

Script Levels: Grade 5 (Early, Middle, Upper)

Word Count: 2,160

Script Summary:

David and Michael find a hurt fox on the mountain ridge behind their house. They want to bring it home and care for it, but their mom stops them. Students will enjoy learning about the proper way to handle injured wild animals and wildlife-rehabilitation centers.

Objectives and Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- consistently read their lines with appropriate rate and accuracy
- consistently read their lines with appropriate expression, including pause, inflection, and intonation
- follow along silently and listen for spoken cues

Using the Scripts:

- Each role is assigned a reading level according to the syntactic and semantic difficulty encountered. Feel free to divide roles further to include more readers in a group.
- Discuss vocabulary and encourage readers to practice their lines to promote fluent delivery of the script.
- Have readers highlight their lines on the scripts, and encourage them to follow along as everyone reads.

Vocabulary:

Story words: animal control center, dehydrated, diseases, kennel, medical, nocturnal, rehabilitation, ridge, volunteers

Cast of Characters:

Grade 5 (Early)	Grade 5 (Middle)	Grade 5 (Upper)
Tom	David	Penny
Narrator	Mom	Michael

Cast of Characters:

Parts		
Tom	David	Penny
Narrator	Mom	Michael

Michael

Mom, Mom!

Mom

My goodness, Michael, what's the matter?

Michael

You have to come quick! We found an animal outside, and it's hurt!

Mom

Where is your brother?

Michael

The animal has been badly hurt! I came to get a box to put it in. We want to bring it back to the house.

Mom

Michael, do not touch that animal! Go tell your brother to back away and wait for me. I'm coming right now.

Michael

But Mom . . .

Mom

Hurry!

Narrator

Michael's mom hurries up the **ridge** behind their house to where a very worried Michael and David are looking at the hurt animal. David holds Brady, their black lab.

Mom

David, put Brady in the house. Michael, come here by me.

David

Okay, Mom. Come on Brady, let's go.

Michael

It wasn't going to hurt us, Mom. The poor animal hasn't moved or made a sound since we found him. He did open his eyes, so we know he's alive. Do you know what he is?

Mom

Some kind of fox, I think. Michael, here's my cell phone. I want you to find the number to the **animal control center**.

Michael

Can't we take care of him?

Mom

Don't be silly, Michael. It's a wild animal. The animal control center will be able to care for him better than we can. Now please, make the call.

Narrator

Michael finds the number and calls animal control. He tells them what they found, gives them their home address, and hangs up. David returns without Brady.

Michael

Okay, they're coming, Mom.

David

Who's coming?

Mom

Animal control. Did you get Brady inside?

David

Yes, but it was difficult. He was pretty excited.

Mom

Why don't you boys go down to the end of the driveway and wait for the animal control people. I'll stay here.

Narrator

A short while later, the boys bring Tom, the man from animal control, up the ridge.

Tom

Who found this little fox?

David

My bother and I did. Well, it was our dog, Brady, really. We were hiking up the ridge, and he started to whine. Luckily, we got hold of him before he got hold of the fox.

Tom

Your mom was right to tell you to stay away from it. Wild animals can be dangerous, especially if they're hurt or sick. They can also carry **diseases** that could make you, your mom, your brother, or even Brady sick.

Narrator

Tom puts on a pair of long thick gloves and carefully kneels down to pick up the fox. It struggles for a moment and even bites Tom's gloved hand. When the fox calms down, Tom places it in a small **kennel**.

David

What are you going to do with the fox?

Tom

He needs **medical** attention, quickly. There's a wildlife-**rehabilitation** organization on the edge of town that takes in animals just like this guy. They'll take care of him.

Mom

Thank you for coming out and helping with the fox.
We really appreciate it.

Tom

We're happy to help. Don't hesitate to call if you need us in the future.

Narrator

David, Michael, and their mom watch as Tom takes the fox to his truck and drives away. Then they go back home for dinner.

