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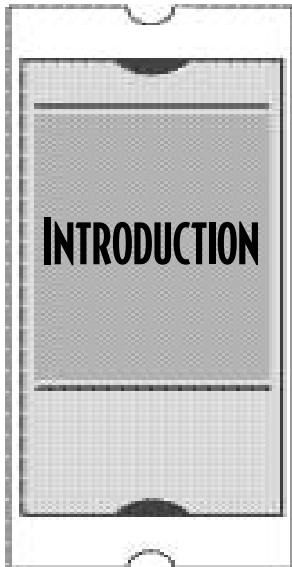
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= total number of parts



Fluency instruction provides a bridge between being able to “read” a text and being able to understand it. Readers who decode word by word sound plodding and choppy. They are too busy figuring out the words to think about what they are reading. Fluent readers are accurate, quick, and able to read with expression. They make the reading sound interesting. Beyond the experience of the listener, fluent readers are also demonstrating skills that are crucial to their understanding of what they read. Fluent readers recognize words at a glance, group words into meaningful phrases, and move beyond the struggle to decode individual words. They are able to focus on making sense of what they read.

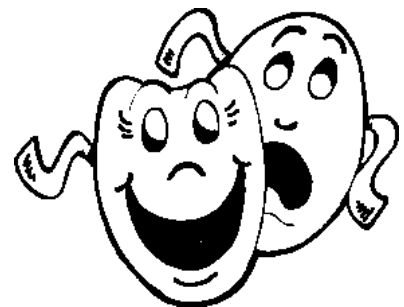
Reader’s Theater is an exciting way to help children improve reading fluency without being too time intensive for the teacher. It requires no props and no additional teaching skills on your part, and it is not difficult to manage. Reader’s Theater promotes better reading comprehension because children who have learned to read a passage expressively also come to better understand its meaning. In addition, research says that these gains transfer well to new text. Reader’s Theater also addresses standards in listening while providing a fun environment for everyone involved. When children practice their lines, they read and reread the same passages. Under your direction, they gradually add more expression, read more smoothly, and find any subtle meanings in the passages.

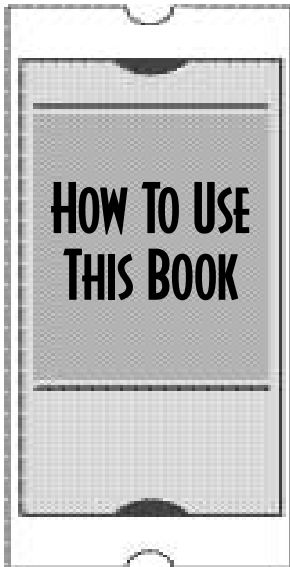
The scripts in *Fables & Folklore Reader’s Theater* are designed for fluency instruction. The overall purpose is to provide children with text at their reading level that is fun to read. The scripts in this collection serve another useful purpose—they introduce children to stories originally passed along in the oral tradition. Fables, folktales, and tall tales are part of our history. However, many children may be unfamiliar with them, and, as they get

older, often miss allusions to them in more complex literature. Use these scripts to fill that literary void and to introduce children to stories enjoyed by their ancestors. In addition, all the scripts provide the following hallmarks of a good Reader’s Theater text:

- fast-moving dialogue
- action
- humor
- narrative parts

The scripts in *Fables & Folklore Reader’s Theater* are intended to be read in groups of 5 to 8 children. Each script is prefaced by information that helps you direct child learning and is preceded by reproducibles that support extended learning and reading comprehension.





Each Reader's Theater script should be covered over the course of five practice days (although those days do not need to be consecutive). The first day should include some or all of the elements of the suggested reading instruction. It should also include an expressive reading by you of the script as children read along silently. On each of the following days, give children an opportunity to practice their reading. On the final day, have each group read its script for the class.

