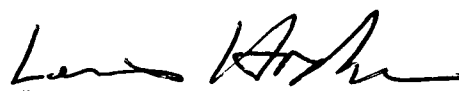
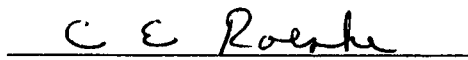


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Joellen Weis entitled "Bringing Literature Alive Through Drama for Middle School Students." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Specialist in Education with a major in Education.


Dr. Lewis Hodge, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:




Accepted for the Council:


Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of the Graduate School

**BRINGING LITERATURE ALIVE THROUGH
DRAMA FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENTS**

A Thesis
Presented for the
Specialist in Education
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Joellen Weis
August 1998

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Howard Roark

John Galt

and

Will Hunting

who have given me the assurance that intelligence
and creativity *can* exist in the
asylum of mediocrity.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a teacher resource manual for middle school teachers to implement drama into their reading curriculum. The dramatic forms of improvisation, storytelling, puppetry, pantomime, and reader's theatre are presented for incorporation into the curriculum. The ideas can be adapted to all ages and ability levels. Different components of the forms are examined and lesson plans, tips, scripts, and resources are offered for the teacher.

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1. INTRODUCTION

As a middle school reading teacher, I deal daily with apathy towards reading. Many of my students do not like to read, and some of them do not read well. It is very hard to convince them that this invaluable subject is interesting and enjoyable. Yet, as a teacher, I realize that I have to make reading exciting and intriguing to get their attention and to keep it.

I was told that the "way" to teach reading was to have students read the stories and answer the questions at the end. The traditional method was simply not going to work with my students because I wanted their eyes to light up when I said, "Let's read," and not to gloss over with boredom. Equipped with an educational background strong in drama, I decided that I should implement drama into their curriculum.

One does not need to be a Broadway star to incorporate drama, but one does need to develop a classroom climate where drama can be achieved. After the classroom is conducive, then one need only to take some extra time to bring "life" through creative dramatics to the literature. Granted, drama cannot be done all the time, and there are certain skills that must be taught for state and local testing. However, by bringing literature alive through drama, students will enjoy a variety of literary selections and store for retention both meaning and content.

This thesis will propose some ideas about how to use drama in the reading classroom. These ideas are adaptable for all ages and all ability levels. One exciting aspect about drama is that it does not require any specific ability level. All students can benefit from using drama in the classroom. Furthermore, no student is too young or too old to get up and act. They might need a little more poking and prodding at different ages, but within

the right context and classroom climate, the acting bug can be caught!

Each section of this thesis will be broken down into the following dramatic components: improvisation, storytelling, puppetry, pantomime, and reader's theatre. The sections will examine the components by giving a brief introduction, ideas on how to use it in the classroom, and some resources for implementation in the classroom. By no means is this a complete analysis of the dramatic components, but this thesis will serve as a beginning resource for the teacher wishing to incorporate drama into the curriculum.

2. IMPROVISATION

Description: Improvisation is a pleasurable, simple way to involve all students in the process of active reading. Robert J. Landy defines improvisation as "an unscripted, unrehearsed, spontaneous set of actions in response to minimal directions from a leader, usually including statements of whom one is, where one is, and what one is doing there"

(5). I have found that improvisation is an exercise which if used frequently in the classroom, can accomplish multiple goals such as the following: create a positive classroom climate, reduce timidity, and encourage creativity and critical thinking skills.

There is a certain amount of spontaneity in improvisation. However, for improvisation to work effectively in the classroom, the teacher must plan and organize activities in a purposeful way. There cannot be mass chaos in the classroom; careful planning can deter that. Improvisation can be the "baby step" for introducing drama into the classroom. It can also become the base of the reading curriculum. Due to its flexibility, the teacher can develop many ways to introduce improvisation into the classroom to bring literature alive. The following sections will show sample activities, lesson plans, and resources which focus on improvisation in the classroom.

Sample Activities

Before delving into an example lesson plan, there are many activities that one can use to acclimate the beginning classroom to improvisation. Begin slowly by utilizing activities that help students build a community within the classroom and feel comfortable with each other. Usually it is best to start with group activities so there is not much focus on the individual. I have found this to work best at the middle school age. However, whether individual or group activities are used first depends on the teacher, the students,

and the classroom environment. Dealing with middle schoolers has caused me to incorporate group work as the best way to introduce improvisation. The following scenarios are for a group of three. These activities were taken verbatim from McCaslin. Some offer more direction than others, and it is up to the classroom teacher to effectively implement them.

1. You are delivering papers. You throw one toward a house, but instead of landing on the porch, it breaks a window. Both the man and his wife come to see what has happened.
2. You and your friend find a five dollar bill on the sidewalk. You want to keep it, but at this moment a woman comes down the street looking for something. You are certain she has lost it. What do you do?
3. You see the girl across the aisle cheat on a test when the teacher steps out of the room. He suspects that there has been cheating and asks you and the girl to stay after class so he can find out about it. What does each one of you say and do?
4. You are falsely accused of cheating on an examination. You are angry and upset. The three persons involved are your teacher, the principal of the school, and you.
5. Your two best friends are running for president of your class. You meet on the playground. What do you say? How do you handle the situation?
6. You are in a laundromat, waiting for a washing machine. One is ready, except that the person who puts the clothes in it has not returned for them. One woman tells you that you have a right to remove the clothes and use the machine. Another says that you should wait, because the owner is coming back in a few minutes. Meanwhile, you are in a hurry. What do you decide to do? Does the person who left the clothes return soon? How does the situation turn out (McCaslin 105-106)?

Once students have successfully completed the group improvisation activities, introduce pair activities. Students should feel comfortable moving to the next level of working with just one partner. By using partner activities, students are preparing for individual improvisation. The following activities were taken verbatim and offer a limited amount of instruction for teachers. The teacher should use discretion in modifying the activities for the classroom.

1. You receive a letter in the mail, telling you that you have won first prize in a poster contest. Tell your mother the good news.
2. Your dog has been hit by a car. When you come home from school, your mother meets you and tells you what happened.
3. You are moving to a new neighborhood today. Your best friend comes around to say good-bye to you. Although you are looking forward to your new home, you are sad to leave the old neighborhood. What do you say?
4. You have found a kitten that you want very much to keep, but your mother has said you cannot have a pet. Try to persuade her that the kitten needs a home.
5. You are trying on shoes to take to camp. The clerk does not have what you want and tries to sell you something else. Should you take her suggestion (McCaslin 103)?

After several activities with groups and partners have been completed, students are ready to do individual improvisation. At this point, the individual activities can directly relate to the reading curriculum. For example, individual scenarios can be created by placing students in the same predicaments as characters from their stories. Another way individual improvisation activities can be used in the reading curriculum is through public speaking. As I have built trust in the classroom, I incorporate the following improvisation activity to prepare them for their eighth grade farewell speeches. Hopefully, the improvisation activities that are done throughout the year will reduce apprehension they may be feeling during their end of the year speech.

I call this activity improvisational speaking. I create enough topics for each student in my classroom to have a different one. These topics may include the following: homelessness, school lunches, year round schooling, gangs, and cliques. It is best if the topics are made to fit the students and their interests. The topics can be either fun or serious. Improvisation lends itself to creativity on the teacher's behalf. The teacher creates the drama that will occur in the classroom. The topics should relate to students' lives and

should be ones that they will be able to speak vigorously and passionately about.

After I have created enough topics, I put them on slips of paper in a paper bag. Students come up at random to the front of the room and pick a topic from the bag. They must speak non-stop (stream of conscious if you will) for one minute about the topic. No two students speak about the same topic so there is no comparison amongst speakers. Some topics may be easier than others just as some students may be more at ease in front of the classroom.

Generally, students enjoy this activity if you present it in a competitive fashion (student against the clock). I ask students to try and say as many things about the topic as they can. This activity can help reduce stage fright for when the students have to perform a lengthier speech. Regardless if speeches are in the curriculum, this activity is useful because at one point in our lives we all have to speak in front of a group. In this sense, students acquire a lifetime skill.

Lesson Plan

A Maryville College Drama student, Russell Groff, told me the following lesson plan he learned through his drama department. It incorporates two concepts of the reading curriculum (characterization and tone) through improvising emotions only. This lesson plan focuses on the connection between drama and literary concepts. By using improvisation, students learn literary elements.

Goal: Students will understand the elements of tone and characterization through the improvisation of emotions.

Objective: Students will improvise different emotions through voice, speech, and nonverbal communication.

