

= Tales of a Third Grade Nothing =

" Tales of a Third Grade Nothing " is the sixth episode of the seventh season of Family Guy that aired on November 16 , 2008 and ended the first half of the season . The episode follows Peter (voiced by show creator Seth MacFarlane) as he goes back to finish the third grade so that he is able to get a promotion at work . It also follows Brian (also voiced by MacFarlane) and Frank Sinatra , Jr . (voiced by himself) as they buy a club and give it to Stewie (MacFarlane) so that he can remodel it .

The episode was written by Alex Carter and directed by Jerry Langford , their firsts for the Family Guy series . Besides Sinatra , the episode featured guest performances by Bob Barker , James Burkholder , Max Burkholder , Chace Crawford , Elisha Cuthbert , Kaylee DeFer , Andy Dick , Carrie Fisher , Caitlyn Jenner (then Bruce) , Phil LaMarr , John Kassir , Debbie Reynolds , Sinbad , Billy Unger and Mae Whitman , along with several recurring guest voice actors for the series . The episode was seen by 8 @.@ 52 million viewers , and it received mostly positive reviews from television critics .

= = Plot = =

Peter is sent upstairs by his boss to deliver shipping reports to the CEO . On his way to deliver the reports , he decides to go into the executive bathroom . When he discovers how lavish the bathroom is , he becomes motivated to do well at work so that he can become an executive so he can use the executive bathroom . But while trying to impress his boss Angela by blowing up a competitor 's billboard , he inadvertently blows up part of a children 's hospital . Nevertheless , she is impressed by his improvement at work and recommends an open executive spot for him . However , Human Resources tells him he must first complete the third grade in order to qualify .

Peter does badly at school and offends his teacher Mrs. Wilson by telling an inappropriate story about her (forgetting that Mrs. Wilson was also Peter 's teacher when he was a third grader) , and makes fun of top student Omar . Mrs. Wilson allows Peter to attend the spelling bee after spelling out " buttlickers " which even Omar can 't spell . Omar fails the spelling bee because he misspelled " coagulate " , but Peter succeeds after correctly spelling the word " lesbians " . When Peter goes back to work , Angela tells him that he will be going to jail for the hospital explosion instead of getting promoted . Fortunately for him , he receives only one week in prison and is told he will be released the following Sunday night at 9 : 00 (Family Guy 's usual time slot)

Meanwhile , Frank Sinatra , Jr. comes back to town to perform with Brian at the Quahog Cabana Club . Since the club owner is looking to sell , Brian and Frank buy the establishment and they let Stewie transform it into a hip , modern nightclub called pLace . At first , Frank and Brian feel uncomfortable , but their feelings change once they get into the club life themselves . However , the club swiftly loses its popularity once Andy Dick is seen there . Once the club has emptied , Frank and Brian perform another song .

= = Production = =

" Tales of a Third Grade Nothing " was written by newcomer Alex Carter . It was directed by former Mission Hill and The Oblongs director Jerry Langford , who had joined the show 's directing staff that season making this his first Family Guy episode , he would direct the episode " Stew @-@ Roids " later that season . Series regulars Peter Shin and James Purdum served as supervising directors . Composer Walter Murphy , who has worked on the series since its inception , returned to compose the music for " Tales of a Third Grade Nothing " .

Actress Carrie Fisher , who is most famous for her role as Princess Leia in Star Wars , returned to voice Peter 's boss , Angela , as she first did in the fourth season episode " Jungle Love " . Fisher has been given high praise for her portrayal of the character , with The Hollywood Reporter calling it one of her " 5 Most Iconic Roles . " Singer Frank Sinatra , Jr. also returned to voice himself , as he did in another fourth season episode " Brian Sings and Swings " .

In addition to Fisher , Sinatra and the regular cast , former game show host Bob Barker , actor James Burkholder , actor Max Burkholder , actor Chace Crawford , actress Elisha Cuthbert , actress Kaylee DeFer , comedian Andy Dick , athlete Caitlyn Jenner (then Bruce) , voice actor Phil LaMarr , actress Debbie Reynolds , actor Sinbad , child actor Billy Unger , and voice actress Mae Whitman guest starred in the episode . Recurring voice actors Lori Alan , Alexandra Breckenridge , writer Steve Callaghan , Ralph Garman , writer Danny Smith , writer Alec Sulkin , writer John Viener , and writer Wellesley Wild made minor appearances .

= = Cultural references = =

" Tales of a Third Grade Nothing " makes several media references . The name of the episode itself is a reference to Judy Blume 's children 's book Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing , whose narrator @-@ protagonist is likewise named Peter . The first few minutes feature a parody of the film Jurassic Park where Peter enters the executive bathroom and inside there is a helicopter that takes Peter to an island ; John Hammond , who is inside the helicopter , welcomes Peter , and the music playing while the helicopter flies above the island is that which was used in the movie . Peter using the restroom and commenting on how peaceful everything is also a reference to a far different scene in the movie when a lawyer was eaten by a Tyrannosaurus Rex after attempting to hide in a bathroom stall . Yosemite Sam , one of the classic Looney Tunes characters , is seen trying on skinny jeans in Barney 's . The Emperor from the Star Wars movies requests that the song " On the Dark Side " by John Cafferty & The Beaver Brown Band be played at Brian and Frank 's club . A video of John Madden 's wedding is shown . Stewie references singer Michael Jackson and how his dance styles appeared to be violent to his own genitalia . Peter says he feels sympathy for John Wilkes Booth then it cuts to Booth at the theater while being annoyed by an obnoxious Abraham Lincoln . A cutaway gag featuring Stewie as a grape stomper references a news reporter who was doing the same thing , fell , got her wind knocked out and reacted hysterically . Near the end of the episode , Frank and Brian perform a duet of a song called " Take Me Out to pLace Tonight , " which uses Billy May 's orchestral arrangement of " On the Road to Mandalay , " as featured on Frank Sinatra Sr. ' s 1958 album , Come Fly with Me .

= = Reception = =

In its original broadcast in the United States on November 16 , 2008 , " Tales of a Third Grade Nothing " was watched by 8 @.@ 52 million homes and acquired a 4 @.@ 2 Nielsen rating , the audience measurement systems developed to determine the audience size and composition of television programming in the United States .

The episode received positive reviews . Ahsan Haque of IGN praised " Tales of a Third Grade Nothing " , writing that it had " a convoluted storyline that actually has some kind of logical flow , and more than a fair share of genuinely funny and outrageously offensive jokes . " . He graded the episode 8 @.@ 5 out of 10 . Steve Heisler of The A.V. Club wrote that the episode was an above average episode , and graded it B. In contrast , Robin Pierson of The TV Critic gave the episode a negative review , saying that while it was funnier than the usual episodes of the show it was still " plotless ramblings " .