Four sections that support reading instruction precede each script:

- **Script Summary** provides a plot summary for the script.
- **Reading Rehearsal** features detailed notes for fluency instruction.
- A brief description of each **Part** introduces children to the characters. (See page 5 for more information.)
- The **Drama Coach's Corner** provides comprehension activities, suggestions for discussion of the story of the script, and directions for the accompanying reproducibles.

On the first day of instruction, use the background and information about each character to tell children what the script will be about and describe the characters.

Read aloud the script, modeling clear enunciation and a storyteller's voice.

Do not be afraid to exaggerate your expression—it will hold the attention of your audience and stick more firmly in their minds when they attempt to mimic you later. Model the pacing you expect from them as they read.

Finish the reading instruction by discussing the fluency tips with children and having them complete any activity described in this section.

Now it is time to give children a copy of the script! Use the following schedule of child practice for a five-day instruction period.

Day 1	<p>After following the steps outlined on page 4, give each child a personal copy of the script. Have children place the script in a file folder, and help them staple the pages in place. Invite them to decorate the cover of the file folder.</p> <p>Read aloud the script together as a class, in small groups, or in pairs.</p>
Days 2 and 3	<p>Assign children to a group. Have children gather to read aloud the script as many times as time permits. Have them change roles with each reading.</p> <p>Move from group to group, providing feedback and additional modeling as needed.</p> <p>At the end of day 3, assign roles or have children agree on a role to own.</p>

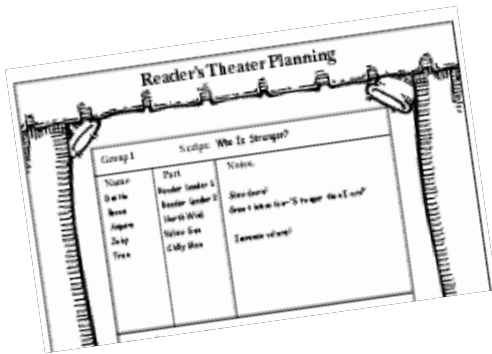
Day 4	Have each group read aloud the script. Move from group to group and provide feedback. Have children discuss their favorite lines at the end of each reading and why the manner in which they are read works well. Repeat. Encourage children to check out a script for practice at home. Have children make placards from tagboard to identify their character.
Day 5	Have each group perform its script for the rest of the class (or other audience members provided by buddy classes and/or school personnel).

Throughout the week, or as time permits, provide children with the comprehension activities described in the Drama Coach's Corner. These are optional and do not have to be completed to provide fluency

instruction; however, many provide children with additional background information that may help them better understand the characters or setting of the script.

Additional Tips

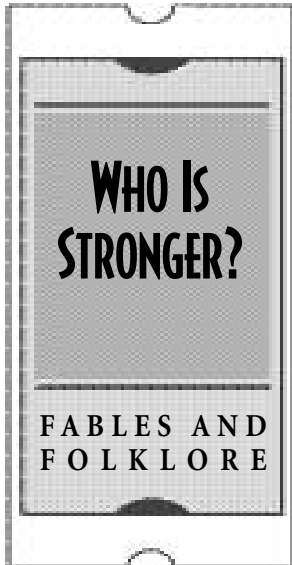
- Use the Reader's Theater Planning reproducible (page 6) to track the assigned roles for each group and to jot down any informal observations you make for assessment. Use these observations to drive future fluency instruction.
- Notice that there are no staging directions in the scripts. These plays are written to be read expressively in a storyteller's voice. If the focus is placed on *acting out* the script, children will shift their focus from the reading to the movement. If children become enchanted with a script and want to act it out, invite them to do so after they have mastered the reading. Then, have the group go through the script and brainstorm their own staging directions. Props should not be included until all fluency goals have been met.



