

The Emperors New Clothes

By Morgan Lloyd Malcolm

There's a bit of admin to do before you start. Which might seem like a faff but it will be worth it I promise. Each answer to a question will fill a gap in the script. Question 1's answer fills the gap labelled (1) etc etc.

This means that you could do various versions of this script depending on the answers. And if there is more than one kid in the family you can do a version for each.

I've kept it gender neutral in terms of characters so anyone can play anyone. The Narrator probably has the most reading and speaking to do.

There is obviously a nakedness element to this which is entirely up to you to negotiate. Maybe give the part to someone in the family who likes being naked. Or if feeling coy you can keep pants on. Or you could make a costume that makes you look naked. Do whatever feels most comfy.

If you have more people than characters you could split the Tailor into two parts and have two tailors.

CHARACTERS:

Narrator

Emperor

Tailor

Adopted Pet

Child

Questions:

- 1. What is the sound that a fart makes?**
- 2. What is your least favourite vegetable?**
- 3. What is your favourite animal?**
- 4. What is the name of your favourite teacher?**
- 5. What is your favourite mythical creature?**
- 6. What is your favourite food?**
- 7. Name something stinky.**
- 8. Name an emotion.**
- 9. Name a kitchen utensil.**
- 10. What is your favourite kind of insect?**
- 11. Name musical instrument you have in the house.**
- 12. What's a word you say when you're happy?**
- 13. What is your favourite thing to eat as a treat?**
- 14. What is your favourite activity to do?**
- 15. What is a really big number?**

NARRATOR: Once upon a time there was an Emperor. They were called Emperor (1)_____ Ruler of the (2)_____ and they were feared across the land. They were feared because they would often make the most silly of decisions that would affect the whole country in the worst possible ways. Like the time that they decided to ban all (3)_____ from their realm and it meant that every person who either was one or was related to one had to be banished and whole families were split up and many people were never seen again. It was a hard place to live. But they were also feared because they often pretended to be someone that they were not. Like capable of ruling over a large realm. And this was scary to everyone.

One day Emperor(1)_____ decided their wardrobe needed a bit of a refresher and they called the royal tailor. They were called (4)_____ and had recently adopted a (5)_____ and felt bad leaving it at home so had brought it with them.

TAILOR: My liege.

EMPEROR: (4)_____! Why have you brought a (5)_____ with you?

TAILOR: This is (6)_____ and I recently adopted them when I...

EMPEROR: (*interrupting*) I don't care! Silence! I asked you to come because I need new clothes. New clothes that represent how fantastic I am. How clever I am. How perfect I am. How everyone else is rubbish and I'm the best!

TAILOR: I'm not really sure if that is possible my liege...

EMPEROR: Make it possible! Because if it isn't I shall take your recently adopted (5)_____ and throw it into a (7)_____ and then after I have I'll throw you in too!

NARRATOR: Our poor Tailor took their (5)_____ home in great misery. How were they supposed to be able to make clothes that represented how fantastic, clever and perfect Emperor (1)_____ was if Emperor (1)_____ wasn't any of these things?

TAILOR: Oh woe is me! I am undone. This is an impossible task.

NARRATOR: But suddenly they heard a voice. And it was the voice of their adopted pet (6)_____ who was unexpectedly magical and also very wise.

ADOPTED PET: Yes it is!! (6)_____! Little did you know when you adopted me that I would be so fantastically magical and wise!

TAILOR: I didn't! What a surprise!

ADOPTED PET: It's very lucky you took me to see the Emperor so I could witness their cruelty and stupidity. Because now I will very happily assist you in TAKING THEM DOWN!

TAILOR: Sorry what?

ADOPTED PET: I have been sent by an underground rebel group called the (8)_____ (9)_____. We are dedicated to bringing down Emperor (1)_____ and we have chosen you to do it. The nation needs you and I'm here to help you. That's why I'm a magic (5)_____

TAILOR: I am but a tailor.

ADOPTED PET: A CHOSEN tailor and you are going to sew the Emperor new clothes out of...wait for it....AIR!

TAILOR: Air?

ADOPTED PET: AIR! You will sew the most beautiful clothes out of sweet sweet nothing and you will take the clothes of nothing to the Emperor and you will tell them that only the most clever, the most fantastic, the most perfect people are able to see the fabric that the clothes are made from and get this; this is the best bit - Emperor (1)_____ will believe you.

TAILOR: But if I make the clothes from nothing then there will nothing there and if Emperor (1)_____ puts them on then they will be wearing nothing so therefore Emperor (1)_____ will be....

ADOPTED PET: Shall we say it together?

TAILOR: OK.

TAILOR and ADOPTED PET: NAKED!

TAILOR: Oh my goodness this is the most audacious idea I have ever heard.

ADOPTED PET: Let's sew!

NARRATOR: And so the Tailor and their (5)_____ sewed absolutely nothing all night. It was a long night of what probably looked like miming to anyone peering in the window. Just sewing thin air. What a sight. But by the morning they had finished sewing nothing and it was time to go and see the Emperor.

EMPEROR: I hope you are here with good news! I hope you have the best clothes ever made for anyone ever!

TAILOR: If you please my liege - I have made you something so special, so rare, so precious and yet I am nervous.

EMPEROR: For why are you nervous?

