



For book *Wheeling the Snake*, Level 5

Script Level: Grade 3 (Middle)

Word Count: 1,104

Script Summary:

Isaac Green and two of his friends want to skateboard down a five-mile-long irrigation ditch called "The Snake." The Snake has no water in it during the months of November and December. If they can go down without "getting bitten," they will earn the right to wear a coiled snake patch on their jackets. However, a high school bully, Cliff, tries to stop them. The friends devise a plan and then have to put it into action.

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: blasting, board, ditch, irrigation, ominous, thundering

Cast of Characters:

Grade 3 (Middle)		
Narrator	Sam	Cliff
Isaac	Jessie	Jordie

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Parts		
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Narrator:

In eastern Washington there’s a dam at the edge of Elliot’s Lake. From the dam, a concrete **ditch** nearly ten feet deep, fifteen feet wide, and five miles long channels **irrigation** water to the farmlands below. But in November and December, the water stops flowing. When the ditch is dry, it is known to every skateboarder and in-line skater in Benton City as the Snake. If you are one of the lucky few who can ride the Snake all the way to the bottom, you get to wear a coiled snake patch on your jacket.

Isaac:

It’s the night of Halloween, and I can hardly sleep. It isn’t just the sugar keeping me awake. Tomorrow will be November first, and the Snake will be alive! I want that snake patch more than anything, but only a few high schoolers have ever wheeled the Snake without being bitten. But this year, Sam and I will be the first junior high schoolers.

Narrator:

Just then, Isaac’s phone rings.

Jessie:

Hi, it’s Jessie.

Narrator:

Jessie is the third best skater in the junior high school.

Jessie:

Let's go do it.

Isaac:

Do what?

Jessie:

You, Sam, and I are going to wheel the Snake!

Isaac:

This is so weird. I was just calling Sam to ask him to do the same thing.

Jessie:

Well, we're in agreement, then.

Isaac:

Hey, don't forget the broom. We'll have to sweep the Snake out before we can wheel it.

The next morning, I boarded over to Sam's house, and his mother let me in his room. He was still asleep, so I smacked him with my broom.

Sam:

Hey, what the heck are you doing?

Isaac:

Come on, get up and let's go!

Sam:

Go where? Oh yeah, I forgot that we've got to sweep the ditch.

Isaac:

And we're going to ride the Snake this year!

Sam:

Do you think we can really make it?

Isaac:

Well, Jessie and I are going to try. Do you want to join us?

Sam:

Well yeah, I want to, but what about Cliff?

Isaac:

Oh no, I forgot about him.

Narrator:

Cliff is a senior at Benton City High, and he's the bad guy's bad guy. Last year, Sam, Jessie, and Isaac were skating on the rail in the bottom part of the Snake, called Lizard Ditch. Cliff rode by and messed up his backside 180 kick-flip, plowing right into Sam.

Cliff:

Get out of here, you stupid kids. This is no place for you. If I catch you here again, you'll be skating on your faces!

Narrator:

They have tried to avoid Cliff ever since.

Sam:

He's never going to let us get to the top of the Snake, let alone ride down.

Isaac:

I've got an idea. What if we take Sandra Glassner's little brother, Jordie? Cliff likes Sandra, so he has to be nice to Jordie. If he's with us, maybe Cliff will leave us alone.

Sam:

Oh, do we have to? Jordie's an in-line skater, not a skate-boarder, and besides, he's two years younger than we are.

Isaac:

He could be a first-grade hip-hopper for all I care. He's our ticket to the top, so let's go.

Narrator:

By the time the boys get to the base, Jessie is already sweeping the Lizard Ditch. When she sees her friends, she runs up to them.

Jessie:

Bad news, guys. Our good friend Cliff is here, and he isn't going to let us get near the Snake.

Isaac:

No problem. Jordie Glassner is going to get us up to the top.

Narrator:

As if he'd been called, Jordie rolls up on his skates.

Jordie:

What's up, boarders?

Isaac:

Hey, Jordie, you're a good skater, right?

Jordie:

I'm the best in the school!

Jessie:

Oh, please.

Isaac:

Then there's no question that you can ride the Snake, right?

Jordie:

Uh . . . well, yeah, any time.

Sam:

Well, we're going to do it today, and we want you to go with us. Come on up to the top.

Jordie:

Um, I guess so, but . . .

Jessie:

You're not afraid, are you?

Jordie:

Of course I'm not!

Narrator:

On their way up, the friends skate around, goof off, and warm up. They are so intent on practicing that they don't notice the **ominous** shadow stretching across the empty ditch. Sam is on his way up one side to do a quick kick, when suddenly a meaty hand pushes him off his **board**. He skids down the concrete bank, luckily landing on his elbow pads.

Jessie:

Oh no, Cliff is here!

Cliff:

Sorry, kid, my hand must have slipped, and I didn't see you there.

Jessie:

That is so chicken, Cliff. You're such a loser.

Cliff:

Oh, really? We'll see who's chicken.

Narrator:

Cliff puts down his board and begins to walk down the ditch toward Jessie. Just then, Jordie pipes up.

Jordie:

Hey, Cliff, my sister is down at the base and she wants to talk to you. Something about a movie on Saturday night.

Cliff:

Sandra really wants to talk to me?

Narrator:

Without waiting for an answer, Cliff grabs his board and runs **thundering** down the hill.

Isaac:

Man, that was lucky. Is your sister really looking for him?

Jordie:

She wouldn't talk to him in a million years.

Sam:

Well, let's get to the top while we've got the chance.

Narrator:

The hike to the top takes nearly an hour. Some high school kids sit at the top, spinning their wheels, none of them ready to take the challenge. Jordie, Isaac, Jessie, and Sam all turn around and look down at the enormous Snake stretching out in front of them.

Jordie:

Okay, are you guys ready?

Narrator:

Isaac steps onto his board and starts down, but soon he is going way too fast to make the first turn. He kicks his board up and skids to a stop.

Isaac:

I don't know if we can make it; this is really steep.

Narrator:

The high school kids above snicker and laugh at the friends.

Jessie:

Blow it out your ears! They're just afraid to go themselves, but I'm not.

Narrator:

Jessie steps on her board, and with that, she is gone. The others immediately follow.

They move so fast, the air seems to suck right out of their lungs. Sam speeds past Jessie and does a ragged 360, almost falling. The Snake gets even steeper, but they keep on **blasting** down the hill. At the bottom, in the Lizard Ditch, a big crowd has gathered, and they all watch the sparks fly as the four friends skid to a stop.

Jessie:

Woo hoo!

Narrator:

Even the high school kids come running down from the top, cheering and shouting. Skateboarders and in-line skaters all over the county still talk about that ride. So few people have ever wheeled the Snake, much less four kids at once, and much less four junior high schoolers. The four friends have since become legends.