
STAGEWORKS
ORIGINALS™ *presents*

10 REASONS YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED HOME SICK TODAY

A SHORT COMEDY BY
E. M. Bell

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Cast of Characters

STUDENT 1

STUDENT 2

STUDENT 3

STUDENT 4

STUDENT 5

STUDENT 6

STUDENT 7

STUDENT 8

STUDENT 9

STUDENT 10

Casting Notes

The casting is very flexible. I've written the piece to be performed by ten students, but you're more than welcome to split the roles even more. Similarly, you're free to combine roles to make the cast smaller (you likely need at least five).

10 Reasons You Should Have Stayed Home Sick Today

by E. M. Bell

STUDENT 1. (*Entering:*) I think we can all agree that sometimes, a mental health day just seems like a good idea.

STUDENT 2. (*Entering:*) But sometimes in high school, it's actually medically necessary.

STUDENT 4. (*Entering, dressed as an official "doctor" type:*) Studies have shown that the hormone cycles and chromosomal base pairings sourced from mitochondrial DNA of a female or male high school student...also known as the *Teenagious homosapienicus*, support the DIRE need for days off.

STUDENT 3. (*Entering, speaks to the "doctor":*) Did you just make that up?

STUDENT 4. (*As "doctor":*) Maybe. But is that a risk you want to take? WITH YOUR HEALTH?

STUDENT 3. Um. No.

STUDENT 4. (*As "doctor":*) That's what I thought.

STUDENT 5. (*Entering:*) There are many reasons for this so called "mental health day:"

STUDENT 1. Stress at home...

STUDENT 6. (*Entering as "mom," screeching a bit:*) I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOUR FATHER INSISTS ON PLAYING HIS COUNTRY JAZZ-RAP FUSION RECORDS AT TOP VOLUME ALL DAY SATURDAY! I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW HE CAN STAND THE SOUND OF IT!!!!

STUDENT 2. Stress at work...

STUDENT 7. (*Entering as "manager":*) First you're gonna wanna dip the chicken in the fryolator.

Then you're gonna wanna stand there and wait.

Then you're gonna wanna take it out.

Then you're gonna wanna put it in the box.

Then you're gonna wanna put the box in the bag.

Then you're gonna wanna—

STUDENT 8. (*Entering:*) ALL RIGHT. WE GET IT. Sometimes we kids need a day off.

STUDENT 9. (*Entering as "teacher," very frazzled:*) Well what about us teachers?! I have grades and testing and evaluations and administrative meetings and professional-development days and statewide curriculum mandates and report cards and staff meetings and field trips and plan books and TO TOP IT ALL OFF ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS I HAVE CHOIR PRACTICE AT MY CHURCH.

STUDENT 1. Teachers deserve a day off too.

STUDENT 9. You think so?! Thank god.

STUDENT 2. But uh...that's a different play.

STUDENT 9. Oh.

STUDENT 1. Sorry.

STUDENT 10. (*Entering:*) Everyone. Pull it together. (*He gestures to the audience.*) These fine people didn't come here to listen to us bicker.

STUDENT 3. They didn't?

STUDENT 10. No. If they wanted that, they'd have stayed home with us and our siblings.

STUDENT 5. Good point.

STUDENT 10. We're here to educate those skeptics out there—

STUDENT 6. Teachers.

STUDENT 9. Hey!

STUDENT 8. Bosses.

STUDENT 7. You're gonna wanna—

STUDENT 4. The principal.

STUDENT 10. And anyone else who might doubt our desperate aching need for a sick day.

STUDENT 3. Even when we aren't exactly sick.

STUDENT 5. So now, for your great theatrical pleasure...

STUDENT 6. We, the students of [*insert name of your school or drama club*] present...

ALL STUDENTS. Ten reasons we should have stayed home sick today!

Reason #1: The Bus Ride

STUDENT 4. One of the greatest reasons to stay home sick from school is to avoid this dreaded TIN TUPPERWARE OF TEENAGE ANXIETY.

STUDENT 3. THE BUS RIDE.

(Some STUDENTS move chairs around to make two rows like a bus. STUDENT 5 begins to walk up and down the aisles. They're all full.)

STUDENT 6. Taken.

STUDENT 7. Taken.

STUDENT 8. Taken.

