

# Introduction

## What is Reader's Theater?

Reader's Theater is the oral presentation of a written work that is performed with two or more readers. Memorization is not required because the focus of this form of drama is on *reading* the work with expression rather than reciting it. The readers help the audience to understand and visualize the text through their vocal performance.

## Benefits of Using Reader's Theater

- It gives purpose to reading.
- It helps children develop reading fluency through repetition.
- It increases comprehension since the text must be interpreted for performance.
- It motivates children to read.
- It improves not only reading skills, but listening and speaking skills as well.
- It encourages children to work together.
- Performing Reader's Theater helps increase self-confidence.

## Tips for Teaching Children How to Perform Reader's Theater

- Encourage the children to read with expression and to enunciate the words clearly.
- Teach the children how to project their voices so that they can be heard. Good posture helps with this.
- Pacing is important. Remind the children that they must be careful not to read too fast nor too slow, especially on unison parts.
- Show children how the script should be held. It's best if it is positioned below chin level so that the audience can see the faces of the performers. You may want to put the scripts in a three ring binder or attach them to construction paper or card stock for ease of use.
- Explain the importance of using facial expressions and gestures. This will make the presentation more interesting for the audience.
- Costumes and props may be used if desired, but are not a requirement.
- The positions of each reader on stage is up to you and the performers. Keep in mind that the scripts were written with the concept of having Reader 1 on the audience's left and the rest of the readers standing in number order to the right.
- Practice makes perfect, especially on unison parts. Encourage the children to rehearse their parts both individually and with their group.

## **What You'll Find in This Book**

This book contains scripts for 2 - 8 readers. The pieces are grouped into sections according to the number of readers required for each performance. Some works have been modified to make them more suitable for Reader's Theater. "The Akond of Swat," for example has been abridged and broken up into two pieces due to its length. While these scripts were created with Reader's Theater in mind, they could also potentially be memorized and used for other forms of dramatic presentation.

## **Where to Find More Scripts**

If you like these scripts, you can find more on our website at [www.WarmHeartsPublishing.com](http://www.WarmHeartsPublishing.com).

Also, if you would like to share your success stories with me, offer suggestions, or ask questions, please visit the Contact page on the Warm Hearts Publishing website. I would love to hear from you.

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# Who Has Seen the Wind?

Christina Georgina Rossetti

..... **CHARACTERS** .....

READER 1

READER 2

.....

READER 1: Who has seen the wind?

UNISON: Neither I nor you:

READER 1: But when the leaves hang trembling,  
The wind is passing through.

READER 2: Who has seen the wind?

UNISON: Neither you nor I:

READER 2: But when the trees bow down their heads,  
The wind is passing by.

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# Oxfordshire Children's May Song

This is a country rhyme

..... **CHARACTERS** .....

READER 1

READER 3

READER 2

.....

UNISON: Spring is coming, spring is coming,

READER 1: Birdies, build your nest;  
Weave together straw and feather,  
Doing each your best.

UNISON: Spring is coming, spring is coming,

READER 2: Flowers are coming too:

READER 1: Pansies,

READER 2: lilies,

READER 3: daffodillies,

READER 2: Now are coming through.

UNISON: Spring is coming, spring is coming,

READER 3: All around is fair;  
Shimmer and quiver on the river,  
Joy is everywhere.

UNISON: We wish you a happy May.

# How the Little Kite Learned to Fly

Author unknown

..... **CHARACTERS** .....

NARRATOR 1

LITTLE KITE

NARRATOR 2

BIG KITE

.....

LITTLE KITE: "I never can do it,"

NARRATOR 1: the little kite said,  
As he looked at the others high over his head;

LITTLE KITE: "I know I should fall if I tried to fly."

BIG KITE: "Try,"

NARRATOR 2: said the big kite;

BIG KITE: "only try,  
Or I fear you never will learn at all."

NARRATOR 1: But the little kite said,

LITTLE KITE: "I'm afraid I'll fall."

NARRATOR 2: The big kite nodded:

BIG KITE: "Ah, well, good-bye.  
I'm off."

