State of Israel
Ministry of Education
The Pedagogical Secretariat
Languages Department
Inspectorate for English Language Education

Elementary English

THE JOY OF READING

Readers' Theater

OVERVIEW

What's in Store?

1. For a change ... let's begin at the end! What is reader's theater?
2. What's the point?
3. Let's Build a Lesson
4. Assessment, really?
5. You're a Star!
6. Worth a Click!

A1 CAN-DO STATEMENTS

What readers' theater builds toward

Through readers' theater, pupils work toward these A1 can-do statements.

READING ALOUD

- Can accurately and fluently read familiar words and chunks aloud.
- Can use appropriate intonation when reading descriptors, questions and dialogue.
- Can accurately read and pronounce words with familiar orthographic patterns.

UNDERSTANDING THE SCRIPT

- Can follow simple dialogues in short illustrated stories.
- Can understand short (illustrated) creative texts that are written in simple words.

PERFORMING

- Can engage in creative play with language.
- Can reproduce correctly a range of sounds as well as the stress on simple, familiar words and phrases.

RESPONDING

- Can use Band I vocabulary to say how a creative text (including literature) made him/her feel.
- Can re-tell parts of a story, starting in L1 when needed.

Selected from the English Curriculum 2020 for Elementary School, Basic User I (A1), Ministry of Education.

Set up readers' theater, step by step

Use these steps with any script you choose. You decide the pace.

PREPARE

1 Choose a script

Check the script against the checklist: age, language, enough roles, harder and easier parts, choral parts and plenty of fun.

PREPARE

2 Plan the language

Pick one or two orthographic patterns and the new vocabulary your pupils need for the script.

BEFORE READING

3 Break the ice

Open with an ice-breaker linked to the theme of the script. Then review the patterns and taught vocabulary.

BEFORE READING

4 Pre-teach the words

Pre-teach and practise the new words. Do a pre-reading task and let pupils guess what the script is about.

DURING READING

5 Model the script

Read the script aloud with lots of expression or play the audio clip. Then check comprehension.

DURING READING

6 Share the roles

Offer a choice of harder and easier roles. Pupils highlight their lines. Everyone joins the choral parts.

DURING READING

7 Rehearse

Pupils practise silently, then in pairs, adding gestures and sound effects. Walk around and listen for accuracy and intonation.

AFTER READING

8 Perform and assess

Read the script together. Use self, peer and teacher assessment, then take the show to a wider audience.

Click the clapperboard to play the clip.

What do you see or hear in this clip? Write in the chat while you watch.

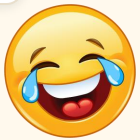
What did you see and hear?

We saw 3 girls:

- holding scripts
- reading from the scripts
- making gestures
- having a good time

We heard:

- fluent reading
- good intonation and expression
- giggling



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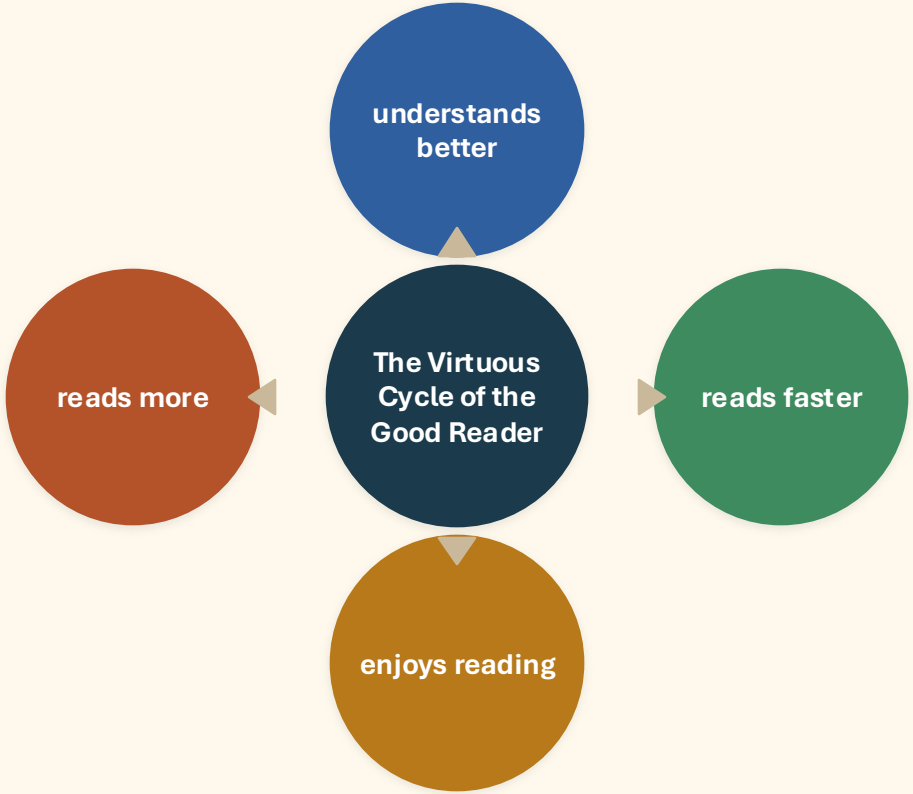
What makes a good reader?



