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TILTING AT WINDMILLS

Don Quixote and Sancho Panza's First Adventure

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TILTING AT WINDMILLS: DON QUIXOTE AND SANCHO PANZA'S FIRST ADVENTURE

inspired by the work of
Miguel de Cervantes

written by
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Synopsis

Introducing “Tilting at Windmills: Don Quixote & Sancho Panza’s First Adventure,” a captivating reader’s theatre experience perfect for classroom use. Written by the esteemed Spanish author Cervantes in the early 1600s, “The Adventures of Don Quixote” stands as a timeless masterpiece in Western Literature, renowned for its wit and humor.

Embark on a whimsical journey alongside the valiant Don Quixote and his loyal squire, Sancho Panza, as they embark on their inaugural adventure. Will you join them as they bravely face what appears to be a mighty giant? Or could it be that our intrepid heroes have mistaken a humble windmill for a fearsome foe?

Designed for students in grades 4-6, this reader’s theatre adaptation offers an engaging and interactive way to explore the classic tale of Don Quixote’s noble quest for chivalry and honor. Through laughter and adventure, young audiences be entertained and inspired to contemplate the timeless themes of courage and imagination that permeate Cervantes’ iconic work. Don’t miss the chance to bring the magic of “Tilting at Windmills” into your classroom and ignite a love for literature in the hearts of your students.

Cast of Characters

NARRATOR 1	
NARRATOR 2	
NARRATOR 3	
NARRATOR 4	
NARRATOR 5	
NARRATOR 6	
NARRATOR 7	
DON QUIXOTE	a gentleman who thinks he's a knight of old
SANCHO PANZA	his neighbor, friend, and squire

Director Notes

“The Adventures of Don Quixote” was written in the early 1600s by the Spanish writer, Cervantes. One of the most widely read novels in Western Literature, it is also quite funny.

ACT I

Scene 1

Setting: no setting, reader's theater

At Rise: All CAST are on stage.

NARRATOR 1

Once, there was a man who went crazy from reading books. The problem was, he only read books about knights and knighthood. The books told about the adventures of knights in shining armor and their fights with dragons, giants, and wizards.

NARRATOR 2

Soon the man started to believe that all the tales he read were true. One day, he decided that he wanted to become a knight. He wanted to punish evil and right all the wrongs in the world,just as the knights in his books did.

NARRATOR 3

He practiced jousting when he was alone in his room and the bangs and whams as he ran into the walls shook his house and worried his niece. Of course, he always won the jousts, so he thought he was a hero.

NARRATOR 4

The man lived in a little village in Spain called La Mancha. He was about fifty-years-old, tall and thin, and he had a small beard. Nobody in his village would have guessed there was anything odd about him because he was an honorable man. A complete gentleman.

NARRATOR 5

The man's real name was Alonso Quixano, and his neighbors called him Don Alonso. He didn't think that name was good enough for a knight, though, so he changed it to Don Quixote de la Mancha so everyone would know where he was from.

NARRATOR 6

One day he began to prepare to actually become a knight. He found an old suit of armor that had belonged to his greatgrandfather. It was so old that he had to tie it together. His horse wasn't much better than his armor. It was old and bony, and he named it Rocinante, which to most people meant "this was once a horse," but to Don Quixote, it meant "this is a steed above all other horses."

NARRATOR 7

And he also found himself a squire, his poor neighbor, Sancho Panza. Sancho was usually a sensible man, but Don Quixote filled his head with crazy ideas.

DON QUIXOTE

Sancho, if you come traveling with me, I can promise you many great things. Adventure, treasure, you name it. In the old days, when knights won islands and kingdoms, they gave them to their squires to govern. If you become my squire, I'll give you an island to govern.

SANCHO PANZA

If I have an island, I'll be rich! I can send money to my family from the island.

NARRATOR 1

So, one night, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza left the village unnoticed and they rode all night. Don Quixote rode Rocinante and Sancho rode a gray donkey named Rucio. Sancho had packed saddlebags full of food because he didn't know how long it would take until he had his island.

SANCHO PANZA

Master, how long do you think it will be until I get my island?

DON QUIXOTE

It could be anytime now. Certainly within six days, I should think. But Sancho, look there. What is that?

SANCHO PANZA

Why it's nothing but thirty or forty windmills, Master. They're common enough around here.

DON QUIXOTE

No, Sancho, look again. There are thirty or more huge giants yonder. I will engage them in fierce combat. And when I win the fight, we'll be on our way to riches with the spoils of our victory.

SANCHO PANZA

That's good news, your grace, but what giants do you see?

DON QUIXOTE

Those with the long arms.

SANCHO PANZA

But those aren't arms, your grace, they're just the sails of the windmills going around in the wind.

DON QUIXOTE

It is crystal clear to me that either you don't know what you're talking about or you're afraid. There is no shame in fear but step aside so I can fight them.

(DON QUIXOTE prepares to joust with the windmill.)

SANCHO PANZA

But Master… it's a windmill. Not a giant! A windmill! Stop!

NARRATOR 2

The knight didn't hear his squire's cries. He rushed toward the windmill with his lance outstretched, yelling at it to give up or face the threat of the great knight, Don Quixote.

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NARRATOR 4

Even though his intentions were good, Don Quixote's attack on the windmills was useless because, of course, they weren't giants.

NARRATOR 5

It wasn't a complete loss though. The story of Don Quixote jousting with the windmills coined a new phrase, tilting at windmills. It means taking on an impossible task with good intentions, like trying to convince your teacher to give you an "A" even though you didn't do your homework.

NARRATOR 6

Don Quixote's nature was exceedingly idealistic. Some might even say unrealistic or Quixotic – another word that came about because of his stories. Being Quixotic is like hoping for snow if you live on the equator. Probably not going to happen.

NARRATOR 7

After their adventure tilting at windmills, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza went on to have many more Quixotic adventures. Though the stories are funny, it is the heart of Don Quixote, who desired to right all wrongs, and the loyalty of his squire and friend Sancho that have kept readers reading 400 years after they were written.



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