Procedure:

Set: How does a writer show characterization? There are many ways. One can see characterization from a description, a character's actions, or a character's emotions. Today you will create characterization through emotion only.

Materials: slips of paper with emotion terms on them (sad, happy, angry, frustrated, paranoid, and indifferent), a paper bag to store terms, and four chairs at the front of the room representing an imaginary car

Instruction: An imaginary car is set up in the front of the classroom. One student comes up and draws an emotion from the bag. The student then becomes the driver of the car. He must show through his voice, speech, and nonverbal communication the emotion he has drawn. This action is expressed while driving the car, picking up other passengers (students), as well as in the interaction among other riders. The students play an emotion more so than a character. It is best to give the driver a destination such as school or the mall. First, the driver will interact with himself. The students will pantomime all their actions with the car and any other props they decide are appropriate to use. To bring humor into the activity, point out their errors in pantomime. Most of the students will walk through the imaginary car door! The driver will then pick up the second student who will socialize with the driver in his emotion. Time is given to pursue the interaction between each pick up until there are four people in the car. The audience (class) must guess the emotion of each character at the end of the presentation. They can also critique the students' abilities to stay in their emotion.

Several rounds of the emotional car ride can be done. Try to have enough emotions to do this without repeating emotions. Students really enjoy this activity and often ask to do it

more than one day.

Assessment: A participation grade is given for acting out an emotion. A grade can be given for the quality of the emotion presentation or just for participation alone. Generally a 100 for participation encourages future participation and provides a fun learning experience.

Lesson Plan 2

In my reading class, I incorporate a lot of writing as well. To be a good reader, one must also be a good writer and be able to recognize good writing. The following lesson plan came from the internet and shows how to utilize improvisation with writing (lang02.txt at www.col-ed.org). This lesson is a great example of how drama can be used to stimulate the writing process. The following lesson was written in first person by the author.

Title: Let's Go Shopping

Author: Gary Miller, Whitford (Int.) Beaverton, OR

Grade Level/Subject: 7-9; Language Arts or Cultural Awareness

I have used it successfully with 7th through 9th grade students. It may be presented as a language arts activity, but could easily be presented as a cultural awareness or human relations activity.

Overview: This lesson involves observation, role playing, writing in character, and presentation to the class. Students will visualize themselves as an observer of humanity in a given situation. They will be stepping out of their own character and into the character of someone else (what an opportunity to teach Reach!). They will react to a situation as they imagine someone else might and then write about it. Your classroom may need to be reorganized to simulate a shopping mall, but you need no special equipment or materials.

Purpose: As this lesson unfolds, students will begin to understand how they observe, identify, and sometimes judge others by behavior and appearance.

Objective(s): This lesson will help kids become better observers, demonstrate point of view as a literary and human function, and teach them an important lesson about how to understand differing perspectives in the same situation.

Resource/Materials: The only materials required for this activity are a flexible room, imagination, and a very heavy book. (A microphone can be improvised.)

Activities and Procedures:

1. Ask students to list the different "types" of people they might see at a large

shopping mall on a Saturday afternoon (families, kids, security and custodial people, clerks, retired people, "mall walkers," people canvassing, etc.) List as many as possible on the board.

2. Have the students choose one character and visualize what that character might be doing at the mall. Then adjust your classroom to accommodate movement and have the kids actually simulate their characters by turning the room into the shopping mall!

Encourage the kids to really get into their roles.

3. After the students have been role playing for about two minutes (just make sure they are completely absorbed in what they are doing), slam the heaviest book in the room down on the floor. Explain that a huge explosion has just occurred. Instruct the students to return to their desks and write what just happened from the point of view of the character they are pretending to be.

4. Allow five to ten minutes for writing and then ask students to meet in small groups to read their writing to each other. Each group should choose the "best" or most effective writing from their group.

5. Select a TV interviewer from the class and stage a MAN ON THE STREET interview with all of the selected authors. (I usually choose one of my least successful writers as the interviewer.)

6. Discussion may follow concerning point of view writing.

Tying It All Together: In addition to being an active, fun, and creative way to teach a literary element, this activity helps students to see how they look at others, and how different people might have differing perspectives on the same experience. While somewhat slanted culturally (in that it assumes most kids have access to and would go to a shopping mall), the format allows for modification and adjustment to create an environment where students might enjoy the privilege of "walking a mile in someone else's moccasins" and learning a new point of view.

Lesson Plan 3

Part of any reading curriculum is the study of biography. Improvisation can be used to bring a class biography to life in the following manner. The following lesson plan was created from McCaslin's idea, and I created a teacher ready lesson to implement the idea in the classroom. Students will show a character's life from birth to death.

Objective: Students will improvise the parts of a biography to understand sequence of events.

Procedure: After study of a character, students must consider how the character would react to certain situations at different points in his/her life. The class is divided into

five or six groups, and each group is responsible for a time period in the character's life.

The following time frames are some that could be used:

birth to age six

six to twelve years

the teens

the twenties

the thirties or forties

later life

old age

The main biographical character does not have to be the only one improvised..

Students can play parts of family or friends. The biographical character does not have to be improvised in every scene. Certain scenarios can be improvised through the presentation of family and friends discussing actions of the biographical character.

Assessment: A grade is given based upon the student's ability to represent the authenticity of the biography. Furthermore, the improvisational activity can be used as a springboard for a group or individual research project (McCaslin 102-103).

Resources

The following resources contain segments about improvisation which may be helpful for implementing it into the reading curriculum. The books by Fitzgerald, Hodgson, and Kase offer scenarios and stories to act out for the experienced teacher. Byers and Spolin offer sections of improvisation techniques. McCaslin's book is a great beginner's book to implement improvisation.

Byers, Ruth. Creating Theatre. San Antonio: Trinity, 1968.

Fitzgerald, Burdette. Let's Act the Story. Palo Alto: Fearon, 1957.

Heinig, Ruth. Creative Drama for the Classroom Teacher. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1981.

Hodgson, John and Ernest Richards. Improvisation. London: Methuen, 1967.

Kase, Robert. Stories for Creative Acting. New York: Merrill, 1961.

McCaslin, Nellie. Creative Drama in the Classroom. New York: Longman: 1984.

Spolin, Viola. Improvisation for the Theatre: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques. Evanston: Northwestern, 1963.

Closing Remarks

Even if a teacher does not want to implement creative dramatics within his/her reading curriculum, improvisation can be included with minimal preparation. Implemented effectively, the benefits of improvisation are many. It is a technique which can bring literature and the classroom alive. The lack of props leaves more to the imagination of the students. Benefits from incorporating improvisation into the classroom are the following: to stimulate students' imaginations, inspire creativity, build group cohesiveness, and build confidence (McCaslin 116).

Although improvisation has many benefits, there are some negative aspects for a teacher to consider. For example, depending on the level and maturity of the students, improvisation can become tiresome and repetitive. Also, improvisation can become a chaotic activity without focus if the teacher is not careful. As a result, improvisation must be presented in a purposeful manner and as a building block to take students to a higher dimension of creative dramatics. If used properly, the results can be boundless.

3. STORYTELLING

Description: One of the most frustrating aspects of teaching reading is the lack of enthusiasm and characterization that students put into reading aloud. Invariably most students read in a monotonous tone that hypnotizes everyone into boredom with the meaning of the story lost back at page one. However, I found that using storytelling in the classroom helps students to truly analyze a story and its characters. As a result, students read with more of a dramatic flair and keep everyone's attention. After doing storytelling exercises, students naturally transfer storytelling to reading aloud from the basal text.

Basically storytelling is the conveyance of a text with enthusiasm and sensitivity (McCaslin 255). If the storyteller can present a story with enthusiasm, inflection, and characterization, then he can truly bring literature alive. All that is required for good storytelling are the following: a lively tale, believable characters, and a meaningful theme (256). However, more important than dramatic flair is the choice of text when considering audience.

Students do not need to be actors to be good storytellers. In fact, storytelling can either be read from a script or presented from memory. Reading from a script is beneficial in the beginning if students are apprehensive. Storytelling is similar to telling a good joke. One must determine the beginning, the middle, and the end of story. Storytelling can help bring literature alive, increase sensitivity to a text, and promote better reading in general. The sections will include the following: lesson plan, storytelling tips, storytelling scripts, storytelling resources, and final thoughts.

Lesson Plan

The following lesson plan shows how to use fables as a starting point for a

beginning storytelling presentation. The lesson is a group activity so students do not feel pressure about performing.

Objectives: Students will discuss selection(s) to ensure understanding.

Students will choose a selection to present to the class in storytelling format.