STUDENT 9. *(Now "the dork":)* You can sit with me! I love a seat buddy.

STUDENT 5. Um. No thanks, I'll stand.

STUDENT 9. *(Snorts:)* NONSENSE! That violates the safety rules! Come on, cop a squat, buddy!

(STUDENT 5 reluctantly sits.)

STUDENT 5. Uh. Thanks. I think?

(The other STUDENTS snicker.)

STUDENT 9. *(Oblivious:)* Man. This underwear my mom picked out for me is so tight.

(STUDENT 9 starts to wriggle around. STUDENT 5 is mortified.)

STUDENT 9. But I do love my Mickey Mouse! So!

(STUDENT 9 laugh-snorts. STUDENT 5 is now dying. Officially.)

STUDENT 5. Could we just. Could you just maybe. Could we ride in silence...?

STUDENT 9. OHHHHHH I get it. Not much of a morning person, huh?

STUDENT 4. *(As a "bully":)* I think he's not much of a sitting-next-to -a-loser person.

(STUDENT 4 high-fives his cronies around him, they laugh.)

STUDENT 9. Oh don't mind them! I don't think you're a dork.

STUDENT 5. I don't think they were talking about me.

STUDENT 9. Haha!

STUDENT 5. ...

STUDENT 9. *(Remembering:)* Oh gee whiz! I just remembered my mom packed tuna!

(STUDENT 9 fishes out the fishy sandwich as STUDENT 7 enters. STUDENT 7 is really attractive. STUDENT 7 smiles at STUDENT 5.)

STUDENT 7. *(To STUDENT 5:)* Hey.

STUDENT 5. Oh. Hi. Hey. I didn't know you took this bus.

STUDENT 7. I just moved.

STUDENT 5. Cool. That's cool. Very. Cool.

STUDENT 7. *(Smiling:)* Haha, yeah, I guess so.

(Pause.)

STUDENT 5. *(To STUDENT 7:)* So. Um. Now that we uh, ride the same bus. Maybe you'd wanna...like? Sit with me? Tomorrow?

STUDENT 7. Yeah I'd—

STUDENT 9. *(Mouth full of sandwich:)* YUM. MEE. YUM!

STUDENT 7. Ew. What's that smell?

STUDENT 5. Oh, it's...just. Tuna? I think?

STUDENT 7. *(Holding nose:)* Gross. Oh god. It's making me carsick. I have to get off. Driver! Driver! Pull over! Stop the bus—

STUDENT 1. *(As "driver":)* Whoa there! We can't just stop the bus!

STUDENT 7. It's an emergency! Please! I'm gonna be—

STUDENT 9. Nothin' like a good tuna salad sandwich with EXTRA ONION, ANCHOVIES and a HINT of CAPERS!

STUDENT 7. *(Now looking green:)* SICK!!!

(STUDENT 1 makes a dramatic braking noise as ALL STUDENTS lurch forward. STUDENT 7 runs off.)

STUDENT 4. *(As "bully":)* Nice job, tuna face.

(We hear STUDENT 7 puking offstage.)

STUDENT 5. It wasn't me!

STUDENT 4. It doesn't matter. Because now that I've called you tuna face, everyone else will too. FOREVER. AND EVER.

(All the STUDENTS exit the bus except STUDENT 9 and STUDENT 5.)

STUDENTS. Good one, tuna face./ Tuna face for EVAH! / Tuna face, more like tuna brain. / *(Etc.)*

(STUDENT 5 is crushed. STUDENT 9 smiles, holds out his sandwich to STUDENT 5.)

STUDENT 9. Want some?

STUDENT 5. I think I'm gonna be sick.

(STUDENT 5 exits off to puke.)

STUDENT 9. *(Calling after him:)* You probably should have stayed home!!!

Reason #2: Humiliating Moments

STUDENT 6. Another good reason to stay home sick is the dreaded...

STUDENT 7. *(All in one breath:)* Humiliating moment everyone sees that you wish you could take back but you can't and so thusly you are doomed to be haunted by it in therapy for many years to come?

STUDENT 6. Uh. Yeah.

(STUDENT 10 walks on stage wearing a backpack and whistling. All is fine...SO FAR. Suddenly, STUDENT 10 slips and falls.)

STUDENT 10. OW!

