

**Assembly Script for
The Trumpet of the Swan (1970)
by E. B. White**

Monologue for the Clerk at the Ritz Hotel – Give your students a taste of what is to come by previewing the scene where Louis stays in the Ritz Hotel in Boston. You will need some sort of hotel desk with an old-fashioned telephone on it.

Someone dressed as and acting as the clerk at the Ritz Hotel in Boston rushes on stage, flustered...

Clerk: Well, I'll be. Whew. I mean, I never. You are not going to believe this.

See, I work at the Ritz Hotel. In Boston. You know? Famous hotel. Very fancy. In Boston? Right off the Boston Common. I mean loads of famous people have stayed here....

No, stay focused. Let me tell you what happened.

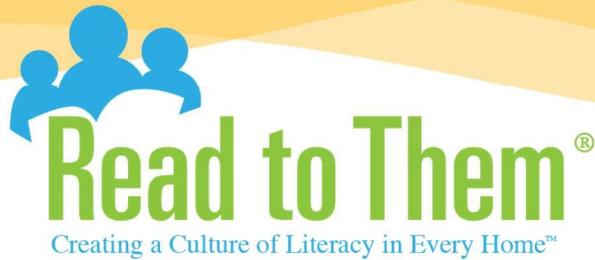
See, I'm the head clerk. My job is to check in guests. Assign them a room. Make sure they get to their room with all their stuff. And make sure they have everything they could need or want. Make sure they're comfortable. Everyone should have a fine visit when you stay at the Ritz. It's an important job, let me tell you.

So, today... Well, this is unbelievable. You'll never guess who checked in today... No, you can't guess.

Well, it was a swan. Yep, a swan. A big beautiful swan. I kid you not.

What kind of swan? It was a magnificent swan. A big Trumpeter Swan. You know, with a black bill. Amazing. It was just...amazing.

But that wasn't the weirdest part. I mean, I have no idea what this swan is doing here. Where it came from. What it's doing in Boston. And why it would want to stay at the Ritz! But - it's not my job to wonder. It's my job to take care of guests. So I checked him in. Yes, I did. He was a paying customer. Gave him a room and everything.



How did he pay? Well that was the weirdest part. It didn't seem like this swan just dropped in from the wild. He had all this stuff with him. Not luggage or baggage. No, he had stuff around his neck. Let me see if I can remember.

First of all, he had this trumpet. Yes, a trumpet. Hanging from around his neck on a cord. No idea why a Trumpeter Swan would want a trumpet... But he also had a little chalk slate - also on a string - hanging around his neck. With a fresh piece of chalk hanging from it. I'm not kidding. I don't know what it was for. To keep track of things? But he had it. Yes he did. Brought it up to his room, he did.

Finally, he had this little bag. Well, it was a money bag – also hanging around his neck. Yes, and it had money in it! That's how he paid me! Now where in the world would a swan get money? I don't even know.

The clerk is interrupted by a phone call.

Clerk: *(on the phone)* Hello...What's that?...You're kidding...He wants what?...All for himself?...OK. Well if that's what he wants...Yes, he's a paying guest...Yes, you better give it to him... Yes, I know he can pay for it...Yes, just do your job...Thank you. *(Hangs up and looks at audience)* Can you believe that? The swan wants room service?!

Clerk is interrupted by another phone call.

Clerk: *(on the phone)* Yes, ma'am...Uh-huh...In what room?...OK, I have it, Ma'am...Now what seems to be trouble?...You hear music? From the room next door?...And it's not the radio...A what?!...A trumpet, you say? You hear a trumpet in the room next door?...No, ma'am. I'm not aware of any musicians staying in the hotel today...Yes, believe me I would know...Yes, I'll look into it. Thank you for calling that to my attention. I'm sorry you've been disturbed. *(To audience)* My goodness. A swan in the hotel. At the Ritz. A trumpet... Room service... What else can happen next?

Phone rings again - and hapless clerk leaves the stage. Principal arrives and closes assembly.

Principal: A swan in a fancy hotel? Want to know more? Join us as we all read *The Trumpet of the Swan!*

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