How Do You Best Connect with Your Learners?

“ … teachers in this study seemed to create shared experiences that focus on imaginative exercises (like shared reading) as their own ***mysterious glue*** *to make connections with their students.”*

Dr. Ken Raemer, University of Winnipeg, Canada

Is reader's theater a shared experience?

WATCH THE CLIP

Final Few Minutes of a Reader's Theater Lesson

Note down the benefits you notice in this clip!

Click the photo to play the clip.

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WHAT'S THE POINT?

Benefits?

- reading fluency and accuracy
- reading comprehension
- increases a love of literature
- allows for differentiation by offering choice
- improves speaking skills
- gets pupils moving
- shared experiences = student engagement
- enhances presentation and pronunciation skills

CHOOSING A SCRIPT

So Much Choice! How Do I Choose?

ONCE YOU'VE SKIMMED THE SCRIPT YOURSELF, CAN YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?

Is it age and content appropriate?

Is the language suitable for the class?

Are there enough roles for the majority of my pupils?

Are there harder and easier roles?

Are there choral parts too?

Is it fun?

A SAMPLE RT SCRIPT

A Sample RT Script: Too Much Noise

Does it tick boxes???

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A Sample RT Script: Too Much Noise

DOES IT TICK BOXES?

Grade: 5

Age, content and language appropriateness: Good

Number of Speaking Roles: 8

Differential roles: yes

Chorus: yes (all together + animal sounds)

Fun: Of course yes!

ORTHOGRAPHIC PATTERNS

all as in w**all**, t**all**, c**all**, f**all**

ou as in **ou**tside, l**ou**d, h**ou**se, get **ou**t, take them **ou**tside

NEW VOCABULARY

w**all** to w**all**

a cute baby

bring them inside / **ou**tside

a l**ou**d noise

to knock on the door

a goat

noise / noisy

get **ou**t of my h**ou**se

a wise man

Just a minute! Before you read the text aloud together, click PAUSE!

ICE-BREAKER

Break the Ice

Do you prefer going on a crowded bus or a half-empty bus? Why?

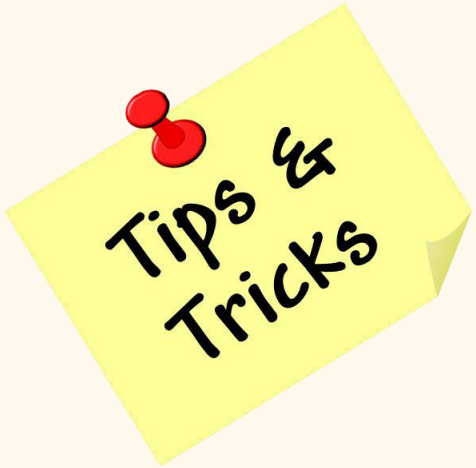
Social-emotional learning (SEL)

BEFORE READING

Some Examples of Pre-Reading Activities

- **Review orthographic patterns:** all + ou
- **Pre-teach new vocabulary:** flashcards / quizlet / memory games
- **Practice new vocabulary:** multi-choice / yes, no / fill in the missing letter or word
- **Pre-reading activities:** circle all the names / underline all the animals / which words appear 5+ times / colour pairs of rhyming words
- **Let's guess what the script will be about!!**

Training for Young Actors: Brain Breaks



- agree to pretend
- concentrate
- use sound effects (mooing, chirping, clapping, singing, fighting)
- cooperation and respect
- use gestures (There was too much noise! / There is help on the way!)

DURING READING

And finally, to the script!

