

The sound of a pop song about roller coasters fills the air as students enter the auditorium at O'Leary Jr. High School for the opening assembly of the *It's a Wild Ride* project. Team teachers perform "The Ups and Downs of Being a Thespian" for students who have just completed a unit on idioms—which is reinforced in the skit dialog.

Script for "The Ups and Downs of Being a Thespian"

Scene: The Canyon Coaster Amusement Park where a disturbing accident has just occurred.

PROPS: Signs on teacher with job title, white sheet to cover bodies on stage, a CANYON COASTER AMUSEMENT PARK banner

Onlooker 1: Look, someone has thrown out five perfectly good people!

Onlooker 2: They're not perfectly good. They look as dead as doornails to me. Looks like they're as pale as ghosts, white as sheets. (Holding Nose) Ooooooo....as smelly as skunks. They must have been dead for a loooong time.

Onlooker 3: (Running in.) Did you see what happened?! It just happened! I saw it! The roller coaster! The roller coaster! Someone call the ambulance! Hurry!

Onlooker 2: This couldn't have just happened, they smell like, like death warmed over . . .(Walking over and lifting an arm) but they're still warm as toast!?!

Onlooker 1: That isn't the smell of death. It's vomit. They must have been on the roller coaster!! Look here's the ambulance now!

Paramedic: I'm afraid these people can no longer be taken on a ride; their last one was their swan song. They've bit the dust, kicked the bucket, yes, gone to see their maker. Cover them until the investigation is over.

Investigator: So,....let me see. How could this have happened? It's a mystery to me. Get me the roller coaster technician. We've got to jump into this matter feet first and see what caused the catastrophe!

Technician: Sir, I assure you I did *not* cause this disaster.

Investigator: Don't come apart at the seams. I just want to research the possibilities. What could have happened here?

Technician: There are several possibilities sir. (Deliberately.) A loop could have been too tight; the car could have been going around the loop too fast or too slowly; the slope of the hill could have been too sharp; the speed going up the hill could have been too fast; the car could have been going around a corner too quickly. There are many possibilities.

Manager: What am I going to do? My goose is cooked, my time is up; I am all washed up. I put all my eggs in one basket with this amusement park and now it looks as though they're all scrambled. What am I going to do???!!!

Investigator: I think you should ask those people out there to help you. (Pointing to the audience of students) **They** look like they're as smart as whips.

Manager: They aren't experts on roller coasters!

Investigator: They will be at the end of their new ROLLER COASTER UNIT. Their teachers who are as good as gold will help them become experts.

PLAYERS GET UP AND BOW.