(STUDENT 10 moans a little in pain.)

STUDENT 10. WHY DO THEY WAX THE FLOORS SO OFTEN OMG.

(STUDENT 10 gets up. They're fine. UNTIL. They notice a stain on their pants from the puddle they landed in... Note: stain and puddle can be IMAGINARY! Ah, the power of theater!)

STUDENT 10. Crap.

(STUDENT 8 enters.)

STUDENT 8. CRAP?! YOU CRAPPED YOUR PANTS!

STUDENT 10. No, that's ridic—

STUDENT 8. *(Yelling:)* EVERYONE COME QUICK! SOMEONE SOILED THEIR PANTS AND NOW WE ALL NEED TO COME AND POINT AND LAUGH.

(All the STUDENTS enter. They immediately point and laugh.)

STUDENT 1. Oh my god.

STUDENT 2. That's so gross.

STUDENT 3. Go back to preschool!

STUDENT 4. You're like my grandma except not!

STUDENT 5. HA.

HAHA.

HA.HA.HA.

STUDENT 6. I'm hungry.

STUDENT 10. You guys! I did not...SOIL...my pants. I fell. In this puddle.

STUDENT 7. I don't see a puddle.

STUDENT 10. Well, not NOW...I absorbed it. WITH MY PANTS.

STUDENT 8. Sure.

IF "ABSORBED" MEANS "CRAPPED."

(All the STUDENTS laugh.)

STUDENT 10. That joke didn't even make sense.

STUDENT 1. It doesn't have to!

STUDENT 9. Because you just had an accident in front of EVERYONE AT SCHOOL!

STUDENT 7. You probably just should have...

ALL STUDENTS except 10. Stayed home sick!

Reason #3: The Dreaded Surprise Test

STUDENT 9. Reason number three is the scariest.

STUDENT 10. The most awfulest.

STUDENT 10. The truly terrifyingly life-ruining, blood-curdling, horror that is...

STUDENT 9. THE SURPRISE test.

(A row of chairs on stage, STUDENTS sit in rows, at invisible desks [or visible if you like]. STUDENT 3 enters wearing headphones and backpack.)

(STUDENT 3 hums [any popular song that's funny].)

STUDENT 4. SHHHHH!

STUDENT 3. Jeez, relax. Sorry.

STUDENT 4. I'm trying to study. Your humming is driving me nuts.

STUDENT 3. Study? What for?

STUDENT 4. The test today.

STUDENT 3. Test? Today?

STUDENT 4. Well, no not TODAY.

STUDENT 3. THANK GOD.

STUDENT 4. The test in like sixty seconds.

STUDENT 3. WHAT?!

(STUDENT 1 enters as a "mean, scary teacher.")

STUDENT 1. ALL RIGHT CLASS PUT EVERYTHING UNDER YOUR DESK INCLUDING YOUR DIGNITY.

STUDENT 3. I had no idea we had a test!

STUDENT 4. He mass-texted us last night.

STUDENT 3. Since when do teachers TEXT?!?!

STUDENT 1. I HAVE AN IPHONE.

STUDENT 3. Right...no...of course.

(STUDENT 1 begins handing out papers to all of the STUDENTS. They whisper to each other.)

STUDENT 2. I studied for three hours.

STUDENT 5. I studied for four.

STUDENT 9. *(Rolls his eyes back in his head:)* I'm STILL studying...behind my eyelids.

STUDENT 10. I read the book twice.

STUDENT 8. I read it three times.

STUDENT 6. I like pizza.

STUDENT 1. QUIET DOWN. You will have exactly sixty seconds to complete this 856-question test. The questions are multiple true false fill in the essay. If you studied that should be NO PROBLEM.

STUDENT 3. Oh god...

STUDENT 4. SHHHHH!

STUDENT 6. I also like tacos.

STUDENT 1. It begins NOW!

(The STUDENTS are about to begin:)

STUDENT 1. WAAAAAAAAAAAAIT!

(The STUDENTS all freeze.)

STUDENT 1. One more thing. If you fail this test, you will fail this class, flunk out of school and your life as you know it will be over.

(Pause. STUDENT 4 makes an "eep!" sound.)

STUDENT 1. BEGIN NOW!

(The STUDENTS frantically write for a minute. STUDENT 4 flips the page. After ten seconds...)

