FISHERMAN 1: What's wrong with those people? Don't they know they're polluting the river?

FISHERMAN 2: The fish are dying. What will we do without fish?

WOMAN: What's that awful smell?

MAN: It's not me. It's all the pollution the wind blows this way from the other side of the river.

POOR CHILD: (Holding glass of brown water.) I won't drink this water. There's gross stuff floating on top.

POOR EARTH CHILD: Can't they see what they're doing to the river? This must come to an end!

(Everyone freezes.)

SUN: On the poor side of the river, they kept chopping down more and more trees to sell for money and clear for farm land. The problem was they never planted new trees to replace them.

(Villagers, except Earth Child, come out of freeze miming the activities of the song as they sing. The tune is similar to previous 'gasoline' song.)

Chop, chop, chop down those trees  
Burn, burn, burn, that debris  
We can't worry about tomorrow  
If we're poor and have to borrow  
So we just keep on chopping down those trees.

(Everyone exits except Poor Earth Child.)

(RICH SIDE)

(Rich villagers and Rich Earth Child enter.)

RICH TENNIS KID: (With tennis racket and sweater) What's wrong with those people? If they cut down all the rubber trees, where will we get rubber for my Nike's.

ICE CREAM PERSON: (Wearing apron and holding ice cream scoop) Where will I get chocolate for my ice cream if they cut down all the cocoa trees?

PHARMICIST: (In doctors coat) I get most of my antibiotics from the plants in the rain forest. Where will I get my medicine if the rain forest is destroyed?

RICH EARTH CHILD: What will happen to all the animals and the beautiful birds? How will they live without trees? They're destroying the land. This has to end!

(Everyone exits except Rich Earth Child)

WIND: For as long as anyone could remember, the two villages had grown up separately with different customs, foods and languages. For years they had been enemies. They taught their children to look down on the people on the other side of the river.

(Rich mother and poor mother enter and go to their children.)

(POOR SIDE)

POOR EARTH CHILD: Mom, have you ever met those people on the other side of the river?

MOTHER: Are you kidding? If you get too close to them your skin will turn green because of all the pollution they bring.

(RICH SIDE)

CHILD: Mom, what are the people like across the river?

MOTHER: Just a bunch of peasants!

CHILD: They're birds?

MOTHER: I said peasants, not pheasants! Anyway, don't ever touch one of them. I hear they'll give you warts.

SUN: No one from either village ever talked to the other, until one day two children, two very special Earth Children from each side of the river, reached out to speak to the other.

(Both mothers exit stage. Earth Children walk towards river.)



POOR EARTH CHILD: Hi!

RICH EARTH CHILD: (Looks around) Hi. (They stare at each other.)

POOR EARTH CHILD: Is it true my skin will turn green if I get too close to you?

RICH EARTH CHILD: I don't think so. Is it true I'll get warts if I touch you?

POOR EARTH CHILD: That's silly. Tell me, what's it really like on your side of the river?

(Earth Children continue silent conversation.)

WIND: The years passed, and as each of the children grew up they would often see each other across the river and talk to each other. They were different from the others. They cared about the Earth, the Sky and the River. They would often share their dreams for the world.

SONG: "SAY YOU LOVE THIS WORLD" (Earth children & chorus)

(Just as the song ends, there is a loud rumbling sound. The children turn around and scream in fright. Lights go on and off as the rumbling continues.)

### SCENE 3 - THE STORM

(POOR SIDE)

(Poor villagers and Earth Child enter.)

POOR 1: What's happening?

POOR 2: It's a storm up in the mountains! (Large crash sound)

POOR 3: What was that?

POOR 4: Sounded like an avalanche!

POOR 2: How long will it last?

POOR 4: Don't ask me. I don't know!

POOR 1: I'm scared!

POOR 3: What a storm!

POOR 2: I hope it's over soon!

(Storm ends, sudden silence, everyone freezes.)

(RICH SIDE)

(Rich villagers and Earth Child enter.)

RICH 1: Finally! The rumbling is over.

RICH 2: Hey look! What's wrong with the river?

RICH 3: It's just a trickle.

RICH 4: It's full of mud and dirt.