Procedure: Several script that are conducive to storytelling are available on the internet (Search: Storytelling). The scripts offered are some that are in the elementary and secondary curriculum. Most curriculums include fables. For the purpose of this lesson plan, Aesop's Fables is used. Examples of the fables are given under the heading **Storytelling Scripts** in this section.

As a class, students read the fables aloud and then silently to themselves. Students need a strong comprehension and understanding of the fables which is why they are read in both manners. The teacher can help explain the fables as they are read aloud.

Students are then placed into cooperative groups of four to six. Each group member chooses a fable from the 101 to present in storytelling fashion. The fables are recommended because they are multi-age attractive, short, and easy to experiment with for storytelling. Due to the length, students can pay close attention to characterization and performance.

After students have memorized and put the fable into their own words, they will decide whether or not their fable will need an introduction or not. Students have two to three days of practice as well as out of class preparation. The members in their group can also critique their practice. The group should try to create a cohesive form to make a smooth transition from fable to fable.

After the teacher has given the groups ample time to rehearse, they will perform

for the class. The class can critique the groups and make suggestions on improvements to make the fable come alive. If the students do an exceptional job, a performance to a lower grade is usually appropriate and rewarding.

Assessment: A rubric similar to the reader's theatre evaluation form which is located under the heading **Assessment** in the reader's theatre section of this thesis can be used or modified to grade the performances.

Lesson Plan 2

Another lesson plan in storytelling that could be implemented is for Halloween. The following lesson plan incorporates Halloween and storytelling into the reading curriculum. If Halloween is controversial in the community or for one child, an alternative assignment should be created. The teacher could have storytelling day around the campfire.

Objectives: Students will write a ghost story.

Students will memorize their story.

Students will share their ghost story.

Procedure: During the week of Halloween, have students create their scariest, original ghost story. A few class periods should be allotted to focus on the writing process (outline, rough draft, and final draft). Also, allow students time to practice their stories.

On the day of Halloween, have the room decorated. Put all the desks near the walls and create a wide open space in the floor for students to sit in a circle. Put on Halloween music to create a spooky ambiance.

As the students sit in a circle, have them share their stories. The lights should be out in the room. This lesson gives the effect of sitting around a campfire exchanging

stories. By using storytelling, it ensures the stories are told in an exciting manner.

Assessment: Students can vote on the scariest story told. This is usually an enjoyable lesson so one may not want to give any grade more than a participation grade. Finally, if assessment is necessary, the reader's theatre evaluation form can be used.

Storytelling Tips

Here are some tips that students should be aware of when presenting their stories to the class. These tips also serve as a concise explanation of storytelling for the teacher.

The following storytelling tips were found on Aaron Shepard's web site

(www.aaronsherp.com/storytelling/Tell1.html).

Finding Your Story:

The key to finding a story is to find one that you love and will enjoy telling over and over.

An appropriate story for telling is one of the following: a folk tale (i.e. fairy tale, myth, tall tale, legend, and ghost story), a literary tale, or a non-fiction piece.

An easy place to locate stories is from books, audiotapes, or storytelling recordings.

Initially, begin with stories that are short, have action, strong characters, and simple structure. Consider your audience in selecting a piece. Modern pieces are easiest to work from due to the language. However, altering older pieces is acceptable.

Finally, it is appropriate to mention the source of your story due to copyright protection.

Preparing Your Story:

Prepare to tell your story by practicing in one or more of the following ways: read it or listen to it repetitively, write the story, draw charts, or begin to tell the story at once.

Make sure the story flows naturally.

Do not memorize the whole story. However, memorization is acceptable for choruses,

important dialogue, well structured beginnings and endings, and rhymes. If you memorize the piece, the audience will pick up its artificiality.

Instead of memorizing the script, try to imagine it through images in your mind. The pictures will help in the retelling of the piece.

Practice in front of a mirror to observe facial expressions and gestures. Before worrying about presentation, make sure you have a complete understanding of the storyline.

Try to create repetitions in the story or create some preferably in threes. The repetition of words or phrases will help keep the audience attuned to the story.

Variation in tone, pitch, volume, speed, rhythm, and articulations are important. Silences can also be helpful. Variety will erase any monotony to the listener.

Use gestures and mime for action if it will help express the story. Do not overdo it!

Include an introduction to your story. An introduction will help protect the copyright of the story as well as set the stage for the story without giving away the plot.

Endings should be so that the audience knows the story is over. Common endings are the following: "happily ever after," "that's the end of that," and "they never saw him again."

Characterization should be distinct. The audience should be able to tell characters apart through gestures, actions, inflection, and differences in voices.

For different characters use cross focus. Each character should be directed at a different 45 degree angle (www.aaronshelp.com/storytelling/Tell2.html).

Telling Your Story:

Do not expect your first time telling the story to be perfect. With each time you tell it, you will notice improvement.

Practice in front of a small group of people that you know. As you become familiar with

the story, you will get used to telling it in front of groups of strangers.

Before your performance, relax yourself. Also check out your performance space to ensure it is large enough and you have room for any props.

Make sure your story is personal to the audience. Do not talk at them. Project your voice.

Make eye contact with the audience. Avoid using words like, "um" and "you know"

between the sentences of the story. Be aware of your body. Do not do any nervous habits or fidget.

Pay attention to your audience and how they react to certain parts. Respond to your listeners. Make sure you go at a reasonable pace so that the audience has time to see the story unfold. Give time for your audience to laugh before going on with the rest of the story (www.aaronshelp.com/storytelling/Tell3.html).

Even though storytelling is not memorized or highly theatrical, some teachers allow students to really get into it. When a teacher does storytelling, she will probably stay true to the art. However, it is not uncommon for teachers to let students have vocal effects, memorize the script completely, wear costumes, incorporate music, and give their story a more theatrical bent (McCaslin 257). Whatever works best in the classroom and sparks enthusiasm should be used. Storytelling does offer many benefits to the art of reading such as: communication skills, recall and organization practice, vocabulary work, syntax, and diction (257).

Storytelling Scripts

The internet is a great source for finding ready made storytelling scripts to use in the classroom. However, it is just as good to use stories from the basal text. The following are some of the fables from Aesop's Fables. The internet site (www.gopher.vt.edu)

(Gopher)) offers 101 fables to use in the classroom. The following examples can be used in the classroom and can be retrieved from that site.

The Cock and the Pearl

A cock was once strutting up and down the farmyard among the hens when suddenly he spied something shining amid the straw. "Ho! Ho!" quoth he, "that's for me," and soon rooted it out from beneath the straw. What did it turn out to be, but a pearl that by some chance had been lost in the yard? "You may be a treasure," quoth Master Cock, "to men that prize you, but for me I would rather have a single barley-corn than a peck of pearls."

Precious things are for those that can prize them.

The Wolf and the Lamb

Once upon a time a wolf was lapping at a spring on a hillside, when, looking up, what should he see but a lamb just beginning to drink a little lower down. "There's my supper," thought he, "if only I can find some excuse to seize it." Then he called out to the lamb, "How dare you muddle the water from which I am drinking?"

"Nay, master, nay," said Lambikin. "If the water be muddy up there, I cannot be the cause of it, for it runs down from you to me."

"Well, then," said the wolf, "why did you call me bad names this time last year?"

"This cannot be," said the lamb. "I am only six months old."

"I don't care," snarled the wolf, "if it was not you it was your father." And with that he rushed upon the poor little lamb and WARRA WARRA WARRA WARRA WARRA ate her all up. But before she died she gasped out, "Any excuse will serve a tyrant."

The Dog and the Shadow

It happened that a dog had got a piece of meat and was carrying it home in his mouth to eat it in peace. Now on his way home he had to cross a plank lying across a running brook. As he crossed, he looked down and saw his own shadow reflected in the water beneath. Thinking it was another dog with another piece of meat, he made up his mind to have that also. So he made a snap at the shadow in the water, but as he opened his mouth the piece of meat fell out, dropped into the water and was never seen more.

Beware lest you lose the substance by grasping at the shadow.

The Lion's Share

The lion went once a-hunting along with the fox, the jackal, and the wolf. They hunted till at last they surprised a stag, and soon took its life. Then came the question how the spoil should be divided. "Quarter me this stag," roared the lion. So the other animals skinned it and cut it into four parts. Then the lion took his stand in front of the carcass and pronounced judgment: "The first quarter is for me in my capacity as King of Beasts; the second is mine as arbiter; another share comes to me for my part in the chase; and as for the fourth quarter, well, as for that, I should like to see which of you will dare lay a paw upon it."