STUDENT 1. TIME IS UP! EVERY GETS A's except—

(Everyone looks at STUDENT 4:)

STUDENT 1. YOU!!!!!!

STUDENT 4. *(To the audience:)* I feel...

ALL STUDENTS. SICK!!!

Reason #4: Forgetting Your Lunch

STUDENT 8. This one's a bad one.

STUDENT 4. My stomach hurts just thinking about it.

STUDENT 8. Makes sense. Because it's...

STUDENT 4. Forgetting your lunch.

(STUDENT 6 sits happily eating some chips.)

STUDENT 6. Chips. Chips. Chips. I love chips. NOM NOM NOM.

(STUDENT 2 enters sadly.)

STUDENT 2. SIGH.

STUDENT 6. CHIPS CHIPS YUMMY YUMMY CHIPS.

STUDENT 2. I SAID...

siiiiighhhhh.

STUDENT 6. Dear Chips, I love you so much, I wish I could marry you.

STUDENT 2. Now that's just weird.

(STUDENT 6 starts making out with the bag.)

STUDENT 2. Oh my god, stop.

STUDENT 6. Sorry. Got carried away.

STUDENT 2. Guess you did.

STUDENT 6. So. Where do we go from here?

STUDENT 2. Is it too much to ask that we start the scene?

STUDENT 6. *(Wiping face, straightening up:)* Right, of course. Right.

STUDENT 2. I mean, this is every time, man. Every time.

STUDENT 6. No, I know, I'm sorry.

STUDENT 2. It's all right, just like...leave it at the door.

STUDENT 6. I'll do better. I will.

STUDENT 2. We're here for the work, dude.

STUDENT 6. I know. I know, I'm sorry.

STUDENT 2. It's cool. It's cool. Just take it from your line.

STUDENT 6. Right, got it. Um.

(Clears throat and speaks in a really fake/mannered way, hitting the wrong syllables.)

Hey there. What has got you so upset? Why the long face? *(Pause.)* Are you OH-kay?

STUDENT 2. I forgot my lunch.

STUDENT 6. Oh no!

STUDENT 2. I know. And I'm SO hungry.

STUDENT 6. THAT is. THE. Worst.

STUDENT 2. Right? And I don't have cash to buy.

STUDENT 6. OH WHOOOOOOOA is me!

STUDENT 2. That's my line—jeez.

STUDENT 6. Oh, shoot, sorry.

STUDENT 2. Oh whoa is me!

STUDENT 6. I'd lend you some, but I spent all my cash on my prom ticket.

(STUDENT 2 looks at STUDENT 6 pointedly.)

STUDENT 6. Okay FINE I spent it on cookies at the track bake sale GEEZ.

STUDENT 2. I guess I'll just starve.

(STUDENT 9 enters.)

STUDENT 2. Hey, I forgot my lunch, got anything to spare?

STUDENT 9. Um. Sure? I think I have a yogurt. Hold on.

(STUDENT 9 rummages at the bottom of their bag.)

STUDENT 6. Lucky you!

(STUDENT 2 glares at STUDENT 6.)

STUDENT 9. *(Handing it to STUDENT 2:)* Here you go. I think it's been in there for a few weeks, but like...yogurt is mold anyway, right?

STUDENT 2. You're thinking of blue cheese.

STUDENT 6. You LOVE blue cheese! What luck!

STUDENT 9. Sorry, it's all I got.

(STUDENT 9 *exits*. STUDENT 2 *opens the lid and sniffs*. STUDENT 2 *gags, hands it to* STUDENT 6.)

STUDENT 2. Oh man. I'm gonna be—

(STUDENT 6 *takes a giant bite of the yogurt*. STUDENT 2 *is horrified, staring*.)

STUDENT 6. Sick?

Reason #5: Gym Class Fatalities

STUDENT 3. Gym class fatalities.

STUDENT 4. Makes ya wonder why you didn't think to call in sick.

STUDENT 3. Since you're bound to end up in the hospital anyway.

STUDENT 3. Exhibit A, submitted for your approval...

(STUDENT 10 jogs in happily. STUDENT 9 jogs in too, huffing and puffing.)

STUDENT 10. I love getting some exercise in the middle of an otherwise physically underwhelming day!

