

Six Awesome Ways to Get Your Groove on with Readers Theater



From simple activities designed to build fluency or increase comprehension, to full blown productions that'll make your kids feel like stars, there are lots of awesome ways to use readers theater scripts in your classroom! Read on to check out our favorites or visit ReadAloudPlays.com to download our free guide to using RT!

Traditional Readers Theater

In this format, students merely do readings around a table or in front of the class. This is the easiest performance method. It's a great starting point, but even with basic RT, repetition is important. Kids should practice several times in their small groups before presenting to the class.

Simple Stage Performance

Concentrate on the basics: speaking up, facing the audience, and reading fluently on cue. Add voice characterization (a good Southern drawl or British accent). Let kids use their scripts when practicing and performing. If you have time, gather simple props, but a fancy set isn't necessary. Look for "natural stages" such as playground structures, courtyards, and grassy knolls. Invite other classes to watch.

Radio Drama or Podcast

Once students master a script, use a laptop to record it! Pause and re-read as necessary, and then edit using the free app, Audacity. Sounds like doorbells and footsteps can also be mixed in (search "free sound effects"). Given the editing involved, this format can be challenging, but after doing a few you'll get the hang of it. A podcast, meanwhile, is much the same thing, though you needn't add the sound effects, and it's a nice touch to have a student introduce each "episode."

Puppet Shows

Puppet shows have many of the same benefits as live stage performances. The fact that students are hidden sometimes helps them overcome their inhibitions, and the nature of the performance forces them to work on voice projection. Also, sets on a miniature scale are often easier (and fun) to create. You can go even smaller by creating dioramas as your sets and having students create characters using popsicle sticks, Lego figures, or clay. Film it, pausing when figures move, or try some stop motion work!

Full Stage Production

Few moments capture the magic like the final bow after a full stage production! Hold try-outs, create sets, make costumes, and invite other classrooms and families. You can add playbooks, backstage passes, and a post-performance party, too! A full production is a big commitment requiring extended rehearsal time, perhaps even after school, during lunch. Begin just as you do with a classroom performance, working up to live rehearsals. Turn it into a musical by collaborating with your music teacher to put together three or four short numbers that fit the theme.

Straight up Reading

When you don't have time for a full show or even a reader's theater performance, yet the content of a play is timely or important, try reading the play together as a class or small groups the way you might other genres. Reading a play about the purpose of Veterans' Day one time through is better than not reading it at all. In those cases, let your confident readers volunteer to cover parts while everyone follows along, but be sure to discuss the content as you go.

Where to Get Great Scripts



No matter the type of production, if you want great results and happy students, you'll need a great script. We have them! All our plays include duplication rights, school day performance rights, comprehension activities, and teacher notes. And they're inexpensive too!

For exceptional readers theater visit ***ReadAloudPlays.com*** today!