"Humph," grumbled the fox as he walked away with his tail between his legs, but he spoke in a low growl, "You may share the labours of the great, but you will not share the spoil."

The Man and the Serpent

A countryman's son by accident trod upon a serpent's tail, which turned and bit him so that he died. The father in a rage got his axe, and pursuing the serpent, cut off part of its tail. So the serpent in revenge began stinging several of the farmer's cattle and caused him severe loss. Well, the farmer thought it best to make it up with the serpent, and brought food and honey to the mouth of its lair, and said to it: "Let's forget and forgive; perhaps you were right to punish my son, and take vengeance on my cattle, but surely I was right in trying to revenge him. Now that we are both satisfied why should not we be friends again?"

"No, no," said the serpent, "take away your gifts; you can never forget the death of your son, nor I the loss of my tail."

Injuries may be forgiven, but not forgotten.

The Fox and the Crow

A fox once saw a crow fly off with a piece of cheese in its beak and settle on a branch of a tree. "That's for me, as I am a fox," said Master Reynard, and he walked up to the foot of the tree. "Good-day, Mistress Crow," he cried. "How well you are looking today; how glossy your feathers; how bright your eye. I feel sure your voice must surpass that of other birds, just as your figure does; let me hear but one song from you that I may greet you as the Queen of Birds." The crow lifted up her head and began to caw her best, but the moment she opened her mouth the piece of cheese fell to the ground, only to be snapped up by the Master Fox. "That will do," said he. "that was all I wanted. In exchange for your cheese I will give you a piece of advice for the future:

Do not trust flatterers."

As mentioned before, the internet has several texts that are appropriate for children. Not only are fables a good source for storytelling, but fairy tales are as well. The following is an example of the well known fairy tale Beauty and the Beast.

Once upon a time . . . as a merchant set off for market, he asked each of his three daughters what she would like as a present on his return. The first daughter wanted a brocade dress, the second a pearl necklace, but the third, whose name was Beauty, the youngest, prettiest and sweetest of them all, said to her father:

"All I'd like is a rose you've picked especially for me!"

When the merchant had finished his business, he set off for home. However, a sudden storm blew up, and his horse could hardly make headway in the howling gale. Cold and weary, the merchant had lost all hope of reaching an inn when he suddenly noticed a bright light shining in the middle of a wood. As he drew near, he saw that it was a castle, bathed in light.

"I hope I'll find shelter there for the night," he said to himself. When he reached the door, he saw it was open, but though he shouted, nobody came to greet him. Plucking up courage, he went inside, still calling out to attract attention. On a table in the main hall, a

splendid dinner lay already served. The merchant lingered, still shouting for the owner of the castle. But no one came, and so the starving merchant sat down to a hearty meal.

Over come by curiosity, he ventured upstairs, where the corridor led into magnificent rooms and halls. A fire crackled in the first room and a soft bed looked very inviting. It was now late, and the merchant could not resist. He lay down on the bed and fell fast asleep. When he woke the next morning, an unknown hand had placed a mug of steaming coffee and some fruit by his bedside.

The merchant had breakfast and after tidying himself up, went downstairs to thank his generous host. But, as on the evening before, there was nobody in sight. Shaking his head in wonder at the strangeness of it all, he went towards the garden where he had left his horse, tethered to a tree. Suddenly, a large rose bush caught his eye.

Remembering his promise to Beauty, he bent down to pick a rose. Instantly, out of the rose garden, sprang a horrible beast, wearing splendid clothes. Two bloodshot eyes, gleaming angrily, glared at him and a deep, terrifying voice growled: "Ungrateful man! I gave you shelter, you ate at my table and slept in my own bed, but now all the thanks I get is the theft of my favorite flowers! I shall put you to death for this slight!" Trembling with fear, the merchant fell on his knees before the Beast.

"Forgive me! Forgive me! Don't kill me! I'll do anything you say! The rose wasn't for me, it was for my daughter Beauty. I promised to bring her back a rose from my journey!" The Beast dropped the paw it had clamped on the unhappy merchant.

"I shall spare your life, but on one condition, that you bring me your daughter!" The terror-stricken merchant, faced with certain death if he did not obey, promised that he would do so. When he reached home in tears, his three daughters ran to greet him. After he had told them of his dreadful adventure, Beauty put his mind at rest immediately.

"Dear father, I'd do anything for you! Don't worry, you'll be able to keep your promise and save your life! Take me to the castle. I'll stay there in your place!" The merchant hugged his daughter.

"I never did doubt your love for me. For the moment I can only thank you for saving my life." So Beauty was led to the castle. The Beast, however, had quite an unexpected greeting for the girl. Instead of menacing doom as it had done with her father, it was surprisingly pleasant.

In the beginning, Beauty was frightened of the Beast, and shuddered at the sight of it. Then she found that, in spite of the monster's awful head, her horror of it was gradually fading as time went by. She had one of the finest rooms in the castle, and sat for hours, embroidering in front of the fire. And the Beast would sit, for hours on end, only a short distance away, silently gazing at her. Then it started to say a few kind words, till in the end, Beauty was amazed to discover that she was actually enjoying its conversation. The days passed, and Beauty and the Beast became good friends. Then one day, the Beast asked the girl to be his wife.

Taken by surprise, Beauty did not know what to say. Marry such an ugly monster? She would rather die! But she did not want to hurt the feelings of one who, after all, had been kind to her. And she remembered too that she owed it her own life as well as her father's.

"I really can't say yes," she began shakily. "I'd so much like to . . ." The Beast interrupted her with an abrupt gesture.

"I quite understand! And I'm not offended by your refusal!" Life went on as usual, and nothing further was said. One day, the Beast presented Beauty with a magnificent magic mirror. When Beauty peeped into it, she could see her family, far away.

"You won't feel so lonely now," were the words that accompanied the gift. Beauty stared for hours at her distant family. Then she began to feel worried. One day, the Beast found her weeping beside the magic mirror.

"What's wrong?" he asked, kindly as always.

"My father is gravely ill and close to dying! Oh, how I wish I could see him again, before it's too late!" But the Beast only shook its head.

"No! You will never leave this castle!" And off it stalked in a rage. However, a little later, it returned and spoke solemnly to the girl.

"If you swear that you will return here in seven days time, I'll let you go and visit your father!" Beauty threw herself at the Beast's feet in delight.

"I swear! I swear I will! How kind you are! You've made a loving daughter so happy!" In reality, the merchant had fallen ill from a broken heart at knowing his daughter was being kept prisoner. When he embraced her again, he was soon on the road to recovery. Beauty stayed beside him for hours on end, describing her life at the castle, and explaining that the Beast was really good and kind. The days flashed past, and at last the merchant was able to leave his bed. He was completely well again. Beauty was happy at last. However, she had failed to notice that seven days had gone by.

Then one night she woke from a terrible nightmare. She had dreamt that the Beast was dying and calling for her, twisting in agony.

"Come back! Come back to me!" it was pleading. The solemn promise she had made drove her to leave home immediately.

"Hurry! Hurry, good horse!" she said, whipping her steed onwards towards the castle, afraid that she might arrive too late. She rushed up the stairs, calling, but there was no reply. Her heart in her mouth, Beauty ran into the garden and there crouched the Beast, its eyes shut, as though dead. Beauty threw herself at it and hugged it tightly.

"Don't die! Don't die! I'll marry you . . ." At these words, a miracle took place. The Beast's ugly snout turned magically into the face of a handsome young man.

"How I've been longing for this moment!" he said. "I was suffering in silence, and couldn't tell my frightful secret. An evil witch turned me into a monster and only the love of a maiden willing to accept me as I was, could transform me back into my real self. My dearest! I'll be so happy if you'll marry me . . ."

The wedding took place shortly after and, from that day on, the young Prince would have nothing but roses in his gardens. And that's why, to this day, the castle is known as the Castle of the Rose

([gopher://ftp.std.com/00/obi/book/Fairy.Tales/Grimm/beauty.and.beast.txt](http://ftp.std.com/00/obi/book/Fairy.Tales/Grimm/beauty.and.beast.txt)).

Storytelling Resources

The following resources explain techniques of storytelling as well as contain scripts for use in the classroom. Again, this is just a quick start for teachers who have interest in

implementing storytelling into their curriculums. The resources by Baltuck, Clowell, Fitzgerald, Hamilton, and Ward all contain usable scripts for the classroom. Chambers and Tooze discuss storytelling in-depth, but Pellowski's book is an excellent storytelling starter.

Baltuck, Naomi. Apples from Heaven. New York: Linnet, 1995.