STUDENT 9. Me *(pant)* too *(pant)*.

STUDENT 10. I'm so glad this is a part of our everyday schedule here at our wonderful educational institute!

STUDENT 9. Yeah *(pant)* it's *(pant)* great *(pant)*.

STUDENT 10. *(Stops jogging and starts to stretch:)* Ten miles! Not bad!

STUDENT 9. Must *(pant)* have *(pant)* water *(pant)*.

STUDENT 10. We gotta stretch first! Haha! You okay there, bud?

STUDENT 9. Feeling *(pant)* great *(pant)*.

STUDENT 10. You know, I got a hair winded there at the end, must have been because of that hill we went up...

STUDENT 9. Which *(pant)* hill *(pant)* there *(pant)* were *(pant)* so *(pant)* many *(pant)* they all *(pant)* blur *(pant)* together *(pant)*.

STUDENT 10. *(Claps him on the back:)* Ha. You're so funny.

STUDENT 9. *(Holding his hands to his face:)* I can't see *(pant)* my hands *(pant)*.

STUDENT 10. *(Goes back to stretching:)* You wanna do another lap? To warm down?

(STUDENT 9 passes out.)

STUDENT 10. You okay?

(STUDENT 9 doesn't move.)

STUDENT 10. Buddy?

(STUDENT 9 still unresponsive.)

STUDENT 10. You sick?

Reason #6: Getting Robbed

(All the STUDENTS enter and stand like a very proper choir and hit a beautiful chord [or a hilariously UN-beautiful chord.] STUDENT 10 steps forward.)

STUDENT 10. Reason number six.

(STUDENT 3 steps forward.)

STUDENT 3. Getting ROBBED.

STUDENT 7. *(As "overly nice choir teacher":)* All right, students. Time to audition for our SPRING RECITAL SOLO!

STUDENT 9. Yippee!

STUDENT 2. Yay!

STUDENT 1. Hoorah!

STUDENT 7. What AMAZING enthusiasm! I love it! Make my heart HIT THE HIGH NOTES!!!

All right, who's first?

(STUDENT 9 waves eagerly.)

STUDENT 7. All right, let's hear it. Please step forward and let your heart tell me THROUGH SONG what dreams are made of!

(STUDENT 9 steps forward and sings a few lines. IT IS TRULY TERRIBLE. Like it's AWFUL. But weirdly, STUDENT 7 and ALL OTHER STUDENTS except STUDENT 4 clap like crazy, genuinely. STUDENT 4 looks around, confused.)

STUDENT 7. I'm TEARING UP!!!! Your voice opened my soul like a key in a lockbox! Wow! It's gonna be hard to top that one! Who's gonna try? Huh? And remember, it's not about winning, it's about singing so the world will know what's in your heart!

(STUDENT 2 waves eagerly.)

STUDENT 7. All right, step right up in the hot seat! Haha! Here we go. Show us the music of your essence, and let shame fall away as you lift your voice in song!

STUDENT 2. Got it!

STUDENT 7. A-five, six, seven, eight—

(STUDENT 2 sings. We didn't believe it possible, but it's WORSE than STUDENT 9. It's so bad, STUDENT 4 covers their ears. When STUDENT 2 is done, the whole class and STUDENT 7 freak out with applause.)

STUDENT 7. WOW!

WOW!!!!

STUDENT 2. *(Bashfully:)* I've been working on it for a while.

STUDENT 7. What a great example of how hard work can pay off!

STUDENT 2. Thanks, everyone.

STUDENT 4. I...I don't understand...

STUDENT 7. *(Comforting STUDENT 4:)* Oh it's okay! If you work hard, someday maybe you can sound like that!

STUDENT 4. *(Sarcastic:)* Oh goody.

STUDENT 7. All right. This is some pretty steep competition, but is there anyone else who wants to throw the ol' hat in the ring?!

(STUDENT 4 raises their hand.)

STUDENT 7. Oh wow! Okay. Well here we go. Let's hear it! Remember: it's not what it sounds like that matters...it's what it IS like.

STUDENT 4. What?

STUDENT 7. You're such a kiddie.

STUDENT 4. ...

STUDENT 7. You can do it.

