



# Reader's Theater

Classic  
Poetry

Susan Brown

2nd Edition

Special thanks to Mary Rose. Your creativity, enthusiasm, and theatrical ideas are an inspiration to me.

*Reader's Theater: Classic Poetry* by Susan Brown

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2nd Edition

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*Child Songs of Cheer.* Written by Evaleen Stein.

*Symphonies and Their Meaning: Third Series: Modern Symphonies.* Written by Philip Henry Goepp.

*A Nonsense Anthology.* Collected by Carolyn Wells.

*Nonsense Songs: Stories, Botany and Alphabets.* Written by Edward Lear.

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# 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.

Preview Copy



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Preview Copy

# 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.

# 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.