

**Harmony Tree International Speech Festival (HTISF)**  
2024-2025 Set Pieces for Asia Division

**FINAL**

**Dramatic Duologue**  
*Born in 2011-2012*

**Choice A**  
**Time Limit:**  
**4 minutes**

## **A Game of Soldiers**

*By Jan Needle*

*(Sarah, Michael and Thomas are children living on Falkland Island during the Falklands War. They are playing 'Soldiers' when they discover a wounded Argentinian soldier. They decide they should kill him, though Sarah remains doubtful and insists on going to her house for a blanket and food to give him some comfort before he dies. Michael (13) and Thomas (8) are left alone, in their den, by the sea. Time: 1980s.)*

- MICHAEL:** It's great this, isn't it? It's not a game any more. It's real. Absolutely ace.
- THOMAS:** Do you think she'll do it, though? Do you think she'll go through with it?
- MICHAEL:** She promised, didn't she? She swore like the rest of us?  
Death to the enemy. Fantastic!
- THOMAS:** She only swore when you gave in, though. It seems daft to me, to get him food and drink and blankets. Then to kill him. It's potty.
- MICHAEL:** Female logic, Thomas. There's no rhyme or reason to it. But never mind, it does no harm to humour them. That's what my father always says.
- THOMAS:** I could see her point in a way. I mean, him with the gun and that. And us with nothing. It might lull him into a... you know... Mightn't it?
- MICHAEL:** A sense of false security. Yeah, I suppose it might. He might even go off to kip if he's got some food in him, and a nice warm blanket on. That'd make life easier. For us.
- THOMAS:** And she didn't give you a lot of choice, in the end, did she?  
Take it or leave it, she said, suit yourself.
- MICHAEL:** Don't kid yourself, son. I'd have talked her round. But she had a point, I've said so, haven't it? A sense of false security.
- THOMAS:** Michael?
- MICHAEL:** Yeah?
- THOMAS:** How you... How we... What exactly are we going to do?  
To... you know... kill him?
- MICHAEL:** You're not ducking out are you, Thomas? You're not trying to go back on a swear? Cause if you are...

**THOMAS:** No, no course I'm not. It's just I... Well, I mean, what exactly are we going to do? How do you kill a man?

**MICHAEL:** Well, there's lot of ways, aren't there? I mean, it would be easier if he didn't have a gun, we're going to have to be dead careful. Maybe we can let you sneak up on him and snatch the thing away.

**THOMAS:** What! Me! Sneak up on him!

**MICHAEL:** I'm pulling your leg, you twit. I wouldn't trust you to take a dummy off a baby. Relax.

**THOMAS:** Crikey, Michael. Don't say stuff like that! But what if he sees us coming, though? What if he shoots us?

**MICHAEL:** He won't. That's why I agreed to let Nelly Knickerleg get the food and stuff. I might get my Mum's sleeping pills or something. Put some in his coffee to make sure. Or even some rat poison from the barn. That'd be another way.

**THOMAS:** But what if they caught you at it?

**MICHAEL:** They might. That's the problem. But I don't think it's necessary, at all. I think we can do it easier, much easier.  
*(He takes out his pen-knife and fingers it)*  
I tell you what though. I don't half wish this was a real commando knife. That would be the easiest.

**THOMAS:** Could you knife him, honestly? Grow, I'd throw up. I'd puke!

- The End-

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**Choice B**  
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## **Dolphin Summer**

*By Monica Edwards, an adapted version*

*(RISSA and TAMZIN are best friends who live on Romney Marsh in Sussex, on the south coast of England. They are united by a very long friendship, their love of ponies and their passion for everything to do with their coastal home. In this scene, they have gone riding by moonlight on the beach. Tamzin is looking for dolphins. RISSA and TAMZIN have dismounted from their ponies on the beach.)*

**RISSA:** We have all the Marsh to ourselves.

**TAMZIN:** Except for the sheep. I do wish they wouldn't go to sleep in the middle of the path and then leap up so frantically.

**RISSA:** You've got nothing to complain of. Cascade is such a well-behaved pony. Everything sends Siani into a panic.

**TAMZIN:** The only net-shed that has two good hooks on the wall, for tying the ponies, is the farthest one away towards the river. I think they used them for drying nets when they went fishing off the shore. *(They tie the ponies to the shed.)*

**RISSA:** Now the wind's dropped it's warm enough to swim.

**TAMZIN:** I keep thinking I can see dolphins out there.

**RISSA:** I think it's only waves. The way they look in the moonlight.

**TAMZIN:** The ponies are staring out, too. I was imagining Cascade was a sea-horse. Perhaps he's longing to get back. But I don't think we'd see any dolphins if we went in on the ponies.

**RISSA:** The tide could be higher, but never mind. Are you ready?

**TAMZIN:** Ouch! The stones are painful here.

**RISSA:** You know, it could be either waves or dolphins out there.

**TAMZIN:** Perhaps if we swim out farther we'll see if there are really dolphins. The water is warm!

**RISSA:** It always is when the air is cold; it's the contrast.

**TAMZIN:** I could go on and on...right to France.

**RISSA:** We've come out quite a way, already. Never mind about the dolphins...The stars are amazing, look. I know the Great Bear, anyway. And that's the Pleiades...

I hope the ponies are all right. (*TAMZIN gets caught in an undertow and disappears, RISSA is unaware of this and continues talking.*) It's so beautiful here. I could stay here forever, couldn't you? Tamzin... you're not listening. Tamzin. Where are you? (*To herself*) Where is she? She can't have hidden underwater for this long. Oh no...no... She might have drowned. What should I do? I just don't know what to do ... I suppose I should get help...but then again, I ought to try and find her.

(*Meanwhile, TAMZIN has crawled back on the beach*)

**TAMZIN:** It's all right, Rissa. I'm over here.

**RISSA:** Tamzin! What happened? Where did you go? You're all right, now! I'll look after you. Everything will be all right. Wait... I'm just going to get towels. I won't be a minute. I'm so glad you're all right. I'll look after you.

**TAMZIN:** Thanks.

**RISSA:** Are you warmer? Do you feel better?

**TAMZIN:** Yes... yes. I got caught in an undertow, I think. I found myself being sucked down... I couldn't keep my head above the water. I was so scared...

**RISSA:** But how did you break free?

**TAMZIN:** I was sinking down — and down. Then suddenly something pushes me upwards — and I could breathe again. It kept on pushing — then I realized — it was a dolphin! Then another dolphin came along and they pushed me back to shore.

**RISSA:** Could you get on Cascade? With me helping

**TAMZIN:** I think so. I'm all right. Just a bit wobbly.

**RISSA:** Just lean on me while we walk up there. I can't believe that the dolphins actually saved you. I thought you were dead.

**TAMZIN:** I thought I was going to be.

- The End-