

Script Levels: Grade 4 (Early, Middle, Upper)

Word Count: 1,923

Script Summary:

Paul and Maria are going to help their *abuelos* clean up the neighborhood on the annual Barrio Workday. Their abuelo gives Paul an important responsibility, but what happens when things don't go as planned?

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: abuela, abuelo, annual, barrio, casseroles, delicious, fiesta, responsible, tamales

Cast of Characters:

Grade 4 (Early)	Grade 4 (Middle)	Grade 4 (Upper)
Dad	Narrator	Paul
Maria		Abuelo

Cast of Characters:

Parts		
Dad	Narrator	Paul
Maria		Abuelo

Narrator

Maria and Paul live with their dad in their beloved **barrio**, or neighborhood, in the middle of town. The **barrio fiesta** can be the most exciting time of year. Next week their family and friends will gather together for the **annual** barrio cleanup day and fiesta.

Dad

Paul, stop asking me! I’ve told you a million times. Workday is next Saturday. We still have a lot to do before then.

Paul

What do we have to do to get ready? Don’t we just show up to clean and then go swimming?

Maria

Ugh! Don’t you remember anything? We have this workday every year! That’s why it’s called “annual,” silly!

Dad

Would you explain it to him again, Maria? I would appreciate it. I need to get dinner going.

Maria

Oh, all right. Jeez, I can't believe you're a year *older* than I am! The Barrio Workday has been going on for at least fifty years! When Dad was little, his family would get together with the neighbors and clean up the barrio. In the evening, they would come back to the park and have a fiesta celebrating their hard work.

Dad

We'll be doing the same thing next Saturday, cleaning and repairing anything that needs to be done in the neighborhood. There's a list . . .

Maria

Who's doing the explaining here? You said you were cooking dinner, Dad!

Dad

You're right, Maria. Go ahead.

Maria

There's a list so everything gets done. This year, we're part of the group cleaning the streets around the park. When we're all done, we can go swimming at the community swimming pool! But it isn't just swimming—you have to *work*, too.

Paul

I know that. I said work *and* swimming. Don't forget all the great food. That's the best part! Salads, **casseroles**, different meats, and of course lots and lots of **delicious** desserts.

Dad

Exactly! We gather together and eat as friends. Nobody goes home hungry.

Paul

So we need to start fixing food for the fiesta.

Maria

Exactly. After school all this week, we'll be making cookies, candies, and cakes!

Dad

But there is one thing I wanted to talk to you about.

Maria & Paul

What?

Dad

I'm afraid I'm scheduled to work on Saturday. I've tried to get it off, but it's just not working out, so I'll be there for the fiesta but not for the workday.

Maria

But who will come with us?

Dad

Your abuelos, of course! They haven't missed a workday since the tradition started! I'm expecting you two to work twice as hard and really help. Paul, I'm putting you in charge. You must be **responsible** on Saturday. No fooling around. You need to make sure our family does their part in the cleanup. Can I count on you?

Paul

Absolutely! I won't let you down, Dad. We'll get it done. Won't we, Maria?

Maria

You can count on us!

Narrator

All week, Maria and Paul come right home after school. They make cookies with their **abuela**, or grandmother, and help their **abuelo**, or grandfather, fix the little lights that will hang in the trees to keep the party going after dark. By the end of the week, Maria and Paul have been a great help to their abuelos. Everyone is happy to prepare for the big day!

Abuelo

Don't dillydally today, you two! Get right up and make your beds. Today is workday!

Maria

You don't have to ask us twice, Abuelo. We're up and almost ready.

Narrator

Paul and Maria quickly ate their breakfast, put on sunscreen and a hat, and were out the door, ready to work.

Paul

It's too bad Dad has to work today. Don't worry, I'm in charge, and I will make sure everyone does their job!

Abuelo

Paul, you and I are going to work along the sidewalk cutting branches and trimming trees. Maria and your abuela will follow along and put the trimmings into the big garbage sacks. Be careful of stickers, and wear your gloves, everyone!

Narrator

Maria and Paul worked beside their abuelos all morning. It was hard work, but Abuelo made it fun by telling jokes, and Abuela brought homemade lemonade and cookies to snack on.

Paul

This is hard work, but if we don't help during the day, then we don't get to go to the fiesta tonight.

Maria

I know, but I'm getting tired!

Paul

So am I, but we can't let Dad down. He's counting on us.

Abuelo

Okay, Paul, we have four big bags of garbage. Why don't you and I go get the truck to put the garbage in.

Narrator

When Paul and Abuelo are in the truck, Paul seems quiet.

Abuelo

What's eating you? You seem a little down in the dumps!

Paul

Oh, sorry, but since Dad couldn't come today, I have really tried to help out. It doesn't seem like I'm in charge of anything. I haven't told anyone to do anything all day!

Abuelo

You've been in charge of yourself today! Your abuela and I haven't had to tell you to do anything. You have done some mighty hard work without complaining at all. I know your dad will be proud when I tell him.

Paul

I suppose, but it's not quite like being responsible for something.

Abuelo

I suppose not.

Narrator

Paul and Abuelo worked hard loading the garbage in the truck and then putting it in the big dumpsters. By the time they got back home, Abuela had made them sandwiches for lunch. As they were eating, Abuelo came up with an idea.

Abuelo

Paul, why don't you and I get the truck packed for tonight. Then your dad won't have to worry about it! Would you do me a favor and be in charge of the key to the truck? I don't have a pocket, and I don't want to lose it.