Mom

You boys have hardly touched your dinner! Michael, it's not like you to play with your food. Are you worried about the fox? I'm sure the wildlife-rehabilitation center is taking good care of him.

Michael

I just wish I knew how he was doing. He looked so bad when Tom took him away. What if he didn't make it?

Mom

Okay boys, let's not let our imaginations run away with us. The people at the rehabilitation center will do everything they can. Why don't we give them a call in the morning and see how he's doing?

David

Why don't we give them a call right now? I'm sure they're still there.

Michael

Please Mom, can't we call them right now?

Mom

If you boys promise to finish your dinner, I'll go in the other room and call right now.

Narrator

The boys silently finish their dinner and quickly clean the kitchen. When they are done, Mom still hasn't returned from the phone call.

Michael

She sure has been talking a long time. What do you think they're saying?

David

Well, if it was bad news it wouldn't take this long, so maybe the little fox is doing better. Here she comes!

Mom

I talked to Penny at the wildlife-rehabilitation center. The animal you found is a male kit fox. He made it through surgery, but he's very weak. She said he must have been out in that desert a while without food and water, because he was very **dehydrated**.

David

Who will stay with him?

Mom

Penny is going to care for him through the night. She said she would call us in the morning and let us know how he's doing.

Michael

He's going to make it. I can feel it. Come on, David, let's look them up on the Internet and see what we can find. Mom, is it okay if we go online?

Mom

Yes. Penny also said if you had not found the fox and told someone about it, he would not have survived.

David

Boy, that little fox is lucky!

Narrator

The boys take their mother's tablet onto the couch and start by looking up the local wildlife-rehabilitation center.

Michael

Good thing Tom took the fox to the rehabbers.

David

The what?

Michael

The wildlife rehabilitators are called *rehabbers*. It says here they help sick, injured, or orphaned wildlife. They rescue wild animals and care for them until they are better.

David

What do they do with them when they're better?

Michael

They release them back into the wild, if possible. Look, they have pictures of all the kinds of animals they have helped!

David

Wow! Rabbits, skunks, javelinas, snakes, and even birds! There's a little fox just like we found. It says rehabbers have special training for many different animals in the area, so they know what to do for a specific animal that's injured.

Michael

"Some rehabbers are veterinarians, but not all veterinarians are rehabbers. Some vets don't know how to care for wild animals." Wow! That's interesting.

David

It says if you encounter an animal that may need rescuing, you should *never* pick it up. Leave it where you find it and call animal control or the rehabbers.

Michael

Mom was right. She *has* lived in the desert all her life, so I guess she knows about these things!

David

Look up kit fox. What does it say about that?

Michael

“A kit fox is a small gray- or tan-colored animal with large ears and a black-tipped tail. It weighs less than five pounds and is often seen at night in Southwestern deserts.” Look, there’s a picture.

David

It looks just like our fox! Hey, Mom, come here!

Mom

What did you guys find out? Oh! That picture looks just like the little fox you found! Say, would you boys like to go see the fox tomorrow at the wildlife-rehab—

David

They like to be called *rehabbers*.

Mom

The *rehabbers* said you could come and see him if you want to.

Michael

That would be great! Hey David, we should give the little fox a name. What do you want to call him?

Narrator

The boys look at each other, then at their mother. They all smile and say . . .

Michael, David, and Mom

Kit!

Narrator

After breakfast the next morning, the boys and their mom drive a short distance to the sanctuary where Kit is healing. Penny meets them when they arrive.

Penny

Good morning! Are you the two heroes who saved the kit fox?

Michael

Actually, it was our dog, Brady, that first found Kit.

Penny

Kit?

David

Yeah, that's what we named him. Is that okay?

Penny

Absolutely! That's a great name! Now, before we go in to see Kit, I need to explain a few things. He was really bad off when animal control brought him in. He had a broken leg, and he was very hungry and dehydrated.

David

Mom told us how bad he was last night, but he's better now, right?

Penny

He feels much better today. We put a cast on his leg and gave him fluids all through the night. This morning, Kit was well enough to eat a little breakfast!