- To fit fluency instruction into an already full day of instruction, it will work best to have all groups work on the same script. This will permit you to complete the first day's activities as a whole class. Children will enjoy hearing how another child reads the same lines, and some mild competition to read expressively will only foster additional effort.
- The roles with the greatest and least number of words to read are noted in the Parts section. The 🏠 and 🏡 indicate a higher or lower *word count*. They are not a reflection of reading level. The Reader Leader parts usually reflect the highest reading level. However, less fluent readers may benefit from having fewer words to master. More advanced readers may benefit from the challenge of the greater word count.
- **First-Grade Teachers:** For the first few months of the year, you may wish to try poems and songs as choral reading in parts to prepare children for independent reading of roles in Reader's Theater.
- **Second-Grade Teachers:** Your children may not need all of the scaffolding presented in the Reading Rehearsal section. Present only what you deem necessary, and move on to the next section.
- Any part can be read in unison. Encourage less fluent readers to pair with more fluent readers for choral reading of a part.

Reader's Theater Planning

Group 1 Script: _____		
Name	Part	Notes:
Group 2 Script: _____		
Name	Part	Notes:
Group 3 Script: _____		
Name	Part	Notes:



SCRIPT SUMMARY

Who Is Stronger? is based on Aesop's fable *The North Wind and the Sun*. The moral of this fable is, "Gentleness and kind persuasion win where force and bluster fail." Another fable connection is the saying, "You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." Set the stage for this contest between gentleness and force by using classroom scenarios to lead a discussion about problem solving. Ask if kind words and discussion should prevail over hitting or angry responses. Ask when strong words are appropriate.

READING REHEARSAL

When you read aloud the script for children, have them listen for the following:

- Demonstrate bravado by increasing modulation and emphasizing *I* and any words that communicate achievement. Have children mimic you. For example, you would read *North Wind: I am SO strong!*
- Notice the exclamation points during the argument about who is stronger. How should children's voices sound during the argument?
- Call attention to the words that represent sounds, such as *North Wind: Whoosh! Whoosh!* Read them, elongating the words (e.g., Whooosh!). Have children copy you.
- On the last page of the script, North Wind's voice should sound very different—he lost and is dejected. His voice is now quieter and he shows less bravado.

Read the whole script again with the class divided into the two main roles and you reading the rest of the text. Notice which children read fluently using the tips they just practiced. If they do not seem ready to read independently in roles, review the whole process before assigning roles.

PARTS

Reader Leader 1
Reader Leader 2



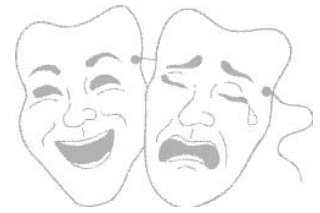
North Wind



Yellow Sun



Chilly Man



DRAMA COACH'S CORNER

Kind Words, Strong Words

OBJECTIVE

Use character empathy to discuss when kind words and strong words are appropriate.

ACTIVITY

Give each child a **Kind Words or Strong Words? reproducible (page 9)**. Discuss times when kind words or gentleness is preferred and times when strong words or force is needed. Encourage children to talk about their responses. You may use the third example to teach children about stranger safety, such as having a password that only the parent knows (to foil a stranger who claims the parent sent him or her to pick up the child). Use your judgment based on the maturity level of your children.

Literature Response

OBJECTIVE

Recall and respond to a scene from the story.

ACTIVITY

Give each child a **Who Is Stronger? reproducible (page 10)**. Have children illustrate a scene from the story and write or dictate on **lined paper** a sentence about why they chose that scene to illustrate.

Kind Words or Strong Words?

PLEASE!

NO!

Directions: Read each example. Think about what happened. Then write how you would respond. Find a partner and talk about your responses.

What Happened?	Kind Words	Strong Words
Your friend uses your red crayon without asking first.		
What Happened?	Kind Words	Strong Words
You see your friend picking on another friend. It makes you mad.		
What Happened?	Kind Words	Strong Words
A stranger tells you to get in the car.		
What Happened?	Kind Words	Strong Words
Your friend talks to you during class. You do not want to get in trouble. At recess, you talk to your friend.		

