

Reader's Theater Exercise 10: Increasing Reader and Audience Attention With Costumes



This month we will focus on how using costumes with Reader's Theater can increase student attention and story comprehension. Reader's Theater is inherently fun, with each student being a star in the story. Students express their characters' feelings and personalities, increasing their own learning as well as that of their classmates. With costumes, students feel they are portraying their roles even more accurately! Both readers and audience members will be more engaged with the activity and will gain more from the reading experience.

For a fun classroom activity using Reader's Theater, have your students practice reading the story provided, make their own costumes, and then have a final performance of the story! The activity can be divided among several days.

First, download the mini version of the Playbook®, *Ucky Duck*, at the following link:

<http://playbooks.com/schools/freemini/ucky-duck-mini.pdf>

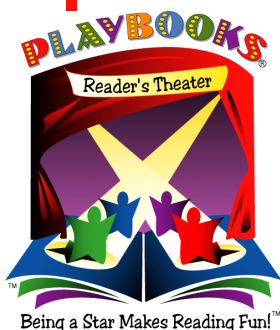
Print enough copies for each student in your class to have one. Use the Recommended Classroom Reader Assignment chart to divide the class into reading groups and decide which students will read each part, according to their reading abilities. Allow the students to read through the story in their groups, becoming familiar with the plot and characters. This also gives them the opportunity to practice their expressive reading for the upcoming performance.

Next, have the students make costumes for their characters. Students and teacher can all bring in supplies they think would be useful. Some basic items to start with are sturdy, colorful construction paper, old clothes, and crayons. The following page provides a sample costume idea for each character in the story. Students can use these ideas to make their costumes, but their own twists and innovation should be encouraged. Cut-out shapes for making feathers and duck bills are provided on a separate page. The most important items needed for making the costumes are in bold on the next page.

Once costumes are ready, have each group perform the story (or a scene from the story, as long as all group members are included) in front of the class. Readers may stand or may sit on stools or in chairs. A good setup for Reader's Theater is to have students arranged in a semi-circle, so the characters can interact at times yet the readers are still facing the audience.

Finally, pass out the critical thinking discussion prompt on the last page. Have your students write their answers first, and then have them share what they think with the class. Their understanding of the story and characters will be enhanced with the costumes and performance, better preparing them to apply the situations in the story to real life.

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Provided by: Playbooks® Multi-Leveled & Colorized Reader's Theater. www.playbooks.com
For past exercises, visit: www.playbooks.com/NewsArchive.shtml

Make a Costume For Your Character!

Remember, you can decorate your construction paper creations with crayons, sparkles, buttons, or any other items your teacher may provide. You teacher may also ask you to only make **some** of the costume items for each character.



Buttercup

Trace the feather shape on **yellow construction paper** as many times as you would like, and cut out the feathers with scissors. Tape them onto your clothes with rolled tape. For your beak, trace the duck bill shape on **yellow or orange construction paper** with pencil and cut it out with scissors. Tape a **popsicle stick** to the back of the beak to keep it from flopping over. Your teacher can help you punch holes in it and tie it onto your head with **yarn**.



Squeal

Wear a pink outfit if possible. Draw shapes that look like Squeal's spots on **pink construction paper** with pencil. Cut along the lines with scissors. Attach the spots to your clothes with rolled up tape. For your nose, cut an **empty toilet paper roll** in half so it is shorter. Cut a piece of pink construction paper to cover the sides and the front opening. Roll the paper on and tape it along the edge of the paper. Careful not to make a hole in the paper, draw two spots for nostrils on the front of your "nose." Your teacher can help you punch holes in it and tie it onto your head with **yarn**.



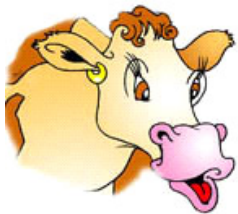
Spencer

Trace the feather shape on **gray and brown construction paper** as many times as you would like, and cut out the feathers with scissors. Tape them onto your clothes with rolled tape. For your beak, trace the duck bill shape on **yellow or orange construction paper** with pencil and cut it out with scissors. Tape a **popsicle stick** to the back of the beak to keep it from flopping over. Your teacher can help you punch holes in it and tie it onto your head with **yarn**. You could also make a pretend "S" tattoo like the one Spencer got out of construction paper and tape it to your arm.



