

Contents

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Introduction | 6 |
|--------------------|---|

Section I Fables

| | |
|---|----|
| The Donkey and the Farmer | 11 |
| The Travellers and the Axe | 16 |
| The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing | 20 |
| The Horse and the Overburdened Donkey | 24 |
| The Bundle of Sticks | 28 |

Section II Thrills and Chills

| | |
|---|----|
| Appointment at Samara | 32 |
| Little Orphan Annie | 35 |
| The Haunted House (from Tom Sawyer) | 38 |
| Bluebeard | 44 |
| The Flying Dutchman | 50 |

Section III Myths and Legends

| | |
|---|----|
| Arachne | 54 |
| The Story of the First Woodpecker | 57 |
| How the Whale Got His Throat | 60 |
| I Dreamt I Was a Butterfly | 64 |
| How the Sun Came to the World | 67 |

Section IV Heroes and Heroines

| | |
|--|----|
| Lady Godiva's Ride | 71 |
| Marie Antoinette: Queenly at the End | 75 |
| A Riddle Story: Field Flowers Three | 79 |
| Saint George and the Dragon | 83 |
| William Tell | 88 |

Section V Humor

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| The Mocking Turtle | 92 |
| The Silly Goose War | 95 |
| Master of All Masters | 99 |
| The Hodja | 102 |
| Three Great Noodles | 106 |

Section VI Folk Tales

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| The Bear Says North | 110 |
| The Cat on the Dovrefell | 113 |
| The King of the Cats | 116 |
| The Two Kings | 119 |
| The Knee High Man | 122 |

Introduction

Readers' Theatre (RT) can be an exciting and novel approach to reading and language arts instruction. This "theatre of the mind" consists of readers, who while sitting or standing, interpret literature from the printed page. Through effective oral interpretation of this literature, the readers create in the minds of the audience the illusion of dramatic action.

The RT approach integrates the language arts of listening, oral expression and reading by focusing on communication of the story. Reading is done for the purpose of understanding the author's message well enough that it can be communicated orally to an audience. Successful oral expression and non-verbal communication during the RT presentation is the real test of whether the reader has understood the story.

Listening is given purpose as an audience performs its role of responder in each presentation. The audience should be directed to visibly indicate response through active listening techniques such as eye contact, nods, appropriate facial expressions and applause. Additionally, the audience can be directed to be ready to offer supportive comments after the presentation. Such reactions should focus on the positive and unique aspects of each presentation. Such questions as: What did you like? What worked well? What's one way something could be done differently? Keep the follow-up discussion (evaluation) constructive, and yet offer opportunities for a focus on problem-solving.

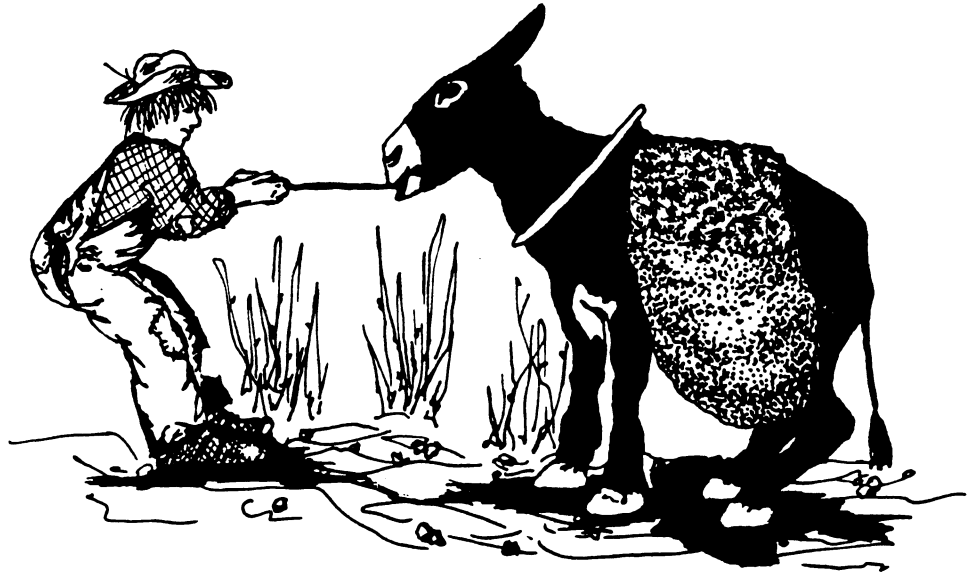
Readers' Theatre also promotes strengthening of children's ability to read critically. The assumption of a role by a child, and her or his subsequent identification with that character promotes a desirable depth of understanding of the text. The "ensemble" or group project nature of Readers' Theatre encourages the growth of social skills and sense of community within the classroom. Furthermore, Readers' Theatre provides opportunity for exercising the imagination of both readers and audience members. In these ways Readers' Theatre addresses many curricular goals.

Summary of RT's Purposes

1. To provide an alternative way to teach reading.
2. To develop students' oral expression (volume, rate, pause, pitch) skills.
3. To develop students' listening skills (listen to enjoy, get message/meaning).
4. To motivate children in reading (variety).
5. To increase students' comprehension, i.e. by having a purpose (to read for an audience) students will understand more.
6. To give purpose to oral reading (share with audience).

Section I

Fables



THE DONKEY AND THE FARMER

Stool Positions:

Narrator

Donkey

Farmer

Class/Audience

Props: None

Costumes: Farmer: straw hat or bandana

Donkey: construction paper ears attached to a hair band.

Narrator: none

THE DONKEY AND THE FARMER

CAST: Narrator
Donkey
Farmer

Narrator: There was a donkey who, like some people, was very stubborn.

Donkey: Hee-haw.

Narrator: This donkey was owned by a farmer who used the donkey to carry his wheat to market.

Farmer: Must get to market early this morning in order to get the best price for my wheat.

Narrator: And so the farmer went to his shed and loaded the bags of wheat on the donkey.

Farmer: Steady there while I put this pack on your back.

Donkey: Hee-haw.

Farmer: Now another.

Donkey: Hee-haw.

Farmer: And the last.

Donkey: Hee-heavy.

Narrator: Then they started off towards town.

Farmer: What a morning! Look at that sunrise. How beautiful it is here on this mountain plateau.

Donkey: Hee-umph.

Farmer: Come along now. We've got to move faster. We've got to get down the mountain and to market early.

Narrator: But moving faster was not what the donkey wanted to do.

Farmer: Come along now. You must move faster.

Donkey: Haa-umph.

Narrator: Still the donkey would not respond to the farmer's pleas nor to his tugging on the donkey's lead rope.

Farmer: You are one stubborn animal. I hope we'll get to town before market ends.



SAINT GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

Stool Positions:

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Townsperson 1

King Princess

George Dragon

Townsperson 3 2

Props: None

Costumes: None