

“The Friend”
A Puppet Script for Back to School

by
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What Willie is nervous about starting at a new school and wonders if he'll be able to make friends. Susie reminds him that she's his friend, and that even when he feels alone, Jesus is there as his friend, too.

Themes: Back to School, Kids, Children, School, Friendship, Jesus

Who Willie
Susie
Mrs. Pickles

When Present

**Wear
(Props)** Stuffed shopping bag
“Kick Me” sign

Why Proverbs 18:24

How See “how” at the end of this script.

Time Approximately 10 minutes

Scene opens with **Willie** at center stage. He is a little anxious at the thought of beginning the new school year at a new location, with new students, and a new teacher. He misses some of his old friends and worries about making new ones. But mostly he misses his long-time teacher, **Miss Pickles**. **Susie** approaches carrying an overstuffed shopping bag.

Susie: *(enters upbeat)* Hi Willie!

Willie: *(somewhat solemn)* Oh, hi Susie. What'cha doing?

Susie: *(cheerfully begins rambling)* I just finished my back-to-school shopping. I just lovvvvvve to shop. I could shop all day long. Shop! Shop! Shop! I got some pencils, a sharpener, pens, a backpack, glue sticks, a pocket dictionary, some paper, a note pad, a ruler, stencils, paper clips, a fingernail file...

Willie: *(shaking his head)* Oh, brother, I had to ask.

Susie: *(continues rambling)* ...a calculator, a clipboard, stickers, an eraser, some markers...uh...and a few other things. *(Takes a deep breath)* Whew! How 'bout you? Have you finished your back-to-school shopping yet?

Willie: *(shaking his head)* Nah. I pretty much already have everything I need. My baseball cards, chewing gum, my petrified frog, and my superhero comic books. You know, all the important stuff.

Susie: You're weird, Willie.

Willie: So, ah...are you excited about going back to school?

Susie: I sure am! We get to move into the new building this year. That's going to be fun. And we'll have our very own lockers and everything.

Willie: Yeah, that's pretty cool, I guess. But I'm gonna kinda miss the old place. I had lots of fun there.

Susie: *(nodding)* Yeah, *(dreamy like)* me too. Lots of great memories. *(Perks up)* But you'll have fun at the new place, too.

Willie: *(sighing)* Yeah, I suppose. *(Pause)* I'm really gonna miss some of my old friends too. Some moved away and others probably won't be in my class.

Susie: Yeah, me too. It's always sad when your friends move away. *(Consoling)* But you'll make new ones. You always do.

Willie: I hope so.

Susie: I'm sure you will. Mom always says that the best way to make friends...is to be a friend.

Willie: Huh?

Susie: Sure. You be a friend to someone and, more likely than not, they'll wanna be your friend too. We're all a little frightened at the start of a new year, and we all want to have someone to share our concerns and our excitements with.

Willie: I guess so.

Susie: I know so. *(Pause)* One things for certain!

Willie: What's that?

Susie: Ya still got me. I'm your friend.

Willie: Yeah, thanks, Susie. I hope you'll be in some of my classes.

Susie: Yeah, me too. But if I can't be there, you still have another friend who will be.

Willie: *(curious)* Really? Who?

Susie: Jesus.

Willie: Jesus?

Susie: That's right. Jesus is our friend. Actually, our very best friend. No one could ever love us as much as he does.

Willie: Hmm.

Susie: And he promised to always be there. Wherever 'there' is.

Willie: Cool.

Susie: We can talk to him anytime we want, day or night, and we don't even have to use our cell phone.

Willie: *(nodding in agreement)* Yeah, that's for sure.

Susie: Whenever we get into trouble, which is quite often in your case Willie, he's always there to help us through.

Willie: Yeah.

Susie: Jesus is like the friend we read about in Proverbs 18:24. There it says, "...there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother".

Willie: Cool. Now that's a friend.

Susie: Sure is. Jesus is my BFFAEAEAE

Willie: BFFAEAEAE? What's that?

Susie: Best Friend Forever and Ever and Ever and Ever. *(Giggles)*

Willie: You're right, Susie. And I'm not so upset anymore. I know Jesus will be with me. And I'm sure we'll make lots of new friends at school this year. *(Pause)* But...you know who I'm really gonna miss the most?

Susie: *(curious)*Who?

Willie: Miss Pickles.

Susie: *(nodding in agreement)* Yeah, she was sure a good teacher. But that's what happens when you graduate. You make new friends and you get new teachers. And our new teacher will probably be really great too. I just hope she'll be half as nice as Miss Pickles was.

Susie: Yeah, me too.

Willie: Sometimes I made her angry, but I knew that she still liked me.

Susie: You mean like the time you picked her award-winning flowers out of her garden?

Willie: Whew! Yeah. She sure did get mad about that. Or like the time I tried to play with her pet fish in the sandbox...and it croaked.

Susie: Speaking of croaking, how about the time you put your pet frog, Freddie, in her desk drawer.

Willie: *(giggling)*Yeah, I remember that.