Paul

Why sure! I have a pocket right here. Don't worry, Abuelo. I will take good care of it!

Abuelo

Thank you, Paul.

Paul

I have an idea. Why don't Maria and I load the truck? Don't worry about a thing. You and Abuela go and rest. I'll be in charge of getting the truck loaded up.

Maria

For once, Paul has a good idea. You won't have to do a thing.

Abuelo

That would help us out. Abuela and I aren't as young as we used to be. Don't forget chairs and blankets, a small CD player, ice chests, and a portable table to eat on.

Paul

Okay, Abuelo, and I've added a few things, too: football, bat and ball, jump rope, and even a glow-in-the-dark Frisbee!

Abuelo

Here's the key. Be sure to lock up the truck when you're done. Don't lose it. Put it somewhere safe.

Paul

I promise I won't lose it. Now don't worry about a thing. I've got it all under control.

Narrator

Paul decides to lock the truck's cab first. Then he puts the key away where he's sure it won't fall out. They work hard for more than an hour getting everything into the truck.

Paul

Be careful with the picnic baskets. We spent all week cooking for this occasion. Abuela will be madder than a wet cat if we drop her **tamales**.

Maria

Paul, shouldn't we put the picnic baskets inside the truck's cab? It might be safer.

Paul

Good idea! Let me get the key.

Narrator

Paul reaches in his pocket. There's nothing there. He reaches in his other pocket: no key. He rifles through his back pockets and shirt pocket but doesn't find it.

Paul

Uh oh. Maria, did I give you the key?

Maria

No, you said you were responsible for it, so you kept it.

Paul

I can't find it!

Maria

I can't believe you lost the key. What are we going to do now? Did you check all your pockets?

Paul

Of course I checked my pockets! It's not there! I had it when we loaded the backseat of the truck, and I know I had it when we put the ice in the cooler. I think I had it when we put the chairs in the back.

Maria

What do you mean, you think? You'd better think, mister, or you're going to be in big trouble!

Abuelo

Hey, kids! Great job loading the truck. Looks like you got everything in but the kitchen sink. Did you lock everything up?

Maria

You'd better tell him, Paul!

Abuelo

What had you better tell me?

Paul

Well, Abuelo . . . you . . . I mean . . .

Abuelo

It's best to just say it quick, Paul.

Maria

Paul lost the key to the truck!

Paul

I did. I'm so sorry, Abuelo. I didn't mean to.

Abuelo

Didn't I tell you to put it somewhere safe?

Paul

I did put it somewhere safe. I thought it was in my pocket, but maybe I moved it.

Abuelo

Sometimes, when you worry too much, you forget what you did. Let's just retrace your steps.

Narrator

Abuelo, Maria, and Paul go over everyplace Paul has been the last hour. First, they look around the truck. Then they remove everything from the back of the truck.

Maria

Now what? We've taken out the picnic baskets, chairs, blankets, CD player, ice chests, and the portable table. We've taken out all of Paul's sports stuff, and there is no key anywhere!

Abuelo

Well, it's not inside the bed of the truck, and it's not outside, around the truck. I guess we had better start taking the food out of the ice chests.

Paul *(in a very small voice)*

Yes, Abuelo.

Maria

Abuelo, I'm getting tired! How much longer is this going to take?

Paul

Maria, this isn't your fault. It's mine. I'm sorry. You can go inside with Abuela if you want.

Maria

No, it will go more quickly if I help. Don't worry, we'll find it! Come on, let's get the food out of the ice chest.

Narrator

Abuelo, Maria, and Paul take all the food and drinks out of the ice chest, but they find no key. Then they move the ice from one ice chest to the other. They still cannot find the key. Finally, they move the ice back into the first chest. No key.

Paul

Well, I'm a cooked goose. I have no idea where I lost that key. You and Dad were counting on me to be responsible, and I've let you both down. I feel terrible!

Abuelo

I know you're disappointed, but all is not lost. Your dad does have a spare key at his work. I'll call him and tell him to bring it when he comes home. Hopefully, he hasn't left yet. Why don't you kids go inside? Take your shoes and socks off here. You don't want to get Abuela's floors dirty.

Narrator

Paul and Maria remove their shoes and socks. Paul is on the verge of tears.

Paul

I can't believe I lost that key. I know I put it somewhere, but where?

Narrator

Clink, clink, clink

Maria and Paul stop what they were doing and look at the key on the pavement.

Maria

The truck key!

Narrator

Abuelo turns around and looks at Paul.

Paul

I know where I put the key.

Abuelo

I believe you do.

Narrator

They all begin to laugh—at first just a snicker, and then a complete belly laugh!

Abuelo

Well, Paul, I've got to admit, that was a great place to keep a key! It sure didn't get lost in your sock!

Maria

All's well that ends well!

Narrator

Paul and Maria help Abuelo pack up the truck again. Dad pulls into the driveway just as they are finishing.

Dad

Looks like everything is ready to go. Did you have a good day with your abuelos, kids?

Maria

It was a lot of hard work. There was a little excitement at the end.

Dad

What kind of excitement?

Paul

I thought—

Abuelo

Nothing worth mentioning. You would have been proud of both Paul and Maria today. They were a great help.

Dad

I had no doubts. Now, who's ready to head to the fiesta?

Maria and Paul

We are!