- Teacher reads text aloud with **LOTS OF EXPRESSION** OR plays an audio clip of the text being read aloud on the LT site. Pause when words need explanations or when concepts deserve short discussions.
- Assess comprehension
- Offer students choice of roles
- Students highlight their lines
- Practice reading silently, then in pairs. Teacher walks around checking and listening out for accuracy and correct intonation.
- Read the script together!

FAQ’s

Do the pupils need to memorize their lines?

Can they make or use props?

Can my pupils dress up in costumes?

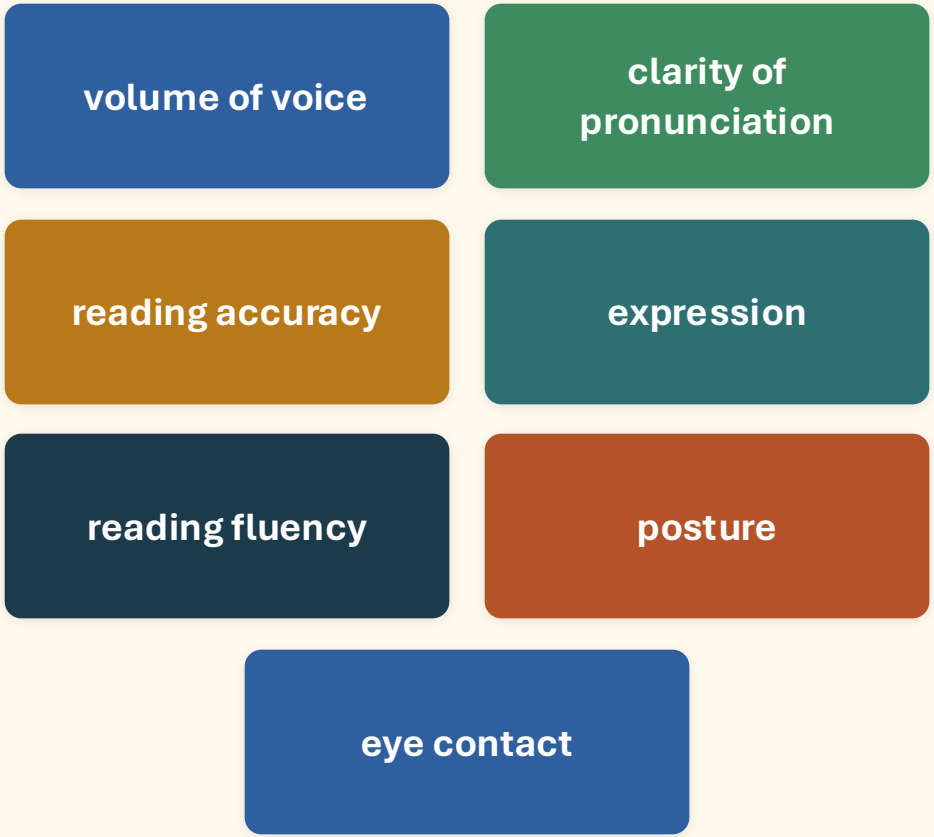
What should I do with the pupils who can't read yet?

What should I do if the script I like only has a few reading parts?

ASSESSMENT

Assessment! Really?

Students are evaluated based on:



What Kind of Assessment?

Self-Assessment

Pupils should ask themselves questions about their performance and write tips for improvement the next time around.

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Peer-Assessment

Pupils can create a peer-assessment template and use it to assess each other so that they can formulate constructive feedback for their classmates.

This activity not only helps others, but helps those doing the assessment too!

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Teacher-Assessment

The teacher can use this activity as a form of alternative assessment, formative assessment or summative assessment, depending on her objectives.

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YOU'RE A STAR!

Steps to Stardom!

1. small groups
2. whole class
3. perform for younger classes
4. invite parents
5. school performance
6. regional performance

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Worth a Click:

- Watch this Model Reader's Theater Lesson
- Let's Talk: Reader's Theater Section
- Padlet filled with scripts and resources (highly recommended)
- Reader's Theater: Oral Language Enrichment and Literacy Development for ELLs
- Reader's Theater: Giving Students a Reason to Read Aloud
- Teacher Vision: Reader's Theater
- Reader's Theater Tips

SUMMARY

So what can we do now?

We definitely know what reader's theater is by now!

We understand how our pupils can benefit

We can build a lesson or a unit around a reader's theater script

We can use self, peer and teacher assessment for reader's theater

We can turn our pupils into actors and even stars!

We can access recommended resources