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### C. THEATRE: SELECTION FROM SHORT PLAY ADAPTATION

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This adaptation of a children's book was prepared for 1st-2nd graders at CS47 in the South Bronx.  
The script has been reformatted to fit this document.

## Jabutí the Tortoise

### A TRICKSTER TALE FROM THE AMAZON

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*Based on the children's book by Gerald McDermott  
Adaptation by Adam Steinberg*

**NARRATOR** (*Teacher*): Jabutí the Tortoise lived in the rainforest. Between the rains, he danced through the trees playing a song on his flute. His shell was smooth and shiny and his song was sweet.

*[MUSIC PLAYS. THE BIRDS START TO WAKE UP]*

**PARAKEET**: Listen! It's Jabutí playing his flute!

**ALL BIRDS**: Come on! Come on! Come on!

**GOLDEN TANAGER**: His music is so beautiful!

**PARROT**: It floats through the forest!

**PUFFBIRD AND HONEY CREEPER**: We love to sing along!

**NARRATOR**: But Vulture didn't like the clever tricks Jabutí liked to play on the other animals, and he was jealous of Jabutí, because Vulture could not sing.

**VULTURE**: One day I'll eat that little trickster tortoise!

**MACAW**: *[ENTERING]* Did you hear? Did you hear?

**TOUCAN**: The King of Heaven has called all birds to Heaven to sing and rejoice together!

**HUMMINGBIRD**: Jabutí, the King has invited you, too. He wants to hear you play.

**ALL BIRDS**: Come on! Come on! Come on! *[ALL BIRDS EXCEPT VULTURE FLY OFF]*

**JABUTÍ**: I would love to play my flute for the King of Heaven. Take me with you, Vulture!

**VULTURE**: Hmmm. Of course! Climb on my back, little friend.

**NARRATOR**: They flew far above the treetops, rivers, and fields. When they had almost reached heaven, Vulture suddenly swooped and turned upside down!

**VULTURE**: Whoops! Sorry, Jabutí! *[VULTURE FLIES OFF]*

**JABUTÍ**: I'm falling! I'm falling!

**NARRATOR**: The earth rushed toward him!



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**JABUTÍ** [*SINGS/CHANTS*]:

TWIG AND BUSH, FLOWER AND TREE  
MOVE ASIDE, MAKE WAY FOR ME!  
RIVER AND MOUNTAIN, FOREST AND FIELD  
YIELD, YIELD, YIELD!

*[THE PLANTS AND TREES BEGIN TO MOVE ASIDE.]*

**PLANTS AND TREES** [*SING/CHANT*]:

TWIG AND BUSH, FLOWER AND TREE  
MOVE ASIDE FOR JABUTÍ

**JABUTÍ:** Oh no! I forgot the rocks!

**NARRATOR:** Jabutí came down on the rocks with a CRACK! His smooth, shiny shell broke into pieces. Meanwhile, in Heaven...

*[THE KING OF HEAVEN ENTERS IN PROCESSION. ALL BIRDS FOLLOW. VULTURE ENTERS LAST.]*

**KING OF HEAVEN:** Vulture, where is Jabutí?

**VULTURE:** How would I know?

**HUMMINGBIRD:** I saw Jabutí climbing on Vulture's back.

*[VULTURE TURNS AWAY AND HIDES HIS HEAD BENEATH HIS WING.]*

**KING OF HEAVEN:** I fear for Jabutí! Birds, fly! Find him.

**ALL BIRDS:** Come on! Come on! Come on! . . .