(STUDENT 4 begins to sing. It's good. At the very, very end, STUDENT 4 coughs a little. Just a tiny bit. STUDENT 4 finishes and waits for the applause. STUDENT 7 and the choir members clap quietly...a smattering of applause, unenthusiastic.)

STUDENT 4. *(Still confident:)* Sorry, I got a tickle in my throat at the end.

STUDENT 7. Right...

(Awkward pause, the OTHER STUDENTS don't look at STUDENT 4.)

STUDENT 7. *(Clears their throat:)* Well, um...this was a very hard decision but I think we can all agree...

(STUDENT 4 smiles.)

STUDENT 7. *(Putting their arm around STUDENT 2:)* This angelic voice!

(The whole class claps and cheers.)

STUDENT 2. Oh my god! Thank you! I'm so honored! Honored and blessed!

STUDENT 7. The best soloist we've had in years!

STUDENT 4. WHAT?!

STUDENT 7. Well, now, we must remember to be happy for other people's success.

STUDENT 4. I'm sorry...but! What?!? They were both TERRIBLE!

STUDENT 9 and 2. Hey!

STUDENT 4. I'm sorry but it's true! I was robbed.

STUDENT 7. Well, now, that's a little unfair. Rejection hurts but in this business—

STUDENT 4. No, this is crazy! They sounded like dying cats!

STUDENT 6. Cats have feelings too!

STUDENT 7. I'm going to have to ask you to step outside until you can find joy in your being for the happiness and skills of your fellow singers!

STUDENT 4. Is this because of the tickle in my throat at the end?

STUDENT 7. Well...

STUDENT 4. I barely even coughed!

STUDENT 7. All the same...if you weren't feeling well, you probably should have...

ALL STUDENTS. Stayed home sick!

STUDENT 7. It really is an important life lesson. Now, let's take it from the top.

(STUDENT 7 begins to conduct. All the STUDENTS sing. It's VOMIT-INDUCINGLY TERRIBLE.)

STUDENT 4. *(Yelling over the din:)* YOU'RE TELLING ME.

Reason #7: Social Networking

STUDENT 1. You know what makes me sick?

STUDENT 9. What?

STUDENT 1. Networking.

STUDENT 9. Like the internet?

STUDENT 1. No. SOCIAL networking. Which is like the internet in that it's invisible, but it's ruining the fabric of American families.

STUDENT 9. Darn Zuckerberg.

STUDENT 1. But even without the internet, social networking is a darn good reason to stay home.

(STUDENT 5 enters and bumps into STUDENT 2.)

STUDENT 5. Oh, shoot, sorry.

STUDENT 2. (As "cool jock":) Oh, no problem. Actually, you were just the person I wanted to see.

STUDENT 5. (Looking behind:) Really? Me?

STUDENT 2. Yeah, you.

STUDENT 5. You know my name?

STUDENT 2. Yeah. It's...um...

STUDENT 5. Taylor.

STUDENT 2. (Lying:) Right. I know. Haha. Right.

STUDENT 5. Wow. I mean. It's just. You're so popular. I feel like you guys don't know people like me are alive.

STUDENT 2. Haha, nonsense. We know you're ALIVE.

STUDENT 5. ...

STUDENT 2. (Clears throat:) Um, anyway, um...a bunch of us are having this really cool party—

STUDENT 5. I love parties!

STUDENT 2. That's nice. So it's on Friday—

STUDENT 5. I LOVE Fridays!

STUDENT 2. Cool, so, it's at the park—

STUDENT 5. I LOVE PARKS!

STUDENT 2. ...Street bowling alley.

STUDENT 5. Oh. Bowling is cool too.

STUDENT 2. So we were all wondering...

STUDENT 5. Yes?

STUDENT 2. If you wouldn't mind...

STUDENT 5. Yes???

STUDENT 2. Asking your friend Morgan to join? They're pretty cool and since we know you hang out, we thought you wouldn't mind extending the invite.

STUDENT 5. Oh.

STUDENT 2. If it's not too much trouble.

STUDENT 5. No. No trouble at all.

STUDENT 2. Cool, great. I'll tell everyone.

STUDENT 5. You do that.

STUDENT 2. (About to walk away, stops:) Hey are you okay? You look at little...

(STUDENT 5 does a take to the audience.)

STUDENT 5. Sick?

