



THE WISE ONES AND THE ELEPHANT

A play for two or more actors
from Roustabout Theatre Home Delivery

This play is written for you to practise and put on at home.

You could perform it for the people in your household, or why not try filming it on a video call to others in your family, or friends!

There are ideas and hints to help you. The only rule is to **HAVE FUN!**



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Did you know?

This play is based on a fable told all across the **Indian** subcontinent. It is first found in a collection of **Buddhist** writings over 2,500 years old!

The Characters

All the characters in this play are called **WISE ONES**. You can have **as many actors** as you want playing the **WISE ONES**. No one plays the Elephant. Instead the actors **mime** what they are touching.

Costumes

What would someone who believes that they are wise wear? Perhaps you could look at images of famous wise people to get some ideas. They could be real wise people, like Mahatma Gandhi, or fictional ones, like Yoda.

Props

You don't need any props to put on this play.

How to Put on the Play

Sometimes the **WISE ONES** speak together. This is called speaking as a **CHORUS**. It's quite tricky to speak as a Chorus, so make sure to practise this carefully.

When the **WISE ONES** speak individually, it is up to you to decide who says what line!



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Some Suggestions!

Practise your mime skills by holding or touching real objects. Remember what the objects feel like, what shape they are, and how heavy they are. You could turn this into the guessing game 'What's In The Box?' You can see a video of us playing this game here: <https://youtu.be/VsXglxwbUTQ>

Checklist:

Have you decided who is going to say which of the WISE ONE's lines?

Have you got your costume?

Have you practised speaking as a chorus?

You are ready to go! Here is the script. Let's play!



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**Here you will find what you need to say!
Read the words in black.**



**Here you'll find what
you need to do!**



THE WISE ONES talk to the audience together as a **CHORUS**.

THE WISE ONES

We are the Wise Ones. There is nothing that we don't know.

A WISE ONE

I used to think that I was the wisest.

A WISE ONE

Although actually it was me.

A WISE ONE

No, it was me.

A WISE ONE

No, I was the wisest.

A WISE ONE

Then we learned that none of us was the wisest.

A WISE ONE

Our wisdom comes from thinking together.

A WISE ONE

One day a strange creature was brought to the palace where we all lived.

It was kept in a large room.



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A WISE ONE

The room was very dark, and so we couldn't see the creature.

A WISE ONE

We all went into the room, reached out with our hands, and described what we could feel.

Each of THE WISE ONES closes their eyes and reaches out with their hands.

A WISE ONE

[Miming, feeling the elephant's trunk.] I can feel a long, thick, wiggly shape, like a hose.

This creature is a snake.

Ha! I am the wisest.

A WISE ONE

[Feeling the elephant's tail.] I don't think so.

I can feel a short, thin, wiggly shape, with hairs on the end.

This isn't a snake. It isn't even a creature. It's a paintbrush. Definitely.

A WISE ONE

[Feeling the elephant's ears.] Are you sure?

I can feel a large, folded, flappy shape, wafting me with a cool breeze.

This isn't a paintbrush. It's a fan. No, wait, two fans. And I know that I am right.



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A WISE ONE

[Feeling the elephant's side.] I know that you are wrong.

I can feel a massive, smooth, flat surface, larger than I can touch in one go.

This isn't two fans. It's a wall. For certain.

A WISE ONE

[Feeling the elephant's tusks.] How can you be so certain?

I can feel a long, smooth, pointed shape, that's so sharp at the end.

This isn't a wall. It's a spear. No, wait, two spears.

I hope that there aren't any soldiers holding those spears!

A WISE ONE

[Feeling the elephant's legs.] There can't be, because I can feel one... two...

three... four thick round shapes, solid and wrinkled like bark.

This isn't a creature. It's a clump of trees.

THE WISE ONES speak to the audience together as a **CHORUS**.

THE WISE ONES

A snake? A paintbrush? Two fans? A wall? Two spears? A clump of trees? Which was it?





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A WISE ONE

The strange creature was led out into the light.

A WISE ONE

And then we saw what it was.

A WISE ONE

We were all right.

A WISE ONE

But we were also all wrong.

A WISE ONE

Have you guessed what the strange creature was?

A WISE ONE

It was an elephant!

A WISE ONE

And that was how we learned that none of us was the wisest.

THE WISE ONES speak to the audience together as a **CHORUS**.

THE WISE ONES

Our wisdom comes from thinking together.

The End.



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