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Putting on a short play, based on a story, where students read from a script is what Reader’s Theater is all about. The purpose of Reader’s Theater is to practice reading fluency and to have fun! True Reader’s Theater uses no costumes or props and focuses on fluency and expression to entertain. But adding costumes and props is a fun touch!

You can find many pre-made scripts out there or you can create your own. I prefer to create my own so I can tailor the language to my student’s reading abilities. It’s also a fun guided writing activity to write a script, as a class.

Putting on a Reader’s Theater play requires preparation, practice and performance. Here’s how we do all 3 in my classroom:

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<th>Preparation</th>
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| 1. Find or write a script.  
   **Highlight, ahead of time, the lines for each character on each script.** | 1. Teacher reads the entire play to show how to use expression when reading. Students follow along. | 1. One play at a time performs for the rest of the class.  
   - Remind actors that they need to: read loud enough, keep their script down (not in front of their face), and change their voices (expression) to make the play interesting.  
   - Remind the audience that they need to: stay seated on their bottoms, pay attention with eyes and ears and clap at the end. | 2. At the end of each play debrief with the audience.  
   - Using thumbs up, to the side and down: How did the actors do with reading loud enough? Keeping their scripts down? Changing their voices?  
   - “What did you like about the play/What did the actors do a good job of?”  
   - “Is there anyway they could make the play better?” |
| 2. Read the selected book to your students. | 2. Teacher reads the entire play again but this time the characters read along. | 2. At the end of each play debrief with the audience.  
   - Using thumbs up, to the side and down: How did the actors do with reading loud enough? Keeping their scripts down? Changing their voices?  
   - “What did you like about the play/What did the actors do a good job of?”  
   - “Is there anyway they could make the play better?” |
| 3. Show the script to students so they get a sense of how long the play will be. (Using an overhead, document camera or SmartBoard). | 3. Same characters meet to rehearse lines together, working on expression and possibly gestures. | 3. At the end of each play debrief with the audience.  
   - Using thumbs up, to the side and down: How did the actors do with reading loud enough? Keeping their scripts down? Changing their voices?  
   - “What did you like about the play/What did the actors do a good job of?”  
   - “Is there anyway they could make the play better?” |
| 4. Assign or choose roles for students. | 4. Each play (usually 3, so all kids are included) meets to rehearse for the big performance. | 4. Each play (usually 3, so all kids are included) meets to rehearse for the big performance. |
| 5. Students highlight their lines in their scripts (if they’re older). | | |

From start to finish this process can take as long as you’d like. You can split it up over a few days (in the place of Guided Reading, for example) or complete it in an hour. It just depends on your needs, style and time available.

Reader’s Theater is so fun and really brings the best out of kids! This is also a great thing to invite parents to, so they can watch their kid’s reading in action.
Reader's Theater

Get to Know the Play

Assign/Choose Characters

Practice Alone

Practice with Same Characters

Practice With Your Play

PERFORM!
Reader’s Theater
Get to Know the Play

Assign/Choose Characters

Practice Alone
Practice with Same Characters

Practice With Your Play

PERFORM!
Narrator: Did you know that kids can lose their first tooth at age four?

Dentist: That’s true.

Tooth Fairy: But most kids lose their first tooth at age seven.

Andrew: Hey, I’m seven and my tooth is loose. It’s really loose!

Mom: Andrew, come eat your breakfast.

Narrator: It’s Saturday morning at Andrew’s house and he’s hungry.

Andrew: I think I’ll have an apple. I love apples!

Mom: So what are you going to do today sweetie?

Narrator: He took a bite...

Andrew: YEEE-OW! Mommy, mommy, do something! This loose tooth hurts so much I can’t even eat my apple.

Mom: Ooh, ooh, ooh, I know what to do.

Narrator: She grabbed the tooth with both hands and pulled as hard as she could.

Andrew: But my tooth did not come out.

Mom: I’m sorry Andrew but I just can’t get that tooth out. Why don’t you try another bite of your apple to make it come out?
Narrator: He took another bite...

Andrew: YEEE-OW! Daddy, daddy, do something! This loose tooth hurts so much I can’t even eat my apple.

Dad: Ooh, ooh, ooh, I know what to do! Let me go get my pliers.

Narrator: Andrew’s father grabbed his tooth, put his foot on Andrew’s nose and pulled as hard as he could.

Andrew: But my tooth still did not come out.

Dad: I’m sorry Andrew but I just can’t get that tooth out. I think we need to call the dentist.

Narrator: His dad picked up the phone and dialed 555-TOOTH.

Dentist: Pretty clever huh? 555-TOOTH. Get it?

Narrator: Yes, ha ha. The dentist came in a shiny black car.

Dentist: Yep kid, that’s a loose tooth alright. Good thing I’m a dentist because I know exactly what to do.

Dad: He’s getting a rope out of his car.

Andrew: Oh no! I know what you’re going to do! You are going to tie one end to my tooth and the other to a door handle and slam the door.