Reason #8: The Bathroom

(ALL STUDENTS runs on stage.)

STUDENT 3. REASON NUMBER EIGHT.

STUDENT 8. THE SCHOOL BATHROOM.

(All the STUDENTS mime vomiting.)

Reason #9: The Bait and Switch

(All the STUDENTS begin high-fiving, clapping each other on the back.)

STUDENT 10. A field trip!

STUDENT 7. Oh boy!

STUDENT 6. I like to recycle!

STUDENT 10. This is gonna be the best!

(STUDENT 6 emerges from the crowd. STUDENT 6 is the “droning teacher.” STUDENT 6’s voice will drive you insane with its monotone.)

STUDENT 6. Hellloooooo classsssssss. I haaaaaaaaveeeeeee an annoooooouncement about the triiiiiiiip tooooooadaaaaaayyy.

STUDENT 10. We’re all packed and ready to go on the nature hike! We brought everything we need! Don’t you worry.

STUDENT 6. Ahhhhhh yessssss, but unforrrrrrtunately duuuuue to a ratheeeeeer acuuuuuuute infestaaaaaation of duuuuuuuuung beetles aaaat the natttturrrrrre reseeeeeeeerve we willlllll haaaaaave to rescheeeeeeeeeedule for another daaaaaaay.

STUDENT 10. WHAT?! But...we’ve been planning this for months! And it’s beautiful out!

STUDENT 6. I knnnnoooooow, but saaaaaadly we will haaaaave to choose anoooooother date. Sometime betwwwww-wweeeeen noooooooow and never agaaaaaaaain.

STUDENT 10. This is so unfair!

STUDENT 6. Lifffffeeeee is unfaaaaaaaair, kids. The soooooooner you realize thaaaaat, the more likely you aaaaaareeee to thrive in the coooooorporate environmeeeeent you are liiiiiiikely to woooooork in upon graaaaaaduating from a mid-tier coooooolllege, saddled with scaaaaaaaaads of student looooooans.

STUDENT 10. Huh?

STUDENT 6. On the pluuuuuuuus side, we’ve arrrrrrraaaaaanged a veeeeeeeery enjoyable ALLLLLLLTERNATE activity for tooooooo-daaaaaaaayyyyy.

(A STUDENT wheels out a cart with a bunch of gross-looking science-y jars and petri dishes.)

STUDENT 6. We will now study the life cycles and movement patterns of the rare Kimitkazi MOOOOOOOLD spores...

STUDENT 10. Ewwwww...

STUDENT 6. And their symbiotic second cousin...the rare IMITACHI Maggot.

STUDENT 7. *(To STUDENT 10:)* You don’t look so hot.

STUDENT 10. I think I’m gonna be sick.

(STUDENT 10 passes out.)

Reason #10: Reason That Shall Not Be Named

STUDENT 8. *(To audience:)* This reason is super depressing. You'll see. Just wait. I can't even give it a title. It's so terrible. We'll just call it "Reason that shall not be named."

(STUDENT 3 enters happily.)

STUDENT 1. What's with you?

STUDENT 3. I'm just so happy it's the last day of school.

STUDENT 1. Yeah, that's always the best.

STUDENT 3. It's over two months of sunny days, making some extra cash, hangin' by the pool.

STUDENT 1. No homework.

STUDENT 3. Or tests.

STUDENT 1. Or teachers.

STUDENT 3. Or backpack.

STUDENT 1. Or recycling.

STUDENT 3. ...I think we still have that.

STUDENT 1. Sure.

STUDENT 3. But you are right. Summer is pretty great.

(STUDENT 9 enters with a giant bullhorn. STUDENT 9 is speaking over the loudspeaker.)

STUDENT 9. ATTENTION ATTENTION. STUDENTS OF *[INSERT YOUR SCHOOL NAME HERE]*.

(The STUDENTS all enter the stage to listen.)

STUDENT 9. DUE TO NEW CURRICULUM MANDATES AND STATE REQUIREMENTS AND GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS AND A BUNCH OF STUFF SMALL-TOWN BUREAUCRATS LIKE MYSELF CAN'T POSSIBLE FATHOM, I HAVE SOME EXCITING NEWS.

STUDENT 1. I bet they're eliminating the summer reading list!

STUDENT 9. THE SCHOOL YEAR HAS BEEN EXTENDED.