Bruchac, Joseph. Tell Me a Tale: A Book About Storytelling. New York: Harcourt, 1997.

Chambers, Dewey W. Storytelling and Creative Drama. Dubuque: Brown, 1970.

Colwell, Eileen, ed. A Storyteller's Choice: A Selection of Stories, with Notes on How to Tell Them. New York: Walck, 1964.

Fitzgerald, Burdette. World Tales for Creative Dramatics and Storytelling. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1962.

Hamilton, Martha and Mitch Weiss. Stories in My Pocket: Tales Kids Can Tell. New York: Fulcrum, 1996.

Pellowski, Anne. The Storytelling Handbook. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.

Tooze, Ruth. Storytelling. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1959.

Ward, Winifred. Stories to Dramatize. Anchorage: Children's Theatre, 1952.

Closing Remarks

Storytelling is a great dramatic form to introduce to your students. No matter what age you are, everyone loves to hear a story. By letting students become storytellers, they see the importance of bringing literature alive, learn literature skills as they work, and ignite a growing enthusiasm to take with them the rest of their lives. Due to its simplicity, storytelling is the easiest dramatic form to incorporate into the classroom. It can be threaded quite nicely into reading. The benefits are worth the risk, and the rewards last a

lifetime! Students have more inflection when they read, and that can make the reading experience more enjoyable for everyone in the classroom. Also, when students have to speak in front of a group, they will have much more confidence.

4. PUPPETRY

Description: Puppetry is a form of creative dramatics that can really bring literature alive!

Students are usually receptive to the idea of puppetry because of their own prior experiences. Most kids have played with dolls, and they have watched television shows which use puppets.

Not only is puppetry a wonderful way to entertain students, it can be used in the classroom as a teaching tool. Fortunately reading lends itself to puppetry performances. There are many scripts available for children to act out which can help students visualize the story. Another way puppetry is a great teaching tool is because it takes away the pressure of the students acting. Often puppetry is good for students who are shy because the focus is always on the puppet and not on the student. The following sections will include types of puppets, puppetry motion, lesson plans, puppet scripts, and resources.

Types of Puppets

The best type of puppet to use in the classroom for financial as well as manipulation reasons is the hand puppet. A variety of hand puppets such as the bandana puppet, finger puppet, paper bag puppet, flat puppet, and the sock puppet can be created and incorporated into the curriculum (McCaslin 121-125).

Bandana Puppet- Each student should have a bandana. Place the bandana over the hand. The first and middle fingers will become the head of the puppet. Place a rubber band over the fingers to create a neck. Then make the thumb and little finger the puppet's arms. Put a rubber band over them as well. In this way, the fingers can clap together as hands. Another option is to cut a hole where the head is and put a styrofoam ball as a head. This puppet is easy for children to make (McCaslin 121).

Finger Puppet- To create a finger puppet, trace a finger onto a piece of paper. Make two copies for each side of the finger. Then cut out felt over the paper pattern and sew together leaving an opening in the bottom for the finger. An easier way is to cut up old gloves and use the fingers from those. Students can decorate the faces (McCaslin 122).

Paper Bag Puppet- Buy students paper bags. The hand fits into the bag and manipulates the mouth. Decoration is the key to the paper bag puppet. It is very easy to use because students can paint, sew, draw, or glue items onto the bag for decoration (McCaslin 122).

Flat Puppet- These are puppets that are created from popsicle sticks. Students can paste cardboard, paper, or felt onto the stick to create their character. These puppets can create a nice movement behind a stage. They look like they are actually moving (McCaslin 122).

Sock Puppet- These puppets are put over the hand, and the hand manipulates it into a mouth. Decorations can be sewn on or glued on with felt. An easy drawing on the sock can be created with markers for a simple puppet (McCaslin 123-124).

A scrap box should be started in the classroom to use for decorations of puppets. These puppets are easy on the budget and require little supervision from the teacher. The more input a student has in the creation of the puppet, the more meaningful it will be.

Puppet Movement

Once the puppet is created, time must be taken to create the motion and personality of the puppet. Students are given a simple form to get them to consider the personality of the puppet such as the following:

Name _____
Sex _____
Age _____
Father's job _____
Mother's job _____

Brothers or sisters _____
Education _____
Hobbies _____
Favorite foods _____
Hateful foods _____
Intelligence _____
Physical appearance _____
Rich or poor _____
Clothing preferences _____
Likes _____
Dislikes _____
Family activities _____
Other things _____ ("Making 2).

The form can be modified by the teacher to fit the needs of the curriculum. Perhaps asking questions that lead students to delve into characterization from the story read will help them present the puppet better. It is similar to the brainstorming process in writing. Students need to consider who their character is before they can adequately create the character.

After students have considered the personality of their puppets, they should begin to experiment with movement. Students should be given guidelines on how to create movement. The following tips are offered to help students, and they came from McCaslin's Creative Drama in the Classroom:

Move its head for "yes" and "no." Have the puppet point to itself for "me" and "mine." If you wave its hand, that will imply "hello" and "goodbye."

Moving across the stage can show walking and running. It is important to not make it lift up into the air. Keep it close to the stage.

When more than one puppet is onstage, students will have to rehearse so that the puppets do not run into each other (127).

Other movement tips include the following:

Open the puppet's mouth on major syllables. Move its head to make it look realistic.

Practice in front of a mirror. Make changes as you see necessary.

Consider real people. Think about how a person would react to a similar situation. Make your puppet react as closely to that as possible. Go "people watching" in the mall to study body movements.

Finally, to emphasize certain words, move the puppets head or have it point with its hands ("Making 3-4).

After considering the puppet's movement, it is then necessary to implement a voice. The following are tips about voice that students need to consider:

Hold your puppet so it faces your audience. Do not let the audience see the back of its head.

Experiment with different voices. Make sure the voice and dialect fit the puppet. If more than one puppet is used, make sure there is a distinction between the two voices.

Speak loudly, clearly, and distinctly. Try not to mumble. Nothing is worse than an audience not being able to hear the puppets.

Practice projecting your voice to the audience. Also practice laughing and grunting so that it can be heard from a distance ("Making 3).

Once students have mastered puppetry movement and voice, implementing a lesson plan is appropriate. The teacher could use puppet scripts or create a lesson from the reading basal text. Puppetry can help to apply the concepts of characterization and symbolism while the students have fun bringing the story alive. The following lesson plan centers around characterization and symbolism.

Lesson Plan

Objectives: Students will pick a character to create a puppet from.

Students will create a flat puppet using a symbol to represent the character.

Students will use puppets to present a scene from the story.

Procedure: After students have read the story from the basal text, split them into groups.

Each group is assigned a scene to perform to the class. Students are told to pick a symbol that represents the character. If they are wealthy, it might be a dollar sign. If they have a certain physical feature which stands out, it might be that (big nose, big ears, etc.).

Students will each get a popsicle stick to make their flat puppet with the symbol they have chosen. Students will then create a cardboard stage with scenery appropriate to their scene they will present. They can create the scene exactly from the text or put it into their own interpretation. Students present their scenes in chronological order of the story.

Assessment: A grade is given for participation. Furthermore, a grade is given for how well the puppet symbolizes the student's chosen character.

Lesson Plan 2

The next lesson plan involves using puppetry to exhibit a narrative poem.

Objectives: Students will create puppets that represent parts or characters in the poem(s).

Students will present poem(s).

Procedure: Students read a collection of poetry or a narrative poem. Students can make puppets of their choice to represent characters or symbols in the piece. Students need to select a narrator from their group to read the poem in dramatic form. The students who have puppets then must improvise their actions to match the poem. They do not have speaking roles. The narrator must use his skills from storytelling to create different voices

and to tell the story in an entertaining manner. By not requiring the puppets to speak, this allows more timid students to participate. Students should have at least two class periods to rehearse their presentation.

Assessment: There are several aspects of drama to consider such as puppetry, storytelling, and improvisation. A grade is given as a group and individually.

Scripts

Often the basal text does not have enticing stories that students enjoy. The following scripts are examples of the kinds of stories available in puppetry script books. These two stories were used in a middle school classroom and were very enjoyable as well as effective. Students can present the scripts in groups. It is very interesting to observe the many different interpretations and presentations.

