

# Jose Becomes a Reader

(A Playlet in Three Scenes)

Based on the Serial by B. Hill Canova  
"Maria's Companions"

## THE PLAYERS:

MARIA, who finds companions in books.

JOSE, who does not like to read.

ANITA, a friend of Maria.

PEDRO, brother of Anita.

TOM SAWYER, recent friend of Maria.

HUCK FINN, friend of Tom Sawyer.

ROBINSON CRUSOE, old friend of Maria.

FRIDAY, servant of Robinson Crusoe.

HEIDI, friend of Maria and Anita.

KIT and KAT, Dutch twins, friends of Maria.

THE PHILIPPINE TWINS, also friends of Maria.

JOE GREEN, groom of Black Beauty.

JOHN SILVER, a famous old pirate.

MEG, JO, BETH, and AMY, four little women who are companions of Maria.

BOBBY, friend of Maria.

SUE, sister of Bobby.

## THE PLAY:

### SCENE I

*The living room or sala at Maria's home. In the center of the room is a table on which several books and magazines are lying. Maria is seated, reading a book. A knock is heard. Maria goes to the door.*

Maria: Come in, José.

José: What are you doing this afternoon, Maria?

Maria: Reading.

José: Reading! Huh! What in the world are you reading for? Can't you find anything else to do?

Maria: I like to read. Don't you?

José: No, I don't. Books are no good. Over at Central School they're always fussing with us, trying to get us to read books. Books! Books! I'm sure I don't want to read any books.

Maria: That's too bad, Jo, because I think you're missing lots of pleasure by not reading books. Maybe some day you'll think differently. Say, Jo, I have an invitation for you. Will you accept it?

José: Sure, Maria. What is it?

Maria: You remember my friend Anita?

José: I'll say I do. She's that mighty nice girl who was visiting you last vacation.

Maria: Well, Anita will be here tomorrow. And her brother Pedro is coming with her. I want you to come

and meet Pedro. I know you'll like him. So come on over tomorrow. There'll be Anita and Pedro and you and I. And I'll have a few other friends here, too.

José: That's fine, Maria. Thank you very much. I'll be here sure. But who are the other friends you're inviting?

Maria: I think you've never met any of them, Jo.. But you'll like them, so come on.

José: Okay, Maria. I'll be here, especially since Anita will be here. Good-bye. (*José leaves.*)

Maria: (*Thinking to herself out loud*) So, Mr. José, I'm going to introduce you to some of my book companions.

Maybe you'll change your mind about reading. (*Curtain*)

.SCENE II

*The sala at Maria's home. Two o'clock the next afternoon. Maria, Anita, Pedro, and José are talking.*

Anita: How lovely of you, Maria, to have a party this afternoon. Whom have you invited?

Maria: Oh, they are all old friends. You know them. Pedro knows most of them, too. I am afraid Jo has never

met any of them, but he'll soon get acquainted, and I know he'll like every one of them. Won't you, Jo?

José: I will if they're all as nice as Anita. (*Anita blushes and looks embarrassed.*)

Pedro: Say, Jo, you certainly are becoming sentimental. (*A knock is heard.*)

Maria: I think our guests are beginning to arrive. (*Goes to the door and opens it.*) Come in, Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. (*Tom and Huck enter.*) I want you to meet my friends.

José: (*Aside to Anita*) Who is Tom Sawyer? I never heard of him.

Anita: Tom, my friend José here would like to know who you

are. He has never heard of you.

Tom Sawyer: Well, I'm Tom Sawyer and I live at my Aunt Polly's house. One Friday afternoon I stayed out of school without her permission and went swimming. So Saturday afternoon Aunt Polly made me whitewash the fence. Soon some of the other boys came along. I thought of a plan to make them do the work. I made believe that I liked the job. They all kept asking me to let them whitewash.



*They read good books.*

Finally I traded chances to whitewash for fruit, tops, marbles, a door-knob, a broken harmonica, a frog, a dead cat, and all the other things the boys had. I am a storybook boy, Jo. Have you ever read about my friend Huck here and me?

José: No. I don't like to read.

Tom Sawyer: Well, you can read about this and other exciting adventures that Huck and I had in a book called *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. It was written by Mark Twain.

Pedro: Yes, I know about both of you, Tom. I saw you in the movies. (*A knock is heard. Maria goes to the door.*)

Maria: Come in; Robinson Crusoe. I see you have your man Friday with you. I want you to tell us about your home in the island. (*Crusoe and Friday enter.*)

Robinson Crusoe: I'll tell you about how I got this man whom I named Friday. One day I was walking along the seashore when I saw some prints of bare feet in the sand. I was afraid! I decided I'd see who made the tracks. The next day I saw some smoke near where I saw the tracks. I saw some men ready to kill another man and eat him. I shot off my gun and scared the men away. I went down to the shore and cut the vines which held the poor fellow's feet. Then I took him home with me. I called him Friday because that is the day I got him. That is only one of the exciting things that

happened to me.

