



For book *Leaving Home*, Level Y

Script Level: Grade 5 (Middle)

Word Count: 1,409

Script Summary:

Leaving Home is a fictional narrative about a boy who has moved from Jamaica to the United States. The story details how it would feel to leave everything familiar behind to begin a new life. Students will personally relate to this story if they have ever moved to a new country, state, or even neighborhood.

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: Caribbean, contrast, cricket, faults, quirks, savory, uniform

Cast of Characters:

Grade 5 (Middle)		
Narrator	Lori	Mom
Mr. Tidewell	Matt	Dad
Desmond	Adam	

Cast of Characters:

Parts		
Narrator	Lori	Mom
Mr. Tidewell	Matt	Dad
Desmond	Adam	

Scene 1

Mr. Tidewell:

Attention, class! I would like to introduce our new student, Desmond Blake.

Narrator:

All heads in the class turn toward Desmond, who stands nervously in the front of the room.

Mr. Tidewell:

Desmond's family has just moved to Chicago all the way from Jamaica.
Let's give him a warm welcome on this cold February day.

Matt, Lori, Adam (simultaneous):

Wel-come, Des-mond.

Narrator:

Desmond has never felt so uncomfortable. He is in front of a room full of strangers, none of whom know Desmond's **quirks** or **faults** like his friends at home do. He wants more than anything to run outside, jump on an airplane, and fly back to Jamaica, but instead, he makes his way to his seat.

Mr. Tidewell:

This seems like a great opportunity to point out a few facts about Jamaica. Jamaica is the third largest island in the **Caribbean**. Does anyone know where that is?

Narrator:

No one answers, but Mr. Tidewell goes on listing facts.

Mr. Tidewell:

The Caribbean is in the Atlantic Ocean, south of the United States . . .

Narrator:

Each fact brings back memories for Desmond.

Mr. Tidewell:

Jamaica is in the tropics, which means the days are always the same length, and it stays warm year-round.

Narrator:

Desmond daydreams about his best friends, Tanya and Lee, and the warm breezes and noises coming in through the open windows of his old school. By **contrast**, the school in Chicago has thick glass over the windows, keeping out the cold and snow. Desmond remembers riding his bike home from school just a few days before, the hot tropical sun beating down on him and his friends.

Mr. Tidewell:

Desmond? Desmond!

Desmond:

Huh?

Mr. Tidewell:

Will you tell us a little about what your school was like in Jamaica? Please stand in front of the class. How many students were in your class, Desmond?

Desmond:

Twenty-five.

Mr. Tidewell:

And is school in Jamaica similar to or different from ours?

Desmond:

There are so many differences, I . . . it would take a very long time to explain them all. It's warmer there and the building is smaller, and it is open to the street.

Narrator:

Desmond is afraid that the class will laugh at him because he speaks differently from everyone else. He's heard them laugh at Mr. Tidewell, who pronounces some things differently because he's from Georgia. Mr. Tidewell notices Desmond's nervousness, and he doesn't pressure him into saying more.

Mr. Tidewell:

Class, do you have any questions you'd like to ask Desmond?

Narrator:

There is silence for a long time, but finally the girl in the seat next to Desmond's raises her hand.

Lori:

What is the biggest difference between our schools and your schools back in Jamaica?

Desmond:

To me, the biggest difference is that everyone in Jamaica wears a school **uniform**, whereas up here everyone wears normal clothes.

Adam:

You mean everyone wears the same thing every day?

Matt:

That's kinda cool.

Adam:

I thought people in Jamaica only wore grass skirts, or is that only in Hawaii?

Mr. Tidewell:

Settle down, class. Desmond, do all schools have the same uniform?

Desmond:

Oh no, each school has its own uniform and colors.

Matt:

What about sports? Did you play any sports in your school?

Desmond:

Back at home I was the captain of the school's **cricket** team. Cricket was definitely my favorite sport.

Adam:

Cricket? Isn't that a bug? Why would anyone want to be the captain of a team of bugs?

Narrator:

How could anyone not have heard of cricket? Desmond is shocked, and he wants to tell these strangers everything about the game he loves, but there is no time. The bell rings, signaling the start of lunch.

Mr. Tidewell:

Thank you for sharing with us, Desmond.

