

Reader's Theater Exercise 14: Build 'Multiple Literacies' With Reader's Theater and Visual Arts



This exercise will showcase the relationship between reading, writing, and drawing and the importance of visual thinking in comprehension.

We are all familiar with illustrations usually found in children's books, which both entertain and help to explain the events of the story, but just looking at pictures is not the only way for students to benefit from visual arts. The act of drawing a scene (or a person or object) gives the learning students a fuller perspective and imagination of the event or object being shown.

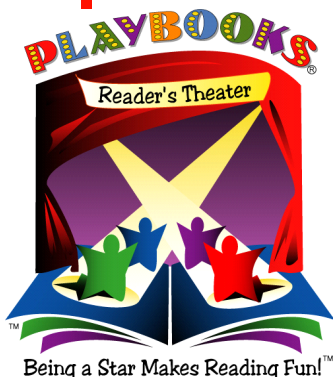
According to Dr. Susan Rich Sheridan, drawing is an innate ability and the first step children take towards literacy. Young children use drawing to represent their thoughts and ideas before they are able to read and write. Literacy is not really just about words; it is about conveying meaning through visual symbols, including words, pictures, and numbers. The use of "multiple literacies" gives us the highest potential for thinking. Incorporating visual arts into Reader's Theater increases the fun students already have with the activity and therefore improves attention and interest even further!

Teacher Instructions: The following activity sheets provide six short Reader's Theater story excerpts, along with spaces for students to draw pictures in response to the excerpts. Students will also need a separate sheet of lined paper for writing. Give each student a copy of the activity sheets.

Assign each student a partner with whom to read the Reader's Theater excerpts aloud. After they have read the scripts, they should use their imaginations to think of what might happen next in each storyline. They should think about what the scene would **look** like, and then draw a picture of the event in the box provided. Encourage them to be creative and funny with their ideas!

After they draw the pictures, direct them to **write** the scene they imagined in Reader's Theater format just like the excerpts they read, on a separate sheet of paper. You should explain the entire activity to the students before they begin, and allot them time to finish the entire process for each excerpt, one at a time. Having students draw before writing will help them to visualize details in their minds that they can later include in the written form of the story.

When students have finished drawing and writing all their scenes, you may wish to have several of them entertain the class by reading their Reader's Theater scenes (along with the original excerpts) for the class with a partner and sharing their drawings!



Paint a Story With Pictures, Then Words!

Babbles: "Ring! Ring! Ring!" you'll always hear me sing. It's time for me to dial, so I can talk a while. I like to make my calls most each and every day. I wonder who I'll call of all my friends today.

Mrs. Brown: Oh yes, this is she, and who could this be?

Babbles: It's Babbles, my friend Mrs. Brown. I hope that you are sitting down. I've lost our tickets to the play. What will we do? It's on Saturday.

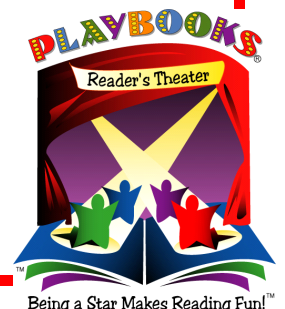


Draw a picture of what you think will happen next:

Narrator: Sam the dog was not paying attention to anything Mom or Tom had said. He spotted a seagull above the sand castle and was carefully watching every move it made. Sam took one big leap toward the seagull.

Mom: *(worried)* Oh, no! Sam, don't jump there! You're going to....

Draw a picture of what you think will happen next:



Paint a Story With Pictures, Then Words! (page 2)

Narrator: The merry-go-round suddenly stopped wobbling and started spinning faster ... and faster! It should have been slowing down, but it was speeding up!

Nikki: What is happening? It is going too fast! Hold on tight.

Narrator: The screeching sound changed into a humming sound and suddenly, the merry-go round came to a jolting stop.



Draw a picture of what you think will happen next:

Mother :Timmy, I'm only going to say this one more time, CLEAN YOUR ROOM!

Timmy: I do not want to.

Mother: Well, if you clean it up now, I will help you. If you do it later, you'll have to do it by yourself.

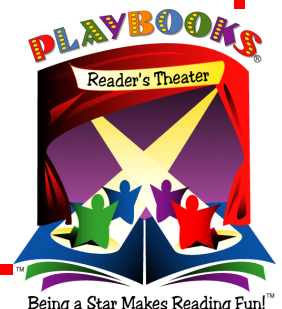
Timmy: It will not be hard to do. I will do it later.

Mother: Later, it could be a lot worse. Are you sure?

Timmy: Yes, I am.

Mother: Well, you can't say I didn't warn you....

Draw a picture of what you think will happen next:



Paint a Story With Pictures, Then Words! (page 3)

Store Clerk: Well, hello there, Mr. MacRicee. What kind of ice cream cone will it be this time?

Mr. MacRicee: Let me see. This is so hard.

Store Clerk: So what do you think? What kind do you feel like tonight?

Mr. MacRicee: Oh! I will have all three of these.

Store Clerk: Three scoops, eh? Very good!

Narrator (Reader 2): From then on Mr. MacRicee started to order triples with chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry. The day soon came, though, when other flavors were getting his attention.



Draw a picture of what you think will happen next:

Dad: So do you have any ideas about how you want to make your monster trap?

Amanda: Yes, we do! We want to trap them in a big hole. Can you dig a hole with us?

Dad: Okay. A big hole **would** be a good way to catch monsters. I need to loosen up the dirt anyway to get the garden ready.

Amanda: We need to dig very fast before they come outside!

Draw a picture of what you think will happen next:

