

SPACE RACE

SYNOPSIS:

Relive the tension and excitement of the Space Race through dance and song - and witness it through the eyes of aliens! This intergalactic feast of music and movement will take you on a mind-boggling journey: from the start of Rock 'n' Roll in 1957, through to the Swingin' Sixties, the Sensational Seventies, and the Electric Eighties. Who won the Space Race, the Russians or the Americans? Is it still going on? And have we learnt anything? Hold onto your seats, and enjoy the ride!

In this show, it is advisable to end with even scores between the Russians and Americans. That way, the audiences can make up their own minds as to who eventually won the Space Race!

CAST & COSTUMES:

(bullet points indicate speaking parts)

- Chief Alien (large cloak)
- Alien Cadets (6)
(green faces/antennae)
- President Eisenhower
- Nikita Khrushchev
- Monica - keeps the scores for the USA (dressed stars & stripes)

- Veronika - keeps the scores for the USSR (dressed in red)
- Laika - first dog in space, Russian
- Yuri Gagarin - first man in space
- JFK
- President Nixon
- Neil Armstrong (first man on the moon)

Russians (as many as possible)

Americans (as many as possible)

KGB agents (approx. 6)

CIA agents (approx. 6) Think MIB!

ESSENTIAL PROPS:

Soviet & American flags, images of 1950s-1980s America & USSR (e.g. posters of Lenin, Communist propaganda, images of JFK, Gorbachev), cardboard rocket, scoreboard, powerpoint images for scene one, disco ball for “First Disco in Space”

STAGING:

We suggest having two stages - one for the aliens and all other outer-space action; the other stage can then represent all the activity that occurs on planet Earth. The “alien” stage can be significantly smaller.

BASIC CHOREOGRAPHY:

Songs 1 & 2: hand-jiving

Song 3: Russian “Cossack” dancing!

Song 4: Twisting

Song 5: Robotic movements for Alien Dance

Song 6: Rapping

Song 7: Back-to-back in pairs, wielding guns and some floor rolls

Song 8: Arm-swaying in chorus

Song 9: Get down on your knees, then up for the rousing choruses

Song 10: *See detailed notes at end of book*

Song 11: *See detailed notes at end of book*

Song 12: Plenty of jumping up in the air and punching the air in the chorus

Song 13: Aliens waving goodbye and humans pointing to their “new” star.

Song 1: Rock ‘n’ Roll into Hyperspace

(whole company)

You and me could rock ‘n’ roll high up in the sky
We could build a rocket that would show the people why
We’re the greatest and we’re on a mission to the stars
One day soon we’ll be the first to reach the planet Mars

Ooh, it’s so cool!
We’re gonna rule the world!

Racing into orbit at a supersonic speed
We could burn some juice that would put us in the lead
Three times round the moon and then we’ll launch a satellite
We could be the first to travel faster than the speed of light

Rock ‘n’ roll in hyperspace
Crank up the volume and pump the bass
Who will win this race? Space Race!

Ooh, it’s so cool!
Who’s gonna rule the world?

Rock ‘n’ roll in hyperspace
Crank up the volume and pump the bass
Who will win?
Who will win?
Who will win this race? Space Race!

Scene 1 – Alien Classroom

(*The aliens are about to start a class. The Chief Alien is taking the lesson*)

Chief Alien: Okay, class; settle down. We're moving onto a new topic. We've studied the Human Race and now we're ready to study the Space Race. Let's recap. What have we learnt about humans?

Alien 1: Some humans live for 120 years.

Chief Alien: Mmm (*uncertainly*)

Alien 2: They have names which they keep for life.

Chief Alien: Stop, stop, stop! Come on, you can do better than that! I want interesting facts. Gimmie something juicy about the human race. They're a real hoot, you know; a real backward lot. Pupil Number 2, try again.

Alien 2: They keep talking about the weather.

Chief Alien: Why? Are they meteorologists?

Alien 2: No, but it's a safe thing to talk about. This way they won't say anything to offend the person they're talking to.

Chief Alien: So they're boring as well as backward! Pupil Number 3. What can you tell us?

Alien 3: They're obsessed with having the latest gadgets. They always want the latest technology. That way they can keep in contact with their friends with things like facebook and twitter.

Chief Alien: You mean they don't use telepathy?

Alien 3: No.

Chief Alien: See what I mean? – Boring, backward *and* primitive!

Pupil number 4?

Alien 4: They seem to be a planet of worriers. This is particularly the case in richer countries. It's almost as if they need to have a worry in order to be happy?

Chief Alien: Boring...backward...primitive...worriers...Do we really want to visit this lot? (*thinks for a minute*) I suppose we have to – it's in our national curriculum. Pupil Number 5?

Alien 5: They seem to keep taking pills and potions and visiting their doctor on a regular basis.

Chief Alien: I thought they believed in something called Mother Nature.

Alien 5: Oh, they're gradually forgetting about her.

Chief Alien: Who is she anyway?

Alien 5: Who, Mother Nature?

Chief Alien: That's the one!

Alien 5: I don't know. Perhaps we'll meet her.

Chief Alien: (*gives a loud sneeze*) Have you got anything for this?

Alien 5: Yes as it happens: Lemsip?

Chief Alien: That'll do nicely. (*Alien 5 hands over some Lemsip; Chief Alien looks at it and nonchalantly throws it behind him.*) Now, Pupil Number 6, what have you found out about the Human Race?

Alien 6: They all suffer from a disease called greed. However hard they try, they are never totally satisfied in themselves – they always want more. And they like having their egos massaged.

Chief Alien: Right! I think we've got the measure of this funny lot! Now, as I was saying, we'll be starting a new topic called the Space Race, 1957-1972. Using the latest technology we'll be able to travel back in time and space to visit these humans. We will be using a device called an Interactive Whiteboard Alpha...

Pupils: Ooh! (sounding impressed)

Chief Alien: Plus!

Pupils: Ooh! (*getting louder*)

Chief Alien: Deluxe!

Pupils: Ooh!

Chief Alien: Extreme!

Pupils: Ooh!

Chief Alien: 101st Generation!

Pupils: Ooh!

Chief Alien: Splodge!

Pupils: Hey? (*said in bewilderment*)

(*Images appear on back wall. The first one is a traditional blackboard!*)

Chief Alien: This is the device we'll be using. (*Turns round to see the wrong image*) Hey, who's been playing tricks? (*Swooshes to next image which is a futuristic-looking interface*) Now this is the device we'll be using to travel back in time. (*Image of the planet Earth then appears*) And this is the planet we'll be visiting. I don't know why it's called Earth as it's got far more water than earth! (*Image of the American flag followed by the Russian flag appears*) Here are the

flags of the two superpowers. Both want to be the first to conquer space. (*Image of a local building or school appears*) I've heard good things about this place! (*Image of a recognisable personality such as a headteacher appears, possibly in disguise*) And this is what the local people/teachers look like.

Chief Alien: But before we go on any trip, there's a lot to learn about the planet Earth. For our research to be properly scientific, we'll need to blend in well, won't we?

Pupils: Yes, sir!

Chief Alien: Now, as we're travelling back to 1957, let's learn some vocab that was popular in the 1950s. If you keep using these words, you'll fit in superbly. Now repeat after me: "Cool" means really good.

Pupils: "Cool" means really good.

Chief Alien: "Cool it!" means relax.

Pupils: "Cool it!" means relax.

Chief Alien: "No sweat" means no problem.

Pupils: "No sweat" means no problem.

Chief Alien: "Crazy" means really good.

Pupils: "Crazy" means really good,

Chief Alien: "What's buzzin'?" means what's new?

Pupils: "What's buzzin'?" means what's new?

Chief Alien: Excellent!

Pupils: Excellent!

Chief Alien: You don't have to repeat everything I say!

Pupils: You don't have to repeat everything I say!

Chief Alien: Stop it! (*sounding annoyed*)

Pupils: Stop it!

Chief Alien: Grrr!

Pupils: Grr!

Chief Alien: Disintegration, anyone? (*said in a sinister tone*)

(*Silence falls!*)

Chief Alien: "Reds" means communists.

Pupils: "Reds" means communists.

Alien 1: What's a communist?

Chief Alien: Ah! The Russians and Americans were competing against each other to be the first to conquer space. Each wanted to be the first to send a man into space, to orbit a satellite around the Earth and even send a man to the moon!

Pupils: Ooh! (*sarcastically*)

Alien 1: Been there!

Alien 2: Done that!

Alien 3: Got the t-shirt!

They start to giggle

Chief Alien: Don't laugh. (*said gently*) These humans are a very primitive race. Try to bear that in mind.

Alien 1: You can say that again!

Chief Alien: These humans are a very primitive race. Try to bear that in mind.

Alien 1: But what is a communist?

Chief Alien: Ah! The Russians were the Communists and the Americans were the capitalists.

Alien 1: But what is a communist?

Chief Alien: Ooh, you are persistent. (*slightly annoyed*) Communism means sharing the wealth of the nation equally amongst all its citizens so that there are no poor people. Everybody works for the good of the nation and newspapers are usually filled with good news, called propaganda. Under communism there is no private ownership. All work and property are shared.

Alien 1: Sounds good.

Chief Alien: Yes, in theory.

Alien 2: So what's capitalism?

Alien 3: I know, I know! It's how you start the beginning of a sentence!

Chief Alien: (*Ignoring Alien 3*) Capitalism is where most organisations and property are privately owned. The individual is king and the most important thing is...

Alien 2: Love?

Chief Alien: (laughs) No!

Alien 3: Chocolate?

Chief Alien: (laughs) No!

Alien 4: Oxygen?

Chief Alien: (laughs) No!

Alien 5: Being kind?

Chief Alien: (laughs) No!

Alien 6: Money?

Chief Alien: (*looks very surprised*) How did you know? You're not an earthling, are you?

Alien 6: My dad works in research.

Chief Alien: Oh! (*sounds impressed and shocked as he's obviously in a high position*) Right! If I press the right buttons we should enter this Space Race when things are hotting up. Oh, by the way, there's a Cold War going on which started in 1952. It's a sort of war, but not a war; it's more in space, but it's not in space. Oh dear! (*realizes how confusing this must sound*)

Alien 3: Hey that's cool!

Chief Alien: Atta boy! Now we're ready to head back to 1957. Please remember – best behaviour – we're going to meet some pretty important people.

END OF SCENE ONE