NARRATOR 1: and he rose toward the tranquil sky.

NARRATOR 2: Then the little kite's paper stirred at the sight,  
And trembling he shook himself free for flight.

NARRATOR 1: First whirling and frightened, then braver grown,  
Up, up, he rose through the air alone,

# Try Again

William Edward Hickson

..... **CHARACTERS** .....

READER 1

READER 4

READER 2

READER 5

READER 3

.....

READER 1: ‘Tis a lesson you should heed,

UNISON: Try again;

READER 3: If at first you don’t succeed,

UNISON: Try again;

READER 5: Then your courage should appear,

READER 2: For if you will persevere,

READER 4: You will conquer, never fear,

UNISON: Try again.

READER 3: Once or twice, though you should fail,

UNISON: Try again;

READER 1: If you would at last prevail,

UNISON: Try again;

READER 5: If we strive, ‘tis no disgrace

READER 4: Though we do not win the race;

READER 2: What should we do in that case?

UNISON: Try again.



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# On Prayer

Eliza Lee Follen

..... **CHARACTERS** .....

READER 1

READER 2

.....

READER 1: As through the pathless fields of air  
Wandered forth the timid dove,

READER 2: So the heart, in humble prayer,  
Essays to reach the throne of love.

READER 1: Like her it may return unblessed,  
Like her again may soar,

READER 2: And still return and find no rest,  
No peaceful, happy shore.

READER 1: But now once more she spreads her wings,  
And takes a bolder flight,

READER 2: And see! the olive branch she brings,  
To bless her master's sight.

READER 1: And thus the heart renews its strength,  
Though spent and tempest driven,

READER 2: And higher soars, and brings at length  
A pledge of peace with Heaven.

# What Christ Said

George Macdonald

..... **CHARACTERS** .....

JESUS

NARRATOR

PERSON

.....

NARRATOR: I said,

PERSON: "Let me walk in the fields;"

NARRATOR: He said,

JESUS: "No, walk in the town;"

NARRATOR: I said,

PERSON: "There are no flowers there;"

NARRATOR: He said,

JESUS: "No flowers, but a crown."

NARRATOR: I said,

PERSON: "But the skies are black,  
There is nothing but noise and din;"

NARRATOR: And He wept as He sent me back

JESUS: "There is more,"

NARRATOR: He said;

JESUS: "there is sin."

NARRATOR: I said,

# A Child's Thought of God

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

..... **CHARACTERS** .....

READER 1

READER 3

READER 2

MOTHER

.....

READER 1: They say that God lives very high!

READER 2: But if you look above the pines

READER 3: You cannot see our God. And why?

READER 2: And if you dig down in the mines

READER 1: You never see Him in the gold,

READER 3: Though from Him all that's glory shines.

READER 2: God is so good, He wears a fold

READER 3: Of heaven and earth across his face

READER 1: Like secrets kept, for love, untold.

READER 3: But still I feel that His embrace

READER 1: Slides down by thrills, through all things made,

READER 2: Through sight and sound of every place:

READER 3: As if my tender mother laid

READER 2: On my shut lids, her kisses' pressure,

READER 1: Half waking me at night; and said

MOTHER: "Who kissed you through the dark, dear guesser?"

# Will God

Eliza Lee Follen

..... **CHARACTERS** .....

READER 1

READER 4

READER 7

READER 2

READER 5

READER 3

READER 6

.....

READER 1: Will God, who made the earth and sea,  
The night, and shining day,

READER 4: Regard a little child like me,  
And listen when I pray?

READER 7: If I am hungry, poor, and cold,  
Then will he hear my cry?

READER 5: And when I shall be sick and old,  
O, then will God be nigh?

READER 3: Yes; in his holy word we read  
Of his unfailing love;

READER 6: And when his mercy most we need,  
His mercy he will prove.

READER 2: To those who seek him, he is near;  
He looks upon the heart,

READER 7: And from the humble and sincere  
He never will depart.

READER 3: He sees our thoughts, our wishes knows,  
He hears our faintest prayer;

READER 5: Wherever the faithful Christian goes,  
He finds his Father there.