

Reader's Theater

Recommended for Grades 3 to 12

Reader's Theater brings the narrative to life for your students as they act out and interpret the story for their peers. Reader's theater can range from the simplest form of an organized reading to a more elaborate activity involving props, costumes, or a reinterpretation of the narrative into another art form. Possible approaches include:

- Turn the narrative into a script and assign roles for all of the characters and a narrator. Pull out dialogue for each role. Distribute the narrative in advance to the selected students and give them time to read through the narrative and their roles. Have the students give a reading of the narrative as the first introduction of the story to the rest of the class.
- Culminate your unit by acting out the narrative. Break students into groups and let each group prepare their own rendition of the narrative. Work with students to assign roles and identify dialogue in the script. Review assignment guidelines in advance, including public speaking skills, and specific requirements for each performance such as referencing the artifacts, use of props, time limit, and adaptation of narrative into a script. Allow students time to work in class to prepare. Each group should take turns performing for their peers.
- Ask students to use the narrative as inspiration for creative work that they can share with their peers. Some options are: spoken-word poetry, rap, or other kind of musical rendition, a soliloquy from the point of view of one of the characters, a television or radio interview, or a talk show.

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State Learning Standards

State Goal 2: Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras, and ideas. Learning Standard B: Read and interpret a variety of literary works.

State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes. Learning Standard B: Compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences. C: Communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes.

State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations. Learning Standard A: Listen effectively in formal and informal situations. B: Speak effectively using language appropriate to the situation and audience.

State Goal 16: Understand the events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations. Learning Standard A: apply the skills of historical analysis and interpretation.

State Goal 26: Through creating and performing understand how works of art are produced. Learning Standard B: apply skills and knowledge necessary to create and perform in one or more of the arts.