RICH 5: It doesn't make sense. After a storm like that, it should be a raging torrent! Something must have happened...

RICH 6: I'll go check my store. You go look up in the tower.

(Rich villagers exit except Earth Child, who is staring at the river.)

RICH NEWSREPORTER: (Entering with microphone.) Good evening, I'm reporting to you live from the riverside where today's top story is, of course, that mysterious storm from up in the mountains this afternoon. We have the scoop. Our wide beautiful river is down to a trickle. Those distressing poor peasants across the river must have caused it. The theory is that they must have dammed up the river so they could cross over to steal our trees now that they've cut down all of their own. The President has called an emergency meeting to decide what we should do about those people on the other side of the river. (Exits)

(POOR SIDE)

POOR NEWSREPORTER: (Enters with microphone.) Good evening, I'm reporting to you live from the riverside where today's top story is, of course, that mysterious storm from up in the mountains this afternoon. We have the scoop. The river is all clogged up. It's down to just a trickle. Well, we all know whose fault it is. It's all that toxic waste dumped here by all those yuppies on the other side of the river. They've run out of room for their garbage over there, so they threw it in the river. The President has called an emergency meeting to discuss the people on the other side of the river.

(The newsreporter exits as poor villagers and Poor Earth Child come out of their freeze.)

POOR 3: The river looks sick.

POOR 2: This is horrible. There's hardly any water flowing in the river.

POOR 1: It's all clogged up back upstream.

POOR 4: I better check my crops.

POOR 3: Let's check our homes.

(Everyone exits except the Earth Children who are staring at the river. The river appears (invisible to the Earth Children) between the two mountains. The wide blue strip is attached to him/her as part of its costume, so you know it's the river.)

RIVER: You'll help me, won't you?

POOR EARTH CHILD: (To the the other child) Did you say something?

RICH EARTH CHILD: I didn't say anything. I thought you did.

POOR EARTH CHILD: I did not.

RICH EARTH CHILD: Did too!

RIVER: Hey, chill out guys. There's been a mud slide at the foot of the mountains and I'm all choked up.

(The children cannot see the voice and are scared out of their minds.)

RICH EARTH CHILD: Who are you? Are you talking to us?

RIVER: Do you see anyone else around here? Of course I'm talking to you. Get a clue! I don't usually talk to humans, but you two are different. You care about me and about each other. You're the only ones who can help me.

POOR EARTH CHILD: What do you want us to do?

RIVER: Take a look upstream, guys! This mud pack isn't for my beauty, you know! If you don't dig me out quick, I'll burst my banks and you can kiss your sweet villages goodbye... And besides that, all the fish will die and you won't have anything to eat. You people are killing me.

BOTH CHILDREN: Killing you??!!

RIVER: You're killing me with pollution. Look at what you're doing to me.

RICH EARTH CHILD: We must tell everyone!

POOR EARTH CHILD: Tell them what? That the river spoke to us?

RIVER: Tell them it's not just me. They're killing the trees, the sky, the sea, the earth, and even themselves.

RICH EARTH CHILD: (To Poor Earth Child) You get everyone from over there, I'll get everyone from over here to help.

POOR EARTH CHILD: I don't know about this...

RIVER: Whoa, guys! It's better if you work together. Upstream a little ways is a fallen tree my friend the Wind blew down. Use it as a bridge. You can cross there. Hurry, I don't have much time left!

POOR EARTH CHILD: I'll be right over.

(Both children exit off their sides of the stage. Soon the Poor Earth Child is seen crossing behind the mountains and the river.)

(RICH SIDE)

(Rich villagers enter and begin to go about their activities. The Earth Children enter talking to each other. Suddenly, one of them realizes there is a stranger in their midst.)

RICH 1: Look! It's one of those poor peasants from the other side!

(There are cries of shock and amazement as they gather around the Poor Earth Child. Soon, the mood shifts to anger.)

RICH 2: Our enemies from the other side of the river are invading! They want to steal our land.

RICH 3: We must protect ourselves. Watch out for warts!

(Villagers begin to back away, moving in general hysteria.)