David

He's a fighter, isn't he?

Penny

He sure is. Now when we go in, you need to be very quiet. He still has a way to go before he's up and around.

Narrator

David, Michael, and their mom enter a dimly lit room as quietly as possible. There are other animals in the room as well. Penny takes them to a cage along the wall, where Kit is sleeping.

Penny

Here he is.

Michael

He looks so small in that cage. Are you sure he's okay?

Penny

We don't want him to move around yet, so we gave him something that makes him sleepy. This way his leg will heal as completely as his body. Little Kit was worn out. He needs to rest to get better.

Mom

Just like you boys do when you're sick at home. You stay in bed and rest so you can get better.

David

Look, Michael, he's opening his eyes! Hi, Kit. Do you remember us?

Michael

It looks like he's smiling at us. Just a little.

David

Kit, you rest so you can get better, okay?

Narrator

Kit blinks his eyes as if to say "yes" and then goes back to sleep.

Penny

Okay boys, let's let Kit get some sleep.

Narrator

The boys, their mom, and Penny whisper goodbye and leave the room.

David

He sure looks better than he did yesterday. I wonder what happened to him out there.

Penny

It's hard to say. Another animal might have attacked him, but he doesn't have many other injuries. He could have jumped off something and hurt himself. We can't know for sure, but we can help him get better.

Michael

Is there anything we can do to help?

David

Yeah, we'd like to help if we can.

Penny

We have a program here that teaches **volunteers** how to care for injured and rehabilitating animals. They help the rehabbers get the animals well and hopefully back into the wild. They also go into schools or organizations and teach others about what to do if they come across wildlife when they're outdoors.

David

Do you have to be an adult?

Penny

As a matter of fact, we have a kids program here. Do you think you would be interested? You could help Kit and the other animals get better.

Michael

Can we, Mom? Please, it would be great if we could help Kit and the other animals!

David

We promise we'll get our chores done at home, too!

Mom

I think it's a great idea. What are the hours, Penny?

Penny

We like to keep them on their regular schedule if possible. Foxes are **nocturnal**, so they eat at night. We will feed them in the evening and early in the morning every day. You can choose the days you want to come in.

Michael

We can come every day!

Mom

The boys would love to help. They'll be here bright and early tomorrow morning. We'll see how many days a week they can handle. It sounds like a lot of work.

Narrator

To everyone's surprise, Michael and David come in faithfully every day to volunteer. A few months later, Penny says she has some big news.

Penny

You boys have been two of our best volunteers this year! You've learned how to clean the cages, feed and care for injured animals, and, most importantly, how to deal with desert animals that have been injured in the wild.

Mom

I'm so proud of both of you!

Michael

You should see Kit, Mom. His leg is back to normal, and he's getting stronger every day.

Mom

Does he know you? Does he come to you when you feed him?

David

Of course not! He's not our pet. He's a wild animal.
We put food out for him and then let him find it.

Michael

We rehabbers work to get injured animals back into the wild, so we have limited contact with them.

Mom

You sure have learned a lot these last few months.

David

We really have.

Penny

Tomorrow, thanks to your help, we are going to release Kit back into the wild.

David

Can we let him go at the top of our ridge, so maybe we will see him every once in a while?

Narrator

Very early the next morning, the boys meet the rehabbers at the top of the ridge behind their home. Even Tom shows up.

Penny

Everyone stand back while I open the cage. Okay, Kit, come on out! It's time for you to go home.

Tom

Look at Kit poke his nose out. Now here he comes, and there he goes! Boy, he sure scampered away quickly! He knows he's home.

Penny

You've done a great job, boys. I hope you're feeling good about it.

Michael

It's a little sad to see Kit go, but I'm happy that he's better.

Tom

I wouldn't be surprised if you saw Kit around here every once in a while.

Penny

And I hope you won't stop volunteering at the center. You two are great with the animals now.

David

We plan on being there for the rest of the summer.

David and Michael

You can count on us!