The Talking Cat (A French Canadian Folktale)

Characters:

Tante Odette, an old woman

Chouchou, her cat

Pierre, a workman

Georges, his friend

There is an old woman, who is fooled into believing that her cat can speak. Tante Odette lives alone on her farm, deep in the Canadian woods. She is careful and thrifty, always keeping a pot of soup on the stove for herself and her old gray cat, Chouchou. She takes good care of her small farm. But as the years go by, she sometimes complains that the work is becoming too much for her. She talks to Chouchou about the chores that have to be done and how she must save her money for later. Often she says to him, "How I wish you could talk, Chouchou. Then I should not be so lonely."

One evening as Tante Odette is sitting by the fire there is a knock at the door. When she opens it, she sees a man in workman's clothes with a red sash tied around his waist.

"I am looking for work," he says politely, "If you can give me some chores, all I ask is a bowl of soup and a night's sleep in your barn."

"Go away," says Tante Odette. "I do not need anyone to help me. Besides, I have only enough soup for myself."

Just as she is about to close the door in his face, an amazing thing happens. Chouchou speaks! "Wait a minute," he says. "You are getting older, and it would be a

good idea to have a strong young man on the place."

Tante Odette can't believe her ears. She looks at the man; then she looks at the cat. "Well, if you think so, Chouchou."

"I certainly do," says the cat. "Ask him to come in and join us in a bowl of soup."

The old woman invites the man in and asks him to supper. "It's only cabbage soup and bread, but we like it."

The man thanks her. When he has finished his supper, he tells her tales of his travels and the different places he has worked. But he says that now he would rather stay in one place, even though he wouldn't make any money. He tells her his name is Pierre. As time goes on both the old woman and Chouchou become very fond of him.

One day Chouchou says to Tante Odette, "Why don't you give Pierre meat and cakes? He works hard. I'm sure he gets very hungry."

"But we have no meat," she replies.

"Then let him go to the store in the town and buy some meat. He will not waste your money."

Pierre appears in the doorway. "I heard what your cat said just now. He's very wise. Let me strike a good bargain."

The old woman goes to a chest of drawers and takes out some money. "Mind you don't waste it," she tells Pierre.

When Pierre has gone, she turns to Chouchou. "How is it that you never spoke in all the years that I've had you and now you are giving me advice?"

But as always, when they are alone, Chouchou says nothing.

The next day when they finish their dinner of meat and cakes, Pierre is in a very good mood and Tante Odette says that she has never enjoyed a meal so much! "Why don't you let Pierre move into the house?" asks the cat.

"What?" says the old woman.

"Winter is coming and it will soon be cold in the barn. We have plenty of room inside."

Pierre says that he would like this very much. And so he moves in.

A few weeks later when the old woman is alone in the house, there is a knock at the door. She opens it and to her surprise, she sees a working man standing there. He is wearing a red sash just like Pierre's.

"Have you seen a workman who calls himself Pierre?" the newcomer asks.

"A man by that name works for me," the old woman says.

"Is he a good worker?"

"A very good worker," she says; and she tells of all the things Pierre can do.

"It certainly sounds like the same man. One more thing, can he throw his voice? Is he a ventriloquist?"

"Throw his voice? Oh, no! I could not stand having anyone around who did that."

"Then it can't be the same person," says the man, as he turns to go.

At this moment Pierre comes to the door. "Georges!" he shouts, "My old friend!"

"Pierre! I've been searching for you everywhere. I want you to go with me to get furs. You know they pay good money for furs in the city. How about it?"

Pierre thinks for a moment. "If I go with you, I'll make money, but it will be cold. If I stay here, I have a good job, food, and a warm place to sleep. What shall I do,

Chouchou? You're a wise cat."

"Stay here," the cat answers. Then the cat turns to the old woman. "Why don't we pay him some wages? You have money in the chest. Surely he's worth a few pieces of gold."

The old woman doesn't know what to do. Finally she says, "Very well. I can give you a small wage, if you'll stay."

"Good!" says Pierre. "Then I'll stay." He says goodbye to his friend and walks with him down the road.

The old woman looks at Chouchou. "I don't believe he throws his voice, do you?"

There was no answer. She stares at Chouchou, who says nothing as usual.

Just then Pierre returns. "It will be a much better winter for me here than in the north woods. And I can earn money at the same time, thanks to your cat."

The cat bows and speaks.

"That's all right, Pierre. Fair is fair." Then Chouchou looks at the old woman.

"Well, we may as well sit down at the table and celebrate the way it has all worked out" (McCaslin 130-132).

The Fisherman and His Wife

Characters:

The Fisherman

His Wife

The Flounder

A poor Fisherman lives with his wife in a cottage by the sea. Every day he goes down to the shore to catch a fish for their supper. When his luck is good, he has enough fish to sell to their neighbors. One morning the Fisherman goes out as usual and sits down in his favorite fishing spot. Suddenly there is a tug on his line. He pulls and he pulls.

"What have I caught?" asks the Fisherman. he gives another tug on his line and up comes the biggest flounder he has ever seen.

Then to his amazement, the fish speaks. "Please let me go. I have done you no harm."

The Fisherman can't believe his ears. "You can talk? I have never heard of a fish that could talk."

"I was once a prince," says the Flounder sadly. "An evil spell was put on me, and I am doomed to spend the rest of my life as a fish."

"I am sorry if I've hurt you," says the Fisherman, taking the hook from the fish. "Go back to your home in the sea."

"Oh, thank you," the Flounder says. "You have saved my life. If I can ever do anything for you, call on me. I'm never far away."

The Fisherman promises the Flounder that he will do so. Then, eager to tell his wife about his strange adventure, he packs up and goes home. When he has finished his tale, his wife scolds him for his stupidity. "That's just like you! Why didn't you ask him for a nice house and some food for our dinner? He was a magic fish, and you let him go."

"I'm sorry, wife," says the Fisherman. "I didn't think of it."

"Well, go back down to the sea and ask for a house like our neighbor's, with enough food to last us a year."

"Very well," replies the Fisherman. So he goes down to the place where he had

caught the Flounder and calls out:

"Oh, fish of the sea,
come listen to me.
For my wife, my wife, the plague of my life,
Has sent me to ask a boon of thee."

Scarcely does he finish when the Flounder appears.

"What can I do for you?" the fish asks politely.

The Fisherman tells him.

"No sooner asked than granted," says the fish. "Go home and you will find a house like your neighbor's."

The Fisherman hurries home, and there is a beautiful stone house where his little cottage had been. His wife appears at the door, delighted with their good fortune.

For a time the Fisherman and his wife live happily. Then one morning his wife, who is always discontented, says, "I don't know why you asked for this house. I should like a castle with servants to wait on me."

"This house is plenty good enough," says her husband.

"No," she replies, "Go back and tell the fish I must have castle."

The Fisherman doesn't want to do her bidding, but at last he agrees. He goes down to the sea and again calls out:

"Oh, fish of the sea,
come listen to me.
For my wife, my wife, the plague of my life,
Has sent me to ask a boon of thee."

In a flash the Flounder appears. "Nothing easier," he says, after the Fisherman explains the matter to him. "Go home to your castle."

Then the Flounder disappears and the Fisherman returns home. Instead of the stone house, there is a great castle with towers and walls surrounding it. His wife is overjoyed. But after a time, she again becomes discontented.

She sends her husband back to the Flounder many times. She wants to be the richest woman in the world. Then a Queen. Next, an Empress. And finally, Goddess of the Universe. Each time her husband begs her to be content with what they have, but she will not listen. And each time the fish grants her wish-until the last one.

"What is it now?" the Flounder asks the Fisherman.

"Oh, gracious Flounder," replies the Fisherman, "my wife wants to be Goddess of the Universe."

"Never!" declares the Flounder angrily. "I will grant no more wishes. Your wife can return to her cottage."

There is a loud noise like a clap of thunder and the fish disappears. Then the Fisherman goes home, where he finds his wife in the doorway of their humble cottage (McCaslin 132-134).

Resources

The following are a list of books to get started on implementing puppetry into the classroom. The books by Boylan and Huber offer scripts like the two samples above to

use instead of the basal text. For learning different puppet styles as well as puppetry techniques consider the sources by Cummings, Jagendorf, and Luskin.

Boylan, Eleanor. Puppet Plays for Special Days. Rowayton: New Plays, 1976.

Cummings, Richard. 101 Hand Puppets: A Guide for Puppeteers of All Ages. New York: McKay, 1962.

Huber, M.B. Story and Verse for Children. New York: Macmillan Company, 1940.

Jagendorf, Moritz. Puppets for Beginners. Boston: Plays, 1952.

Luskin, Joyce. Easy to Make Puppets. Boston: Plays, 1975.