Dentist: Nope. But that is a good idea. I’m going to tie one end to your tooth and the other end to my car.

Mom: Did you say car?
Narrator: The dentist did *exactly* what he said and drove away as fast as he could.

Dad: But when he got to the end of the rope, his car fell apart.

Dentist: Oh boy. Next time I’ll use a door handle instead.

Narrator: Just then, Andrew’s best friend Lewis came by and saw Andrew looking pretty sad.

Lewis: What’s up Andrew?

Andrew: I’ve got a loose tooth that *will not* come out and I can’t eat my breakfast.

Lewis: I had a loose tooth last week. I know *exactly* what to do!

Narrator: Lewis went inside, picked up the phone and called the Tooth Fairy.

Andrew: You know the Tooth Fairy’s phone number?

Lewis: Yep. It’s 555-biker chick.


Lewis: You’ll see.

Narrator: Just then, the Tooth Fairy came roaring down the street on a big, black motorcycle.

Andrew: Cool. Hey wait! If you think you’re going to use *that* thing to pull my tooth out, you’re *NUTS*!

Tooth Fairy: Chill out kid. Who do you think I am, a Dentist?
Dentist: *I’m* a dentist and I’m offended by that.

Tooth Fairy: Chill out Dentist. I’m going to use this big hammer to get the kid’s tooth out.

Mom: Did you say hammer?

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy clanged Andrew’s loose tooth but the hammer broke in two pieces.

Tooth Fairy: No way! I’ve never seen anything like that before. I give up.

Lewis: Hold it, I have another idea.

Narrator: Lewis went inside and got some pepper and sprinkled it up Andrew’s nose.

Andrew: Ahhhh

Mom: Take cover!

Andrew: Ahhhhh, ahhhhh

Dad: Run for your life!

Andrew: AHHHHHHH-CHOOOOO!

Narrator: The tooth shot out of Andrew’s mouth and all the way across town.

Tooth Fairy: See ya kid, I need to get that tooth!

Andrew: The End.
Nice Try, Tooth Fairy!
based on the book by Mary W. Olson

| Narrator | Emma       | Tooth Fairy | Mom  | Dad  |

Narrator: Did you know that kids can lose their first tooth at age four?

Tooth Fairy: That’s true. But most kids lose their first tooth at age seven.

Emma: Hey, I’m seven and I just lost my first tooth.

Mom: Emma, you will have to put your tooth under your pillow tonight for the Tooth Fairy.

Emma: Why?

Dad: The Tooth Fairy collects all lost teeth and leaves a present in return.

Emma: Do I have to give the Tooth Fairy my tooth?

Mom: Yes sweetie, that’s what kids do.

Emma: What kind of present will I get?

Dad: You will have to wait and see. Now go put your tooth under your pillow and go to sleep.

Emma: Good night.

Narrator: Later that night...

Tooth Fairy: 1987 Green Street is where I need to be. I think I’m lost. No wait, there’s Emma’s house.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy flew up to Emma’s window and slipped inside.
Tooth Fairy: Oh this tooth is a beauty! I will leave her four shiny quarters.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came.

Tooth Fairy: I need to get this tooth home and catalog it.

Narrator: The next morning...

Emma: Wow, four shiny quarters! Mom guess what? Dad come see!

Mom: See what I told you? The Tooth Fairy came for your tooth last night.

Dad: You’re rich! Can I borrow some money?

Emma: I miss my tooth already.

Mom: A new one will start growing in soon.

Dad: Don’t worry.

Narrator: Emma really wanted her tooth back, so she wrote a letter to the Tooth Fairy.

Emma: Dear Tooth Fairy, My grandpa is coming to visit tomorrow and I really want to show him my tooth. Can you please bring it back for one day?

Narrator: Later that night...

Tooth Fairy: 1987 Green Street again. I think I’m lost again. No wait, there’s Emma’s house.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy flew up to Emma’s window and slipped inside.

Tooth Fairy: I’ll leave Emma’s tooth under her pillow and come back for it tomorrow night.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came. The next morning...
Emma: Hey, this tooth is enormous! The Tooth Fairy made a mistake.

Narrator: She decided to write another letter to the Tooth Fairy.

Emma: Dear Tooth Fairy, Thank you for bringing back my tooth last night but I think you might need glasses because you brought me an enormous tooth that is not mine. I’m still waiting for my tooth.

Narrator: Later that night a hippo showed up to get his tooth.

Emma: So that’s who the tooth belongs to!

Narrator: Way later that night...

Tooth Fairy: 1987 Green Street again. I know I’ve been here before.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy flew up to Emma’s window and slipped inside.

Tooth Fairy: I’ll leave Emma’s tooth under her pillow and come back for it tomorrow night.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came. The next morning...

Emma: Hey, this tooth is tiny! The Tooth Fairy made a mistake again.

Narrator: She decided to write another letter to the Tooth Fairy.

Emma: Dear Tooth Fairy, The tooth you left me last night was too small. I’m still waiting for my tooth.

Narrator: Later that night a hedgehog showed up to get his tooth.