POOR EARTH CHILD: No wait! I'm alone! There's no invasion!

(The villagers stop, dumbfounded.)

RICH 4: S/he speaks English!

RICH 2: S/he's a spy. Arrest him/her!

(The villagers, satisfied with this analogy, begin to advance.)

RICH EARTH CHILD: Stop this, all of you! She's not a monster!

(Everyone stares at Poor Earth Child.)

RICH EARTH CHILD: This is my friend. We met across the river. (Pauses) Can't you all see that s/he's no different than I am? (Long pause)

POOR EARTH CHILD: Please! I want to be friends. If we don't work together, the earth will die! (Villagers burst into laughter.)

RICH 5: Die? How can a rock die? (Laughter)



RICH EARTH CHILD: The river spoke to us. (Laughter dies down.) It told us that the earth is alive, and if we don't change, it's going to die. Everyone will die.

RICH 5: (After pause) S/he's been brainwashed! Call the doctor, before she starts talking to the cars!

(Someone scampers off to find the doctor. Meanwhile, Rich Earth Child's mother pushes through the crowd and takes her child away.)

MOTHER: Oh, my poor darling! (Turns to Poor Earth Child) You beast! How dare you brainwash my daughter!

RICH EARTH CHILD: Mother, please... The river really did speak.

MOTHER: You say that again and you're grounded until your 40. Just because you've been brainwashed doesn't give you the right to be rude.

(Doctor breaks through crowd to Rich Earth Child.)

DOCTOR: (German accent, very Freud-like) Please, let the child breathe. So, you say the river spoke to you. Hmmmm...

RICH EARTH CHILD: Yes sir, it did. It said that we were polluting the environment and destroying the earth.

DOCTOR: Hmm, I see. It's not everyday that water speaks to someone. Do you have conversations in the shower? Let's talk about your last dream.

RICH EARTH CHILD: Look, I'm not insane and I haven't been brainwashed.

(Meanwhile, conversation shifts to Poor Earth Child as a crowd gathers around her.)

RICH CHILD 1: You don't look like a monster to me.

RICH CHILD 2: Did the river really speak to you?

POOR EARTH CHILD: (Nods) Believe me, it's not considered normal in my village either.

RICH CHILD 3: I believe you. I want to hear it speak too.

(Suddenly, the crowd parts down the middle. President enters appearing rather intelligent. S/he strolls up to Rich Earth Child.)

PRESIDENT: (Slowly, deliberately) What... is going on... here?

RICH 1: This spy came across the river with one of our children. They claim they have been hearing things. They say the river spoke to them.

PRESIDENT: How... interesting. And what... did the river say?

POOR EARTH CHILD: S/he's dying. S/he's all choked up from all the pollution and mud from cutting down all the trees.

PRESIDENT: S/HE, you say. Well... fine. And what else did... S/HE say?

RICH EARTH CHILD: She says we must do something before it's too late!

DOCTOR: This child is not insane. I have examined him/her completely, and besides a strange dream involving snorkle gear, I have found no quirks in her psyche.

RICH EARTH CHILD: Brilliant conclusion.

RICH CHILD 2: Maybe s/he's is telling the truth.

RICH CHILD 3: I want to hear the voice. (Dead silence) I want to meet the other people. I want to help the river. I don't want everything to die.

PRESIDENT: But wait, we must examine this situation. None of us have ever spoken to one of those people before, therefore we are naturally curious. However, we must be cautious. Would it be prudent to confer with our enemies? Do we want to jeopardize our safety? Can we trust someone from the other side? Should we believe children who talks to rivers?

(During his boring speech, the Earth Children and the Rich Children have slipped away off stage. Before the president is finished, the other villagers have noticed the children are gone and go looking for them.)

PRESIDENT: (To the audience) Where is our pride? Where is our respect for danger? Where is (Turning around)... everyone? (S/he wanders off to look for everyone.)

#### (POOR SIDE)

(Meanwhile, the Earth Children and Rich Children cross over to the other side of the river. Everyone is busily working, but when they see the Rich Children, they react with the same cries of horror and amazement as the other side did.)

