

HAPPY SELF EXPRESSION, SALLY

by MINDY SHEPHERD ANDERS

GENRE: Drama

SYNOPSIS: To remind youth that we don't have to assert our individuality or "try" to be unique because we are all inherently special and unique as children of God.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: In this sketch, four young people try to express themselves uniquely and loudly in an attempt to establish their identities. The ensuing competition for attention begins imperceptibly, then increases in intensity and volume until the final, desperate, shouting pandemonium. Work with your actors on building intensity. If the sketch starts out at the heightened level, it won't work. Think of the soundtrack to a suspense movie—the music builds and builds as the suspense in the movie builds. It might even help to have the cast listen to a suspense movie soundtrack as they work on this sketch.

TIME: Over 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 5

TOPIC: Self Image/Self Esteem, Youth

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Genesis 1:26-27, 1 John 3:1

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Youth Service, Easter Service

CHARACTERS:

Sally—The birthday girl, turning 16 today
Richie—Age 16; Sally's loud and obnoxious friend
Helen—Age 16; Sally's New Age friend
Lavonne—Age 16; Sally's rich, fashion-conscious friend
Pat—Age 16; Sally's brainy friend

PROPS: Four wrapped birthday gifts, ancient Indian artifact replica

COSTUMES: Helen wears a mismatched conglomeration of prints and solids, dark makeup and fingernail polish, eyeliner that curves out and up from her eyes. Her hair is done in what can only be called an interesting configuration, and she wears a multitude of jewelry. Lavonne wears anything expensive and stylish. Pat wears large glasses and something frumpy. Sally and Richie wear typical teen attire—nothing that makes a "statement." All wear birthday hats.

SOUND: Five wireless mics

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: Sally's birthday party at her house

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As lights come up, HELEN, PAT, RICHIE and LAVONNE finish singing "Happy Birthday" to SALLY. They are gathered around SALLY, each holding a wrapped gift.

HELEN, PAT, RICHIE, LAVONNE: *(Singing)* Happy birthday, dear Sally, happy birthday to you.
(They clap.)

SALLY: *(Deeply touched)* Thanks, guys.

PAT: No problem

HELEN: *(Mysteriously)* Thank you for inviting us, Friend.

SALLY: I think this is going to be one of the best birthdays I've ever had.

RICHIE: Yeah! You finally get to drive! *(Laughs good-naturedly, but slaps SALLY a little too heartily on the back.)*

LAVONNE: I was so glad when I got my driver's license and my dad bought me my Corvette.

RICHIE: Yeah, fast cars, fast women. Ha ha ha ... *(nobody laughs)* get it? Fast CARS, fast WOMEN? *(Slaps SALLY on the back again. It's starting to sting a little.)*

PAT: Do you know the most common cause of death among teenagers is car accidents?

SALLY: Yeah, I'll have to be careful of that.

HELEN: *(Loudly)* I thought it was suicide.

RICHIE: *(Starting to sing)* My aunt lived by the sewer, and by the sewer she died, and when they called the coroner in, they called it sewer-side. Oooooooh, B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O, B-I- ...

LAVONNE: I drive real careful.

HELEN: Would you like my gift NOW, Sally? Or ... in another time?

SALLY: Uh, I'll take it now, I guess.

HELEN: *(Presenting her gift to SALLY)* The future caved in on us, as we gazed into it. The stars came close to our faces but we couldn't touch them. We drowned in vacuity.

RICHIE: Vacuity?