(ALL STUDENTS GASP.)

STUDENT 9. BY TEN WEEKS.

(ALL STUDENTS GASP HARDER.)

STUDENT 9. WHICH IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T FIGURED IT OUT, IS THE ENTIRE SUMMER.

(ALL STUDENTS GASP AGAIN!)

STUDENT 9. I FOR ONE AM LOOKING AT THIS AS A POSITIVE CHANGE IN OUR SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT. YOUR MINDS WILL NOW BE MOLDED FIFTY-TWO WEEKS OUT OF THE YEAR. NO MORE PESKY SKI TRIPS, DISNEY VACATIONS OR LONG WALKS ON THE BEACH. IT'S JUST AP TESTS, SATS AND GPAS FROM HERE ON OUT.

STUDENT 1. I want to die.

STUDENT 3. I wonder if they have summer vacation in heaven.

STUDENT 9. SO PUT AWAY THOSE SWIM TRUNKS, BOOGIE BOARDS AND DREAMS. AND I WILL SEE YOU BACK HERE TOMORROW FOR FIRST PERIOD. THANK YOU ALL.

STUDENT 1. *(Falling to their knees and looking up to the sky:)* WHY?! WHY HAST YOU FORSAKEN MEEEEEE?!!!

STUDENT 3. PULL IT TOGETHER!

STUDENT 1. NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

STUDENT 3. This isn't the end of the world...we can make the best of it...

STUDENT 1. THE BEST OF IT?!?! THE BEST OF IT?!?!?! THE BEST OF WHAT??? MRS. NUSSBAUM'S COUGH DROP SMELL IN THE LIBRARY? MR. STEINER'S POP QUIZZES SENT FROM THE BOWELS OF HADES TO RUIN ME? AND NOW THIS TORTURE CAN CONTINUE ALL YEAR LONG??

STUDENT 3. I see your point.

STUDENT 1. I can't do it! I'm never, ever coming to school again! Every day will be a mental health day for me! Because this is DESTROYING my mental health. I CANNOT return to this place of misery day after day after day! Starting tomorrow I'm calling in sick for the rest of my—

(STUDENT 5 enters. They are super cute and dressed really cool.)

STUDENT 5. *(To STUDENT 1, who is still on the ground:)* Hey.

STUDENT 1. Hey.

(STUDENT 1 gets up off the ground, tries to seem casual.)

STUDENT 5. You okay?

STUDENT 1. Yeah. Just...um. I tripped.

STUDENT 5. Ha, oh cool. I can be klutzy too.

STUDENT 1. Haha, yeah.

STUDENT 5. You hear about extending school?

STUDENT 1. Yeah, what a bummer.

STUDENT 5. Totally. *(Pause.)* But there is...one upside. I think?

STUDENT 1. What?

STUDENT 5. I'll get to see you in history class tomorrow.

STUDENT 1. *(Blushing.)* Ha, right.

STUDENT 5. You'll be there, right?

STUDENT 1. Oh yeah, of course. Absolutely, 100%, totally.

STUDENT 3. I thought you were calling in si—

(STUDENT 1 elbows STUDENT 3.)

STUDENT 3. Ow!

STUDENT 5. Cool, see you then.

STUDENT 1. Great.

STUDENT 5. Awesome.

STUDENT 1. Perfect.

STUDENT 5. Gnarly.

STUDENT 1. Nifty.

STUDENT 5. Groovy.

STUDENT 1. Rad.

STUDENT 5. Supercalifragilistic—

STUDENT 3. UGH. STOP.

ALL STUDENTS **except 2 and 5.** WE'RE GONNA BE SICK!

End of Play

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Script Specs

10 REASONS YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED HOME SICK TODAY

by E. M. Bell

GENRE

Comedy

LENGTH

Short play, 15-20 minutes

CAST

10 either

(5-20 actors possible: 0-20 females, 0-20 males)

SET

Minimal.

Nostalgic for your high school days? Then you haven't been there lately. Take a tour of high school's everyday horrors, from the dreaded surprise test to the battle for a bus seat, courtesy of an ensemble of students who play everyone from the tone-deaf choir kid to the teacher who talks at a snail's pace. Yeah, you're definitely gonna wish you took a sick day.