POOR EARTH CHILD: Mother, come quick! Everyone, I need your attention! (Crowd gathers) We have something very important to say. We must work together to...

MOTHER: (Grabbing her daughter) Get away from my baby! Oh darling, are you alright? What did they do to you? (Squeezes child)

POOR EARTH CHILD: Mother..... (Gasping)

MOTHER: Quick, get a doctor! Can't you see my darling's sick? It must have been horrible.

POOR EARTH CHILD: Mother, please.... (Gasping, turning blue)

MOTHER: It's all right, baby. It's all over now. (Squeezing child)

POOR EARTH CHILD: Mother, I can't breathe. (Mother releases child, who gasps for air.) Listen to me! We were told to bring our two villages together to clean up our environment, or we will destroy the earth.

MOTHER: Where did you hear this nonsense? From those people? (Pointing to Rich Children.)

POOR EARTH CHILD: The river spoke to us. (Poor villagers laugh.)

POOR 1: She's crazy!

(By now a doctor has pushed through the crowd and begun pinching and poking the child in examination.)

DOCTOR: Is it true, the river spoke to you? Are you hallucinating? You can tell me, I'm a doctor.

POOR 2: Maybe she ate some of those magic mushrooms?

DOCTOR: You don't have a fever and you don't show signs of any illness. Does it hurt when I go like this? (Pokes him/her.)

POOR EARTH CHILD: Yes, stop it! (Slaps his/her hand away.)

DOCTOR: Have you been experiencing any back pains? Dizzy spells? Maybe the blood supply has been cut off to your head.

POOR EARTH CHILD: You're the one who needs a doctor!

POOR 3: Here comes the President. Perhaps s/he can shed some light on this problem.

POOR PRESIDENT:, (Enters conferring with villagers.) Yes, well... Obviously the problem is this other child. The solution is to get rid of her. Take her away! (To Rich Earth Child)

POOR EARTH CHILD: You don't understand. I'm telling the truth!

POOR PRESIDENT: Not another word! I must rid my village of disagreeable pests. I will not tolerate any more of this disorder. Take her away! (Two people grab her and begin dragging her away)

POOR EARTH CHILD: Wait, stop! You're hurting her! Let her go!

SONG: "PLEASE LISTEN TO ME" (Earth Children)

(The Poor Children seem convinced that there is some truth in what the Earth Children have been saying. They move in closer and begin to analyze the situation.)

POOR CHILD 1: You know, those people from the other side of the river do look a little like us.

POOR CHILD 2: We are kind of the same. (Looking closely at Rich Children)

POOR CHILD 3: S/he says the river spoke to him/her and that the earth was alive. S/he says they need our help. Nobody believes her. But I do.

RICH CHILDREN: Me too! Yeah! Etc.

PRESIDENT: I just can't believe what I'm hearing. (Working him/herself into a lather) Have all you children gone crazy? Don't you realize this is probably a plot to take over our land? This is a crisis! (To the audience) Now's the time for wisdom. Now's the time for leadership. Now's the time for a good president! And if you vote for me, I promise to... Wait a minute, I already am president!

(During the president's speech, the children have slipped away off stage. Before the president's speech is over, the villagers notice the children have gone and go looking for them.)

POOR PRESIDENT: When you elected me president of our fair village four score and twenty years ago, our forefathers brought forth upon this land... (Turns around) Where is everyone? (Wanders off looking for everyone.)

#### SCENE 4: THE RESCUE

SUN: The children of both villages had slipped away from the adults and ran to the site of the mud slide at the foot of the mountain. The water was rising dangerously behind a wall of mud and debris.

(The children enter from behind both mountains.)

CHILD 1: Wow! Look at all that yukky mud!

CHILD 2: No kiddin'. Just look at all that garbage and grease! And the smell...!

RIVER: Enough already, guys! You'd look the same way too if you were me.

CHILD 3: Huh?

CHILD 4: Who said that?

RICH EARTH CHILD: That's the voice of the river.

CHILD 5: Hey, I heard it too!



CHILD 6: Hey, River! Tell us how you got in such a mess.