Closing Remarks

Puppetry is a stimulating way to incorporate drama into the reading classroom. It is attractive to the artistic side of some students as well. There are many benefits from using puppetry besides bringing drama and art into the classroom. Puppetry requires the use of imagination. Not only must students imagine what their puppet will look like physically, they also must create a personality. Manual manipulation skills required for the construction of puppets will improve motor skills. In that regard, puppetry is both physical and imaginative for the student. Finally, puppetry is an outlet for expression that can make the classroom climate a more comfortable place for learning.

5. PANTOMIME

Description: Pantomime is the act of showing ideas through action instead of words. It is very similar to playing charades, so most students understand the concept without much instruction and enjoy it. Pantomime appeals to the middle school adolescent because it allows whole body expression and movement but eliminated dialogue (McCaslin 66). It is the most basic aspect of creative dramatics and a foundation for all other skills. Free of anxiety about speaking, students feel more at ease in performing. However, it is recommended that the whole class works at one time versus individualized performance in front of the class (66). Not only does this reduce the anxiety of more timid students, but pantomime is also a successful activity for students who have speech impairment or are non-English speaking (66).

The minimal amount of time it takes to implement pantomime into the curriculum is well worth the effort. To increase chances of initial success, teach students in short time frames and build from simple to more elaborate exercises. As far as space is concerned, chairs should be pushed to the side of the classroom for movement. Always make sure there are established boundaries so that the activities do not become chaotic.

Pantomime is relatively easy to prepare from the standpoint of the teacher. One does not need scripts, only well planned activities and an imagination are required. The following sections will present activities from simple to complex, lesson plans, and resources to further investigate pantomime.

Activities

Before introducing pantomime, the teacher must stimulate students' imaginations, visualizations, and observational skills. There are some recommended activities to help

unlock these skills as well as develop them. The following activities are examples of how to prep your students for pantomime.

To Develop Imagination

Call seven students to the center of the room. Hand a student an object and tell him it is the most beautiful bracelet he has ever seen. The student will then handle it, look at it, react to it, and then pass it on to the next student. The other students must guess what the object is based on the pantomime of the student before. Come up with several different activities for students to try and guess the object (McCaslin 67).

To Develop Concentration

Students may not be used to holding the image or staying in the pantomime. Have students pretend to look for a lost ring. Then the next time around tell them the ring is really lost. Compare between the two acts. What was different from pretending to look and actually looking? Other group exercises to increase concentration are the following:

Watching a plane come in
Looking at a funny movie
Smelling smoke in the woods
Listening for the lunch bell to ring (McCaslin 69).

At this point, students should be prepared to begin pantomime exercises. The following are scenarios to be used and modified by the teacher. The first set of activities are group ones. Each group is assigned the same one to see how differently they interpret them, or each group is assigned a distinct activity.

1. You are a group of people waiting for a bus on a city street. Each one of you will think of someone special to be: an elderly woman going to see her grandchildren, a businessman late for work, a girl on her way to high school, a blind man who needs help getting on the right bus, a young man beginning a new job, etc.
2. You are pilgrims who have gone to a shrine where, once a year, one wish is said to be granted. Decide who you are and what it is you want. You might be a crippled man who

wants to walk again, a poet who wants very much to have her work published, a young mother who wants her sick baby to be cured. The teacher may wish to play with the group and be the statue at the shrine who indicates which wish is to be granted.

3. You are the people in a bus terminal. Some of you are going on trips, others returning; still others are meeting friends or relatives. There may be a porter, a woman selling tickets, and a man selling newspapers and magazines (McCaslin 76).

4. Animal Tag. The players move around like whatever animal "it" calls out. Each new "it" calls out a different animal. Anyone not acting like the animal named automatically becomes "it" (Cottrell 132).

As students become more confident, have them individually do pantomime. It is best if students face the wall and do not look at each other. In this way, they are all doing the piece individually while in a group. Students should close their eyes so they are not self-conscious about their movements and others' movements. As they gain self-esteem and confidence, they can then perform for the class. The following are examples of individual pantomime exercises:

1. Eating a taffy apple
2. Waking up to the smell of breakfast
3. Building a snowman
4. Wrapping a gift
5. Practicing a trick on ice
6. Climbing a tree
7. Carving a pumpkin
8. Reading a book
9. Awakening to the sound of a fire siren
10. Trying to locate a missing hamster (Cottrell 125-127).

These activities are only starting points for teachers and students. They can be tried individually or in the front of the class. Students should do an activity with their eyes closed and then perform it for the class. The presentations can be critiqued by the students followed by a discussion on the possibilities of different ways of performance. Pantomime activities can be incorporated into full fledged lessons. The following lesson plan is from Dramakinetics in the Classroom.

Lesson Plan

Objective: Students will become aware of all the ways special role-characters move and speak.

Terms to Know: Characterize- to create a person or thing different from oneself.

Background: Characterization is basic in creating plays; for a play is always concerned with characters. Now is the time to introduce characterization, for the children are able to express themselves freely and confidently in rhythmic movement.

When a child characterizes he takes on a new role. The beginning experience should be limited to creating one or two characterizations.

Material selected for characterizations should meet the following basic requirements:

1. Characterizations should be well-defined and essentially true.
2. They should be involved in a situation which appeals to children.
3. They should be far removed from a child in age and characteristics.

Children enjoy creating characterizations that encourage the use of the whole body.

Before the teacher starts on exercises for characterization, she should examine the different elements that make up any character portrayal.

1. Physical Characteristics- general appearance: sex, age, height, weight, hair, eyes, posture, gestures, movement, clothes
2. Background Characteristics- social life, occupation, education, home life, nationality, interests, place in the community
3. Inner Characteristics- temperament, attitudes, complexes, drives; e.g., character may be innately shy, sensitive, highly imaginative, hard to please, domineering, excitable

In guiding young children through the study of characterization, the teacher should again emphasize the need for observation. The basic mode is to watch people and then to act out the particular movements.

Presentation:

Teacher: "Who can tell me what this is a picture of?" (Teacher could be holding a picture of a king, queen, clown, etc.)

Guided Activities:

1. Teacher shows pictures of:

Kings	Pirates
Queens	Cowboys
Giants	Show People (carnival, circus)
Elves	Witches
Clowns	Ghosts

Children discuss characteristics and identifying gestures and possible voice tones.

2. Children imitate characteristics and gestures and voices.
3. Activity pantomime

Activity Pantomime:

The teacher reads the following poem to the children. She should read it several times until she is sure the children are familiar with the various characters. Then for the poem use the specific procedure.

Procedure: All the children spontaneously pantomime while teacher reads.

Spinning Top

By: Frank Dempster Sherman

When I spin round without a stop

And keep my balance like the top,

I find that soon the floor will swim

Before my eyes; and then, like him,

I lie all dizzy on the floor

Until I feel like spinning more (Complo 71-72).

Complo offers several poems to try with this lesson as well as reinforcement activities to use as follow up.

Resources

The following books offer many helpful suggestions about pantomime. Buford, Gray, North, and Van Tassel all present exercises and information about pantomime in the classroom. Keysell and Wethered explain more the theoretical aspects of pantomime as well as its use beyond the classroom.

Bruford, Rose. Teaching Mime. London: Methuen and Co., 1969.

Gray, Vera and Rachel Percival. Music, Movement, and Mime for Children. Oxford: Oxford, 1962.

Keysell, Pat. Motives for Mime. London: Evans, 1975.

North, Marion. Body Movement for Children. Boston: Plays Inc., 1972.

Van Tassel, Katrina and Millie Greimann. Creative Dramatization. New York: Macmillan, 1973.

Wethered, Audrey G. Drama and Movement in Therapy. London: Macdonald and Evans, 1973.

Closing Remarks

The use of pantomime in the classroom has many benefits. Pantomime truly helps

students become attuned to their bodies and how they move. It is a form of expression in and of itself. All students can perform mime without fear due to its lack of dialogue. Mime even teaches them about the power of nonverbal communication as well as making them better communicators. Pantomime is very easy to implement in the classroom and takes very little time. For the results it can produce, it is well worth the little time spent in class.

6. READER'S THEATRE

Description: Reader's theatre is a great way to get students out of their seats with minimal acting qualifications. Reader's theatre is a performance of a text using the script, pantomime, and characterization. Although there are varying ways to do the performance, the following stipulations are usually adhered to: scripts are held and used during the performance with no memorization required, costumes are minimal and uniform, no full stage sets are used, and narration is the glue that holds together the dramatic action of the dialogue ("What 1).

Reader's theatre was not originally used in lower grades. Yet, when teachers saw that it created a higher interest in reading, it became integrated into the curriculum ("What 1). Also, it is a very simple medium to use in the classroom because of its lack of props and costumes.