Susie: *(laughing)*The whole school remembers that. I didn't know Miss Pickles could jump so high.

Willie: Yeah. *(Laughing)* Or scream so loud.

Susie: Yeah, I'm going to miss Miss Pickles a whole lot. *(Pause)*Well Willie, I've got to go finish my back-to-school shopping. Would you like to come with me?

Willie: *(shaking his head)*No thanks. I think I'll just hang around here for a little while.

Susie: Okay. See ya later. *(Susie exits)*

Willie: Bye.

Miss Pickles: *(enters upbeat)* Good morning Willie.

Willie: *(startled)* Oh, hi Miss Pickles.

Miss Pickles: Are you ready for school to begin?

Willie: Yeah. I guess so.

Miss Pickles: *(excited)* I know I am. We're going to have such a good time in my class this year.

Willie: *(speaking slowly and a bit upset)* You always did.

Miss Pickles: We'll be taking a field trip to the museum.

Willie: That sounds like fun.

Miss Pickles: And we'll be learning how to use the computer. Maybe we'll even be able to play some games on it.

Willie: *(disappointed that he'll be missing out)* Ohhhh.

Miss Pickles: And I'm planning a big pizza party for next month.

Willie: *(in anguish)* Ohhhhhhhhhh.

Miss Pickles: I'm just so glad I got that promotion. Now I'll be moving up a grade.

Willie: *(confused)* Promotion? You mean...?

Miss Pickles: *(very excited)* That's right, Willie. I'm going to be your teacher again this year.

Willie: *(joyful and excited)* Oh Miss Pickles. That's just wonderful. I can't wait to tell Susie...and...and...and Sammy...and Betsy...and... and everybody.

Miss Pickles: Yes, me too. Isn't it just wonderful?

Willie: Gee, Miss Pickles. You're just like that friend in Proverbs who sticks closer than a brother.

Miss Pickles and Willie both laugh.

Miss Pickles: Why thank you Willie. That was sweet of you to say. *(Slight pause as Miss Pickles becomes more serious)* Now Willie, you have to promise me that you won't be playing any of your tricks on me in our new class. Okay?

Willie: *(sarcastically)* Why, Miss Pickles. I wouldn't play any tricks on you. You're my favorite teacher.
Willie pats Miss Pickles on the back.

Miss Pickles: *(relieved)* Good. Thank you, Willie. I was a little concerned about that. Come on now, I'll walk you home.

Willie: I can't Miss Pickles, but thanks. I've gotta go tell Susie and Sammy the good news. See ya later. *(Willie exits quickly)*

Miss Pickles: *(speaking to the audience)* Oh, that Willie. He's such a good boy. I think he's finally grown up. And I'm so relieved to know that he won't be playing any of his tricks on me this year.

Miss Pickles begins to exit. As she is leaving, she turns her back to the audience where they will be able to see a sign, placed on her back by Willie, which reads "KICK ME" written in large letters. Miss Pickles then walks away happily singing to herself.

The end.

Tips for performing with puppets:

Puppets are wonderful tools for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in a fun, lighthearted way. What great joy it brings to hear the laughter of children when your performance goes well. I would like to take just a moment to focus on a few areas that I believe are key for that to happen.

The first has to do with the stage (curtain) itself. PREPARE YOUR WORK AREA. How you feel behind the curtain can make a big difference in how your presentation is seen in front of it. You will want a large enough work area behind the curtain to allow three or four puppeteers to maneuver comfortably behind it. A short stool or a rolled-up blanket can provide relief from the discomfort to your knees and back. Proper lighting is a must. This will help prevent you from losing your place while reading from the script. You may want to attach several copies of the script to the back of the curtain and have each puppeteer highlight their individual parts.

Next, because puppets are mostly expressionless, you will need to give them their spirit and vigor. BE HIGHLY EXPRESSIVE AND ANIMATED. Wave those arms, raise your voice and include lots of *wows, boings, zonks and thuds!* Children love that.

The presentation is most important. It is so easy for a good skit to suddenly go bad due to poor delivery. Reading over a script two or three times before performing it can make a world of difference. COMMIT TO MEMORY AS MUCH OF THE SCRIPT AS POSSIBLE. This will free you up to spend more time concentrating on the handling of your puppet...adding slap-stick humor, etc. ALWAYS KNOW WHAT YOUR PUPPET IS

DOING. Is he positioned too high up...or down too low? Is he looking at who he's speaking to? Are his lips in sync with your words.

And finally, don't forget the 'risk' factor. By this, I mean to be bold. Take risks. Dare to be differently. So what if your puppet (or your audience) gets a little wet. Who cares if your puppet ends up with whipped cream (shaving cream) on its face or with a little Play-Doh in its hair? It all comes out in the wash. DO THE UNEXPECTED. Your children will love it. If they are still talking about your puppet skit days, or even weeks, after it's over you're probably doing something right. In short, HAVE FUN!

1. Prepare your work area
2. Be expressive
3. Commit to memory much of the script and know what your puppet is doing
4. Do the unexpected
5. Have fun!

PURCHASE
SCRIPT
TO
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