RIVER: Sure. Why not? After all, I'm stuck here a little while. It's simple. People on one side of me are thoughtlessly dumping garbage and chemicals. And on the other side, they're chopping down all the trees. So when it rains, there are no roots and plants to hold the soil, and I get choked with mud. Not to mention what it does to the rain forest. Ahh.. all that beauty.. The rain forest.. the tropical rain forest.

CHILDREN: (Picking up the chant) Ahh.. all that beauty .. the rain forest.. the tropical rain forest..

**RAIN FOREST RAP: (Rapper & children)**

RIVER: Well, I guess that about "raps" it up, folks. This is my "swan song".

POOR EARTH CHILD: Hey, we better hurry up and clean out the river before we're all up the creek!

WIND: Quickly the children began pulling out large trees, stones and all kinds of garbage. As the children worked, the adults from both villages finally find them by the river.

(Rich and poor villagers enter from their sides of the river.)

RICH VILLAGER 1: Look! The river is about to burst it's banks!

POOR VILLAGER 1: Hurry, everyone! We must help the children before it's too late!

(Villagers from both sides jump in and help their children clear the river.)

SUN: And so, both villages, adults and children, worked together to avert the impending disaster. Soon, they had cleared away the last bit of debris and the river flowed once again. The children were sure they heard the river breathe a sigh of relief.

RIVER: Aaahhhh...

WIND: Just then, the presidents, who had been wandering the countryside in search of their people, stumbled onto the scene.

RICH PRESIDENT: (To the villagers) Ahh, there you are!

POOR PRESIDENT: (To the villagers) Ahh, there you are!

RICH PRESIDENT: (To the villagers) Good job, my friends! (To poor president) Well, I guess your people are to blame for this problem. All those trees you cut down clogged the river.

POOR PRESIDENT: Just a minute there! What about all the garbage and chemicals you people dump in the river.

RIVER: How did you guys ever get to be president!

BOTH PRESIDENTS: Who said that?!! (Looking around)

POOR EARTH CHILD: It's everyone's fault. We're all part of a polluting industrial complex!

SONG: "POLLUTING INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX" (Cast, chorus & choreography)

RICH EARTH CHILD: (To the presidents) So you see, Mr. Presidents, we're all to blame. But there's still hope, if we work together.

POOR EARTH CHILD: (To the presidents) We need your help too. Our earth is sick and we must act now!

POOR PRESIDENT: My child, we are not doctors.

RICH EARTH CHILD: Yes, we are! We all are. We must become earth doctors if we are to heal the river and our planet.

RICH PRESIDENT: First you must understand, you did not hear voices. (Many of the villagers protest loudly. The presidents hold up their hands for silence.) The river can't talk. And for that matter, the earth is not alive, either. So you can't tell me the earth is asking for help too.

(The Earth appears next to the River wearing an appropriate costume. The Earth too, is invisible to the villagers.)

EARTH: So, you think I'm dead, do you! I'm just a rock floating in space, just that dirt in the ground. Just try to make seeds grow without me. (Everyone looks around for the voice.)

A CHILD: Who's voice is that?

RICH PRESIDENT: (Nervously) I didn't hear anything. (To Poor President) Did you?

POOR PRESIDENT: (Stumbling) Nnnn-no. I ddd-didn't hear anything.

BOTH PRESIDENTS: We didn't hear anything.

RICH PRESIDENT: It's just your imaginations. Children have such wonderful imaginations.

EARTH: It's not their imagination that's polluting the waters and fouling my soil. You're killing the fish and making the air dangerous to breath. And cutting down the rain forest kills animals and plants every day.

RIVER: The Earth is right! You're endangering you're own lives as well as ours. You know, it always hurts me the way your two villages look across me at each other with hate and fear in their eyes, always finding new things to dump in me as though you hated me too.

RICH PRESIDENT: (Reacting to voices) I think there's two of them!

POOR EARTH CHILD: Listen, they're trying to tell us something!

EARTH: You humans--you think you're so important! I've been around for billions of years. If you thought of time like a clock with 12 hours, humans have only been walking on the earth for a few minutes. And your generation, the one that's destroying me-- well, you've only been here less than a second. It took billions of years to create me. This rain forest is millions of years old. That's not even an hour on my earth clock. And now you're about to wipe it all out in a fraction of a second.