TAILOR: For I have used a fabric that only the most clever, the most fantastic and most perfect of people can see.

EMPEROR: What?

TAILOR: Not even I could see it as I was sewing it as I am not clever enough, not fantastic enough and certainly not perfect enough to see it. I had to feel my way around it. But from what I could feel I can tell you that I have made the most perfect set of clothes that anyone has ever seen. Or NOT seen I should say.

EMPEROR: HAHHAHAHAHAHAHAHA this must be a joke. You must be joking. This is a funny joke and I am laughing.

TAILOR: I promise it is not a joke. This fabric is so special and so magical. But yes maybe I was foolish to try and bring it here. I shall take it away and think of something else.

EMPEROR: Just you wait one minute. Did you say 'magical'?

TAILOR: I did.

EMPEROR: I LOVE magic. Look! I can make my thumb split into two! Watch!

They perform a terrible magic trick with their thumb.

TAILOR: Very good my liege.

EMPEROR: And you say that only those that are clever and fantastic and perfect can see this fabric?

TAILOR: Yes indeed.

EMPEROR: SHOW ME THE CLOTHES!

TAILOR: Very well. But don't be sad if you can't see them.

EMPEROR: Why wouldn't I be able to see them?

TAILOR: Well..

EMPEROR: OF COURSE I WILL.

The Tailor opens a box with nothing in it. The Emperor gasps.

EMPEROR: WOW! I mean WOW.

TAILOR: Can you see the clothes?

EMPEROR: YES! Of course I can! They are so BRIGHT! And SHINY! And COLOURFUL! YES!

TAILOR: Do take them out to look at them fully.

The Emperor takes out the clothes that aren't there.

EMPEROR: Oh yes yes these are entirely my kind of clothes. I love clothes like these. These are definitely clothes that I can see. These are the bees knees indeed. I love them!

TAILOR: You do?

EMPEROR: How can I not? They are made especially for me. For I am the only one clever enough and fantastic enough and perfect enough to see them! I shall put them on this instant so that I can parade through town!

TAILOR: Very well.

NARRATOR: And with that Emperor (1)_____ took off all their clothes and put on all the new clothes made of nothing. The Tailor tried very hard not to laugh but they struggled wildly and had to pretend to be a (10)_____ to cover their giggles. The Emperor wouldn't have noticed anyway because they were SO THRILLED about their new clothes.

EMPEROR: It is TIME to go out into the world now. It is TIME for the people to see my GLORY!

TAILOR: Oh they will certainly see that.

EMPEROR: Lead the way! And tell them all about my new clothes.

NARRATOR: And off they went into town. The Tailor played a (11)_____ whilst announcing the news of the new clothes.

TAILOR: Hear ye! Hear ye! The Emperor has new clothes! Made of the finest fabric that only the most clever, the most fantastic and the most perfect of people can see. It is invisible to the naked eye. Unless, like the Emperor, you are all those things. Behold - our mighty leader!

NARRATOR: And out the Emperor marched - completely and utterly NAKED.

Feel free to make a moment of this.

EMPEROR: BEHOLD MY GLORY!

NARRATOR: And all the people in the crowd held their breath. For no one wanted to admit that they weren't clever enough or fantastic enough or perfect enough to see the fabric.

EMPEROR: I am the most CLEVER, the most FANTASTIC, the most PERFECT in all the world and you shall bow down to me!

NARRATOR: And the whole crowd bowed down. All except one. A child. One single child remained standing and staring at the Emperor. And before the Emperor could voice their displeasure the child said;

CHILD: Mummy? Daddy? Why is the Emperor completely naked?

NARRATOR: And the whole crowd sucked in their breath and held it. The Tailor sucked in their breath and held it. And the Emperor started to go a bright shade of pink.

EMPEROR: STUPID CHILD! I only appear naked to you because you are not clever or fantastic or perfect enough to see my clothes!

CHILD: But why would you want to wear clothes that no one can see?

EMPEROR: Because it proves to the world how clever and fantastic and perfect I am!

NARRATOR: And the child thought about this for a moment then took a big breath and said;

CHILD: But I can see your bum!

NARRATOR: And everyone else in the crowd started to nod and agree and murmur and point and the Emperor started to look wildly around.

EMPEROR: You can see my bum? You can all see my bum?

CHILD: And everything else!

EMPEROR: I'm naked to you?

CHILD: Of course you are! You have nothing on!

EMPEROR: But, but, but.....

CHILD: YES I CAN SEE YOUR BUTT!

EMPEROR: No! I'm clever! I'm fantastic! I'm perfect!

CHILD: No you're not YOU'RE NAKED!!!

NARRATOR: And the nudey Emperor (1)_____ ran away to their castle in horror while the Tailor and their adopted pet (5)_____ high fived and the whole crowd laughed and laughed and laughed. And then because everyone was feeling so happy they decided to make the Child the new ruler of (2)_____ and called them Emperor (12)_____ and on the first day of their reign the Child made a new rule.

CHILD: That from now on we must only eat (13)_____ and every day we must always (14)_____.

NARRATOR: And Emperor (1)_____ ran away and was never heard of again. And the Tailor and their adopted (5)_____ lived happily ever after. And Emperor (12)_____ ruled for (15)_____ years. And never ever pretended to be something they were not.

THE END.