Mother

Trace the feather shape on **yellow construction paper** as many times as you would like, and cut out the feathers with scissors. Tape them onto your clothes with rolled tape. For your beak, trace the duck bill shape on **yellow or orange construction paper** with pencil and cut it out with scissors. Tape a **popsicle stick** to the back of the beak to keep it from flopping over. Your teacher can help you punch holes in it and tie it onto your head with **yarn**. You could also string beads on a string or yarn to make a necklace like the one Mother Duck wears!



Lucy

Trace the earring shape on **yellow construction paper** and cut it out carefully with scissors. You can loop it over your ear or tape it in place. Draw shapes that look like Lucy's spots on **brown construction paper** with pencil. Cut along the lines with scissors. Attach the spots to your clothes with rolled up tape.



Slink

Make your hat out of a **large piece of black construction paper**. Follow the instructions and pictures on the separate sheet of paper. When your hat is done, decorate it if you wish!

Slink's Hat: Instruction Sheet

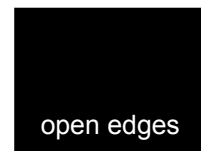
1. Place your paper down in front of you, lengthwise, so it is more wide than tall.



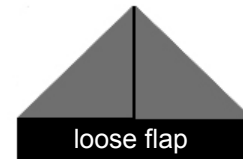
2. Take the right side of your paper and fold it in half.



3. Rotate the paper so that your open edges are at the bottom, and the creased edge is at the top.



4. First take one top corner, then the other, and fold them down so they meet in the middle of your rectangle.



5. Below the area just folded are two flaps, the open edges we kept at the bottom earlier. Grab the top flap and fold it up as far as you can. You want the folded edge to be right underneath the folded corners from the previous step. Flip your hat over, and fold this last flap up as far as you can.



6. Now either run your glue stick on the inside of your step 5 and 6 flaps, (making sure to refold them into place to seal the glue), or you can tape them into place. Your hat is finished!

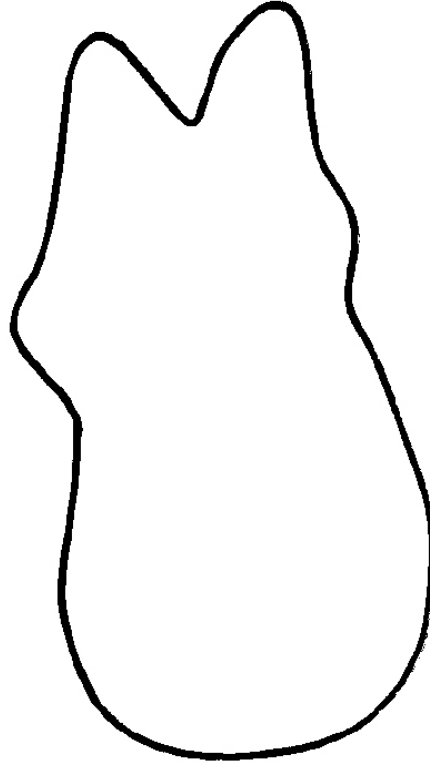


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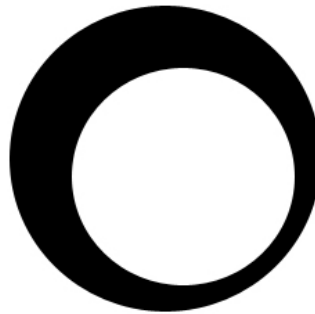
Feather Shape



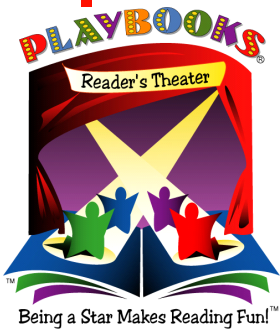
Duck Bill Shape



Earring Shape



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Name _____

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!



Directions: Use complete sentences to answer the following questions.
Discuss your answers in class.

With the help of his friends, Spencer tries to change himself in order to fit in and be something that he isn't. Have you ever acted differently or dressed differently than you normally would, because you wanted to be like someone else or be accepted into a new group? How did this make you feel? Did you keep the changes you made? What did you learn from the experience?

Do you think young people are encouraged to conform or remain true to themselves in today's society? Why?

Reader's Theater Exercise 10 (continued)