RIVER: Get a grip, people! Think about our future!

RICH EARTH CHILD: (To the Presidents) You heard what they said, didn't you? We can save our planet. There's still time. But we need everyone's help.

POOR EARTH CHILD: We all want the same thing-- us, the animals, the plants and the trees. We want to live. We don't want to die. Is that too much to ask?

SONG: "I WANT TO LIVE" ( Earth children)

## SCENE 5 - THE RESOLUTION

RICH PRESIDENT: (To the voices of River and Earth) What exactly do you want us to do?

RIVER: Building a bridge between your two villages would be a good start.

POOR PRESIDENT: We'd have to cut down some of our precious trees to do that.

EARTH: My friends the trees would understand. It's for a good cause.

RIVER: That's right. We're here to help you. You must use your resources wisely, not use them up. If you cut down a tree, plant another.

EARTH: A bridge would help bring your two villages together to work on our problems. If humans are smart enough to put a man on my friend the moon, then you're smart enough to find a way to save us.

RIVER: And protect us. Go ahead and build the bridge.

POOR PRESIDENT: And once we have the bridge, what then?

RICH PRESIDENT: We'll trade things with each other. I hear your tomatoes are excellent, but your bread is terrible. Our bread is superb, but our tomatoes stink.

POOR PRESIDENT: We'll have joint meetings about our environment. We'll make the river so clean we can all swim in it again. And that includes the fish too!

POOR EARTH CHILD: We'll protect the trees and replace those we've cut down. Then the mud won't slide down and clog the river when it rains.

RICH EARTH CHILD: We'll stop throwing garbage into the river and we'll get our factories to keep chemicals from escaping into the air.

**DROP IN SECTION #2:** Here, 4 or 5 performers write their own resolutions or suggestions on what to do about the environment.

RICH PRESIDENT: That sounds like a pretty full agenda.

A CHILD: For you, maybe--but not for us. We have the rest of our lives!

POOR EARTH CHILD: And we're going to make sure that by the end of our lifetime, no child will ever have to worry about whether or not the world will survive.

POOR PRESIDENT: But, how can you guarantee something like that?

RICH EARTH CHILD: By having faith in each other and never forgetting what has happened here today.

EARTH: Listen to the children.

RIVER: They know what has to be done.

CHILD 1: (To the presidents) Take care of our planet.

CHILD 2: Stop polluting the air.

CHILD 3: Stop polluting the water.

CHILD 4: Stop polluting the land.

RICH PRESIDENT: (He's been consulting with the other president.) It seems a pretty substantial challenge, to build a legislative agenda based upon hearing voices from the river and the earth--however, we will agree to two things: we will build a bridge (cheers) and we will give over one day of every year to listen to you, the children, and the voices of our friends in nature.

POOR PRESIDENT: Now that our two villages have at last made peace with each other after all these years, I think we should have a special day of celebration every year to commemorate this event. (cheers)



POOR EARTH CHILD: Don't forget, we made peace with the earth too.

RICH EARTH CHILD: Let's call it "Earth Day". And on that day we'll always remember the time we worked together to save our planet.

(The villagers cheer and embrace each other. A sound or musical chord cues them to freeze. The Sun and the Wind resume their narration.)

SUN: (To the audience) A bridge was built and both villages continued to work together. They helped each other solve problems and made our friend, the earth, a better place to live.

WIND: The muddy brown river became clear and clean and the fish returned in greater numbers. Chemicals and pollution began to disappear from my skies.

SUN: The children of the villages took their message to the children of other countries around the world. They too worked to protect the environment, and soon, the earth once again was a blue jewel in the universe.

WIND: So my friends, I hope you will always remember the story of the two villages...

SUN: And our friends,

RIVER: The River...

EARTH: And the Earth.

(The four elements hold hands as the music for the final song begins. The cast comes out of their freeze and walks down stage holding hands. By the end of the song, the cast is holding hands and singing with the audience.)

SONG: "LETS MAKE PEACE WITH THE EARTH" (soloists, cast & chorus)

THE END