Emma: So that’s who the tooth belongs to!

Dad: Way later that night...

Tooth Fairy: 1987 Green Street again. I know I’ve been here before.
Narrator: The Tooth Fairy flew up to Emma’s window and slipped inside.

Tooth Fairy: I’ll leave Emma’s tooth under her pillow and come back for it tomorrow night.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came. The next morning...

Emma: Hey, this tooth is really smelly!

Narrator: She decided to write another letter to the Tooth Fairy.

Emma: Dear Tooth Fairy, Thank you for bringing back my tooth last night but the tooth you left me was too stinky. Nice try. Still waiting.

Narrator: Later that night a skunk showed up to get his tooth.

Emma: Pew!

Mom: Way later that night...


Narrator: The Tooth Fairy flew up to Emma’s window and slipped inside.

Tooth Fairy: I’ll leave Emma’s tooth under her pillow and come back for it tomorrow night. I hope this tooth is the right one.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came. The next morning...

Emma: Hey, that’s not my tooth! Are you kidding me? This is a tusk! What do I look like, an elephant?

Narrator: She decided to write yet another letter to the Tooth Fairy.

Emma: Dear Tooth Fairy, Thank you for bringing back my tooth last night but you left me a tusk this time and I’m definitely not an elephant. Tooth please?
Narrator: Later that night a huge elephant showed up to get his tusk.

Dad: Way later that night...

Tooth Fairy: 1987 Green Street. I should just move in next door.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy flew up to Emma’s window and slipped inside.

Tooth Fairy: I’ll leave Emma’s tooth under her pillow and come back for it tomorrow night. I really hope this tooth is the right one.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came. The next morning...

Emma: Seriously?

Mom: It’s an alligator tooth sweetie.

Dad: Maybe you should draw her a picture of your tooth.

Narrator: She decided to write back to the Tooth Fairy and draw her tooth.

Dad: Later that night...

Tooth Fairy: 1987 Green Street. I can find this place in my sleep.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy flew up to Emma’s window and slipped inside.

Tooth Fairy: This has got to be her tooth. I don’t have any more!

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came. The next morning...

Emma: Finally, my tooth! I’m just borrowing it. I’ll give it back tomorrow.

Mom: The End.
Nice Try, Tooth Fairy!
based on the book by Mary W. Olson

Narrator: Did you know that kids can lose their first tooth at age four?

Tooth Fairy: That’s true. But most kids lose their first tooth at age seven.

Billy: Hey, I’m seven and I just lost my first tooth.

Mom: Emma, you will have to put your tooth under your pillow tonight for the Tooth Fairy.

Billy: Why?

Dad: The Tooth Fairy collects all lost teeth and leaves a present in return.

Billy: Do I have to give the Tooth Fairy my tooth?

Mom: Yes sweetie, that’s what kids do.

Billy: What kind of present will I get?

Dad: You will have to wait and see. Now go put your tooth under your pillow and go to sleep.

Billy: Good night.

Narrator: Later that night...

Tooth Fairy: 1987 Green Street is where I need to be. I think I’m lost. No wait, there’s Emma’s house.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy flew up to Billy’s window and slipped inside.
Tooth Fairy: Oh this tooth is a beauty! I will leave him four shiny quarters.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came.

Tooth Fairy: I need to get this tooth home and catalog it.

Narrator: The next morning...

Billy: Wow, four shiny quarters! Mom guess what? Dad come see!

Mom: See what I told you? The Tooth Fairy came for your tooth last night.

Dad: You’re rich! Can I borrow some money?

Billy: I miss my tooth already.

Mom: A new one will start growing in soon.

Dad: Don’t worry.

Narrator: Billy really wanted his tooth back, so he wrote a letter to the Tooth Fairy.

Emma: Dear Tooth Fairy, My grandpa is coming to visit tomorrow and I really want to show him my tooth. Can you please bring it back for one day?

Narrator: Later that night...

Tooth Fairy: 1987 Green Street again. I think I’m lost again. No wait, there’s Billy’s house.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy flew up to Billy’s window and slipped inside.

Tooth Fairy: I’ll leave Billy’s tooth under his pillow and come back for it tomorrow night.

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came. The next morning...
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Narrator: He decided to write another letter to the Tooth Fairy.

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Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came. The next morning...

Billy: Hey, this tooth is tiny! The Tooth Fairy made a mistake again.

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Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came. The next morning...

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Narrator: Later that night a skunk showed up to get his tooth.

Billy: Pew!

Mom: Way later that night...


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Tooth Fairy: I’ll leave Billy’s tooth under his pillow and come back for it tomorrow night. I hope this tooth is the right one.

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Tooth Fairy: This has got to be his tooth because I don’t have any more!

Narrator: The Tooth Fairy left, just as quietly as she came. The next morning...

Emma: Finally, my tooth! I’m just borrowing it. I’ll give it back tomorrow.

Mom: The End.
Thank you so much for purchasing this Readers’ Theater pack! Here are more scripts you may be interested in:

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- Sneezy the Snowman
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