

Attachment E.-1 Sample screen play concept for Mulla Nasrudin series, by MTSA staff

## SAMPLE SCREEN PLAY CONCEPT: MULLA NASRUDIN AND THE LOST LETTERS

Time: 15 Minutes

The Mulla, a famous philosopher and religious scholar, rides on his little donkey along a path in Afghanistan toward a rural village, with two big sacks. He meets 3 boys about 6 years old, and stops to talk about the fact they have no school. The Mulla turns around to get something from his sack, but drops the sack and - in a burst of light, it turns into a burst of letters, scattering the letters.

Focus is on some of the letters which make up one or two familiar, simple words, such as, for example, "man" and "run", or "go" and "stop".

The children offer to look for the letters and return them to the Mulla. He promises he will show them how to read and write each letter.

But wherever the letters have fallen, they begin to grow, and grow, and grow, until they are taller than a child. So the kids need 2 or 3 to cooperate in hauling the letters back, one by one. The Mulla scolds the letters, puts his hand on the top of each letter, and squishes it to the ground. He then picks it up and puts it back into his pack.

This scenario gives the opportunity for slapstick-type comic events, as well as for a lesson in cooperation, and as well keeping the image of each letter in front of the eyes of the children so that they can memorize it.

As to writing the letters, the Mulla addresses the 3 boys and, at the same time, looks straight into the camera and addresses the audience as if they were in the studio. He gives each of the 3 boys a pad of paper and shows them how to write the letters. Then he asks them to write the letters 3 times, while he is watching them. He turns to the kids in the TV audience and asks them also to write the letters 3 times. He asks them also to promise to write 3 lines of letters as homework until the next day.

(Compare here the *Blue's Clues* children's series where the "Steve" character addresses the video audience directly.)

Once the Mulla has found all of his lost letters, and the children have written them three times, the Mulla gets on his donkey and leaves. A final comic bit: on the rear end of the donkey, the children have written the letters.

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In another attachment is one of the little Mulla Nasrudin tales which might be the theme for another program, a story called "His need is greater than mine." A crow stole the soap from the Mulla's wife as she was washing the Mulla's cloak, and the Mulla's response was: " Look how black is his cloak – his need for soap is much greater than mine." This offers the common words soap, hand, fly, etc., and a lesson about charity and forgiveness. The letters could drop off the soap and float down to earth like a kite, or else perhaps splash into the wash basin.

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Also in another attachment are pages from the newest Afghanistan literacy text book approved by the Deputy Minister for Functional Literacy of the Afghanistan Ministry of Education. The original is in full color, glossy paper, very sturdy. This is the curriculum which must be covered, all of it, although not necessarily in the same order as in the book. .

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