Name _____

Date _____



Who Is Stronger?



Directions: Think about the story. Draw a picture of your favorite part of the story. Tell why you like that part of the story.



WHO IS STRONGER?

Retold and adapted by Margaret Allen



PARTS

Reader Leader 1
Reader Leader 2
North Wind
Yellow Sun
Chilly Man



Reader Leader 1: North Wind and Yellow Sun are friends.

Reader Leader 2: They both live in the sky.

Reader Leader 1: North Wind is very strong.

Reader Leader 2: Yellow Sun is very strong.

North Wind: I am SO strong!

Reader Leader 1: . . . brags North Wind.

Yellow Sun: I am SO strong, too!

Reader Leader 2: . . . answers Yellow Sun.

North Wind: You, Yellow Sun—strong? I think not!

Yellow Sun: I am stronger than you are, North Wind.

North Wind: Stronger than I am? You must be joking, Yellow Sun!

Yellow Sun: I am not joking, North Wind. I am stronger than you are!



WHO IS STRONGER?

North Wind: You are not!

Yellow Sun: I am, too!

Reader Leader 1: This goes on and on for days.

Reader Leader 2: Finally, the North Wind says . . .

North Wind: I can prove I am stronger.

Yellow Sun: How?

North Wind: Do you see Chilly Man? He is down the road.

Yellow Sun: Yes, I see Chilly Man. He has his coat on.

North Wind: That's right.

Yellow Sun: How can Chilly Man help us? How can he know who is stronger?

North Wind: Let us try to make him take off his coat.

Yellow Sun: What? Take off his coat?

North Wind: That's right. The first one of us who makes Chilly Man take off his coat is stronger. Is it a deal?

Yellow Sun: Yes, it is a deal. You go first.



WHO IS STRONGER?

Reader Leader 1: Yellow Sun hides behind a cloud.

Reader Leader 2: North Wind blows.

North Wind: Whoosh! Whoosh!

Chilly Man: I am glad I have my coat. This wind is very cold!

Reader Leader 1: North Wind whistles.

North Wind: Whew! Whew!

Chilly Man: Listen to that wind. It makes me colder.

Reader Leader 2: North Wind blows and blows and blows!

Chilly Man: I am SO glad I have my coat!

Reader Leader 1: And with that, Chilly Man holds on to his coat.

Reader Leader 2: Out pops Yellow Sun.

Yellow Sun: It is my turn now.

Reader Leader 1: Yellow Sun comes out from behind the cloud.

Reader Leader 2: Yellow Sun shines gently.

Yellow Sun: Ssssss.

Chilly Man: I am getting warm.



WHO IS STRONGER?

Reader Leader 1: Chilly Man lets his coat go.

Reader Leader 2: He does not hold it tightly now.

Reader Leader 1: Then Yellow Sun shines warmer.

Yellow Sun: Ssssssss!

Chilly Man: I am getting very warm.

Reader Leader 2: Chilly Man unbuttons his coat.

Reader Leader 1: Then Yellow Sun becomes hot.

Yellow Sun: SSSSSSSSSSSSS!

Chilly Man: Oh, my! I am very hot. I must sit under this tree and cool off!

Reader Leader 2: And with that, Chilly Man takes off his coat. He puts it on the grass. Then he sits down to cool off.

Yellow Sun: See, North Wind? I *am* stronger than you are!

North Wind: Yes, you made him take off his coat. You win.

Reader Leader 1: . . . says North Wind in a sad voice.



WHO IS STRONGER?

North Wind: You win. But how? I blew and blew. I blew and roared and whistled. I was sure I was stronger. How did *you* win?

Yellow Sun: I was gentle. You were very harsh. You made him hold tight.

Reader Leader 2: Yes, Yellow Sun won. She proved she was stronger.

Reader Leader 1: Yellow Sun did with gentleness . . .

Reader Leader 2: . . . what North Wind could not do by force!