Scene 2**Narrator:**

The noise in the cafeteria is deafening as Desmond makes his way through the lunch line. He takes a banana and some orange juice, and settles for a cheeseburger. It's no substitute for a patty, his favorite lunch in Jamaica, which was delicious flaky pastry filled with **savory** ground beef.

Desmond recognizes people from his class, but he feels uncomfortable sitting down with them and their friends. He sits at an empty table in the back of the room, thinking to himself that he doesn't mind being alone, until someone approaches him.

Lori:

Hi, I'm Lori, and this is Matt.

Matt:

Cricket sounds pretty cool. Do you think you could teach me how to play?

Narrator:

The students look outside at the falling snow.

Matt:

Well, maybe in the springtime.

Desmond:

You mean it's actually going to stop snowing sometime?

Narrator:

Desmond feels a little more comfortable when Matt and Lori laugh at his joke.

Matt:

So I heard that cricket is something like baseball, you know, with a bat and bases and everything.

Desmond:

Bats, yes, but no bases. The two batters simply switch places with each other.

Matt:

Two batters?

Lori:

I'm bored with this talk about cricket. Why did your family leave Jamaica?

Desmond:

Well, my father's job transferred him to an office in Chicago, so we had to leave. It was very sudden, and I had to leave all of my friends behind.

Matt:

That must have been tough.

Lori:

It must be hard coming to a new school and a new country at the same time. But what do you think of Chicago?

Desmond:

It's way too cold. I've never seen snow before, and I had no idea it would be so cold.

Narrator:

Matt and Lori both laugh.

Desmond:

Hey, I'm used to tropical temperatures where it rarely drops below seventy degrees. I've never worn so many clothes at the same time, and I can't tell you how weird it feels having this turtleneck wrapped around me. It's been choking me all morning.

Matt:

You'll eventually get used to it.

Lori:

Winter is great for making snow angels and ice-skating.

Matt:

And ice hockey.

Narrator:

Desmond hasn't heard of snow angels, but he thinks ice hockey sounds fun. Maybe Matt is right, he thinks, and he'll begin to enjoy the weather. Before he knows it, Desmond finds himself heading back to class with two new friends.

Scene 3

Narrator:

After school, Desmond takes the bus home and carefully walks the block to his new house. He'd slipped and fallen the day before while running to get out of the cold, but it seems warmer now. He slams the door to his house and starts taking off the layers of winter clothes.

Mom:

Desmond, please don't slam the door when you come into the house!

Desmond:

Sorry, Mom.

Narrator:

Wonderful aromas come from the kitchen, and the Chicago home is decorated with Jamaican furniture, native paintings on the walls, and colorful rugs on the floor. Reggae music plays on the stereo. Desmond sneaks a taste from one of the bubbling pots on the stove.

Mom:

You'd better set the table, Desmond. Your father will be home soon.

Narrator:

Headlights beam through the kitchen as Desmond's father arrives.

Dad:

That darned snow and ice!

Mom:

Oh, George, you complained about the traffic and terrible roads when we were in Jamaica.

Dad:

Yes, but at least it was warm there. How was your first day at school, Desmond?

Desmond:

Can you believe that they have never heard of cricket here? I don't know what they do for fun. But there was one boy who told me a little about ice hockey.

Dad:

Hockey sounds interesting. You'll have to teach me after you learn.

Mom:

I'm sure the cricket team back home isn't the same without you.

Dad:

So, Desmond, what's the biggest difference between schools here and schools at home?

Desmond:

That's the same thing they asked me at school. I said that the biggest difference was that I got to wear my normal clothes.

Narrator:

Desmond's parents both laugh.

Mom:

I'm sure your friends at home will be jealous. You'll have to tell Tanya and Lee when you speak to them on the Internet tonight.

Desmond:

We've promised we'll talk every day. So what about you, Dad? What is the biggest difference so far for you?

Dad:

Well, it's tough to drive in all this ice and snow, but I think it's even tougher to remember to drive on the right side of the road instead of the left.

Mom:

And it'll be tough for him to fix the garage door where he hit it after sliding on a patch of ice.

Narrator:

Desmond's family laughs.

Desmond:

What about you, Mom?

Mom:

I think mostly I miss going out to work. I enjoy staying inside where it's warm, but it's very different corresponding with my clients in Jamaica over the Internet.

Desmond:

It is comforting to be here in the warm, colorful house. It feels very familiar to have the food and songs from back home. It makes me feel as though these challenges aren't so difficult.