José: (*Aside to Anita*) I wouldn't mind to know about some more of those exciting adventures of Robinson Crusoe. (*Heidi comes in.*) Who's that nice looking little German girl with her hair in pigtails?

Anita: That's Heidi, the little Swiss mountain girl. Didn't you ever hear about her? Maybe she'll tell you who she is. Will you, Heidi?

Heidi: I live with my grandfather in the Swiss Alps. We have a cozy little mountain cabin. I used to live in a beautiful house down in the city, but I like my mountain home better. (*Kit and Kat enter.*)

Anita: Oh, here come more guests. They are Kit and Kat, the Dutch twins. And look! Here come some other twins. They are the Philippine twins.

José: (*Looking out of the window*) Look at that handsome black horse coming up the driveway. There's a man riding him.

Anita: Yes, that is a famous horse called Black Beauty, and the man riding him is Joe Green, the groom. Black Beauty and his groom Joe are acquaintances of Maria. She learned to know them by reading a book by Anna Sewell called *Black Beauty*. Come in, Joe. (*Joe Green enters.*)

Pedro: Oh, there is someone I never saw before coming up the walk. Why, he walks with a crutch. I wonder who he is. (*As John Silver gets nearer to*

*(Please turn to page 178.)*

### JOSE BECOMES A READER

(Continued from page 167)

the house, he is heard singing, "Fifteen men on a dead man's chest, Yo ho ho, and a bottle of rum.")

Maria: Why, that is John Silver.

Pedro: Who is John Silver? He looks terrible to me. (John Silver enters.)

Maria: I'll let him tell who he is. John Silver, please tell us who you are.

John Silver: Well, I'm a pirate. I went to Treasure Island to dig for hidden gold. You can read all about me in the book by Robert Louis Stevenson called *Treasure Island*.

José: I wouldn't mind to read about that old cut-throat pirate. Maybe I will read about him. Look at these old-fashioned girls coming in. Who are they? (Meg, Beth, Amy, and Jo enter.)

Maria: These are my four little women friends, Jo, Beth, Amy, and Meg, whom Louisa M. Alcott tells about in one of her books called *Little Women*. And here are two more of my book companions, Bobby and his sister Sue. Come in, Bobby and Sue. (Bobby and Sue enter.) I am glad you are here even if you are late.

Tom Sawyer: I'm sorry, but Huck and I must be going.

Other Storybook People: Yes, and we must go, too. Goodbye, Maria and Anita.

And goodbye, Pedro. Goodbye, José. We hope you will learn to know us, José, and make us your companions, just like Maria has done. (Curtain closes as they start out.)

### SCENE III

The same as Scene I. Maria, Anita, José, and Pedro are talking.

Maria: Well, José, this afternoon you met some of my storybook friends. What do you think of them, Jo?

José: Do you mean, Maria, that all those people are in books?

Maria: Yes, and there are many more just as interesting.

José: I should like to see them.

Maria: You can read about them, Jo.

José: I think I begin to see why you like so well to read, Maria.

Maria: Why don't you become a reader, José? You can get books from the school library. And magazines, too. One of the best of these is a magazine called *The Young Citizen*. It is the magazine for young people. It has splendid stories in it and games, and lots of interesting information. And many other things.

José: Well, Maria, I think I shall become a reader, too. And I'm going to begin right now by reading your copy of *The Young Citizen*. (Holds

### HOW FAST CAN YOU ADD?

(Continued from page 170)

#### How to Secure Rapidity

Add these columns twice each day for five days in succession. Then do not look at them for one day.

Then add them twice each day for four days; put them out of sight for two days.

Again, add them twice each day for three days; do not look at them for three days.

Next, add them twice each day for two days; do not look at them for four days.

Then add them twice in one day. You will be surprised at the amount of speed you have gained in adding.

Remember that "practice makes perfect." If you want to be able to add numbers quickly and correctly you must be willing to do the labor involved in this method. It certainly will pay you to do so.

Here are the correct answers to the problems on page 170. Check answers: (a) 60 (b) 115 (c) 170 (d) 225 (e) 280 (f) 335 (g) 390 (h) 445 (i) 230 (j) 85 (k) 140 (l) 195 (m) 250 (n) 305 (o) 360 (p) 415 (q) 470 (r) 75 (s) 110 (t) 165 (u) 220 (v) 275 (w) 330 (x) 385 (y) 440 (z) 315 (ab) 100.

up a copy of *Treasure Island* in one hand and a copy of *The Young Citizen* in the other. Curtain.) — Adapted from *The Instructor*.