The lack of props and costumes leads to the only problem of generating a script. Scripts can be generated in many ways. First, there are several source books that have adapted scripts from literary works. Second, teachers can create scripts for their students from their reading texts. Modeling for students an adaptation is a good way to introduce students to a reader's theatre script. Finally, students can adapt scripts to be presented in class. By having students adapt scripts, the teacher can achieve many goals. Students scan the stories after careful reading and extract the main points to present in a reader's theatre. Furthermore, students can creatively experiment with the overall presentation. They will have to consider stage formation, characterization, costumes, and interpretation of their piece. These objectives are important because they teach reading skills as well as allow for

creative expression. Reader's theatre reinforces reading skills, creates a higher interest in reading, and is a simple but valuable dramatic form to integrate in the reading curriculum. The following sections will include a lesson plan, assignment, assessment rubric, reader's theatre tips, scripts, and resources.

Lesson Plan

The following is a lesson plan which shows how to have students create a reader's theatre presentation from their basal text as well as how to inform students to present their piece.

Objectives: Students will discuss the story as a group to ensure complete understanding. Students will analyze the story in cooperative groups.

Students will create a reader's theatre script with considerations to format and performance.

Procedure: Based on the story, split students into cooperative groups of four to six. If students need more characters, then they can borrow other group members or play multiple roles using different focal points. Since the "actors" do not look directly at each other during the performance, they can have two distinct focal points to establish different characters as well as different voices. Another way to approach this dilemma is to have the student turn his back on the audience and then turn around to let the audience know about another character.

When students are analyzing their story, they need to create a narration as their framework to hold the piece together as well as create transitions. The narrator will have a role in the production. The other roles will be comprised of key dialogue of characters.

After the students have completed the script, they will need to consider how to

stage themselves. They can position themselves in any format. They also need to consider simple costumes such as same colored tee shirts and jeans. However, costumes may not be necessary for a classroom performance. Yet, if students get really good at reader's theatre, they could perform for lower grades and costumes may need to be a consideration.

When the students begin to rehearse, they will have to establish focal points based on their reading. A focal point is a place out in the audience where the character looks at to talk to another character. This focal point will be the same for each individual character, and every different character will have a different focal point. When two characters speak to one another, they will have cross focus. If one character looks diagonal to the right focal point, then the other one will look cross focus at a diagonal to the left.

Because there is no physical interaction between characters, characterization through voice is very important. Students can experiment with different accents that are appropriate to the characters. Furthermore, instead of touching characters to show movement, pantomime will be used to imply movement between characters. Pantomime can be timed by using certain words from the script to cue the students into when to create movement. In this manner, physical interaction can occur without actual touching.

After the teacher has given the students ample time to rehearse, they will perform for the class. It is interesting to observe the way different groups will interpret the same work. Another way to do reader's theatre is to assign the different stories in a unit to the cooperative groups. Through reader's theatre, the teacher has taught the students how to extract important points of a story, think creatively, and it is a great way to review a story and truly understand it on all levels.

A sample assignment sheet that can be given to the students as another lesson plan

is the following:

Reader's Theatre Assignment

Procedure:

The class will form groups of three or four. Each group will select six to eight minutes of prose that will be scripted into reader's theatre form, rehearsed, and performed for the rest of the class. One longer piece or several shorter pieces may be used.

Selection:

Choose prose that has only one or three major characters, ample dialogue, and descriptive exposition that can be treated as narration. Keep away from first person narratives.

Scripting:

Knowing how many readers you need to script for, find literature that supports this number of voices. Look at the amount of the narration; keeping in mind how many readers you have, decide whether or not you need multiple narrators. If you do, look for different voices, moods or qualities of the exposition that can be divided between the narrators. If the piece is too long, begin editing by removing unimportant subplots. Eliminate unimportant characters and situations too difficult to portray on stage. Lastly, reduce the tags ("he said," "she said") so that dialogue flows smoothly.

Type the script into a workable fashion with each character clearly identified, single spaced for each character, double spaced between characters. Provide a wide left margin so that the pages can be hole-punched and placed into a three-ringed binder.

Staging:

Plan your use of stage carefully so that character relationships, movements, and time/place transitions are communicated clearly. Remember, movement must be purposeful. Creative use of focus helps to define a space or environment, walking in place can imply movement, and going back to audience can effectively remove you from a scene. Creating static and moving tableaux can help show character relationships and plot situations. Experiment with using different levels, chairs and tableaux with an eye toward keeping the action accessible to the audience.

Rehearsal:

Ample class time is provided for your group to rehearse without meeting outside class, if you attend each session and meet scripting deadlines. Your absence will negatively affect your group and will weigh heavily on your grade as well as your conscience. I will be available during these rehearsals to watch as offer suggestions. Cooperation and sensitivity to others are essential for productive rehearsals. Be sure to rehearse using script binders.

Performance:

Be prepared to read on the day assigned; all groups will show their work on that day. Scripts need to be in easily handled holder, 3-ring notebooks work well. A clean copy of the final script draft must be handed in prior to performing. One evaluation sheet naming the readers and selection must be provided prior to performance. The group will be assigned one grade which each member will receive. I will only split the grade if the dynamics of the group are faulty; alert me to any problems ("Reader's 1-2).

Assessment

Assessment for reader's theatre is more subjective than grading a test. In a way, it is much like grading a paper. The teacher should develop a type of rubric to assess the students' work. One can either grade the preliminary work or the final product. An example of a final product rubric is given:

Reader's Theatre Evaluation

Piece Performed _____	
Author: _____	
Readers: _____	
Introduction	Script Use
___ Tone	___ Cue Pick-up
___ Interest	___ Flow
___ Effectiveness	___ Pacing
	___ Handling
Selection	Narration
___ Appropriateness	___ Involvement
___ Vocal Balance	___ Focus
___ Audience Engagement	___ Timing
___ Effectiveness	___ Mood
___ Script Format	
Staging	Vocal/Physical
___ Accessibility	___ Characterizations
___ Tableaux	___ Reactions
___ Movement	___ Projection/Volume
___ Relationships	___ Focus
___ Levels	___ Body Language
___ Effectiveness	___ Gesture
Performance	Key
___ Initiation	! Great
___ Transitions	+ Good
___ Dynamics	+/- Could Improve
___ Ending	- Detrimental ("SC 323 1-2).

Reader's Theatre Tips

Students will need some guidelines to effectively do reader's theatre. Teachers should make students aware of some tips as part of the learning process. The following tips on reader's theatre came from Aaron Shepard's web site:

Preparing:

Each student should highlight only their speaking part in their script.

Students should underline words in stage directions or other reader's speeches where they will be pantomiming.

Make notations in script for stressed words or pauses.

Practice reading the part out loud to determine voice characterization. Analyze how the character is feeling and present that in your tone.

After figuring out voice inflection, consider appropriate facial expressions for the character.

Rehearsing:

Script should not cover face. The audience needs to see facial expressions.

Do not just read from the script. Know your script well enough to be able to look up at the audience.

Speak clearly and enunciate each syllable.

Project your voice loudly.

Speak with expression and feeling.

Posture should remain straight unless doing something.

When there is movement, make sure to face the audience.

Stay in character even when not speaking.

Narrators should give the characters enough time to speak and act before going on in the script.

Performing:

Stop speaking if the audience is laughing at the script.

Ignore audience noises and conversations.

Don't look at audience movement.

If a mistake is made, keep going.

If something is dropped, wait until an in conspicuous time to pick it up.

Don't whisper to a reader if he forgets his part. Say his line or skip over it.

If a reader makes a mistake big or small, do not react to it. Pretend it did not happen

("Tips 1-3).

Reader's Theatre Scripts

Reader's theatre scripts can be found in various books Although to make it pertinent to the students' lives, it is advised to make scripts as a teacher from texts that the students are using. Again, having students create their own scripts is a skill worth teaching. The following are examples of scripts that can be used in class. Students could practice first using the sample scripts given and following the tips mentioned above.

The Baker's Dozen: A Saint Nicholas Tale

Narrator 1: In the Dutch colonial town later known as Albany, New York, there lived a baker, Van Amsterdam, who was as honest as he could be.

Narrator 4: Each morning, he checked and balanced his scales, and he took great care not to give his customers exactly what they paid for--not more, and not less.

Narrator 2: Van Amsterdam's shop was always busy, because people trusted him, and because he was a good baker as well. And never was the shop busier than in the days before December 6, when the Dutch celebrate Saint Nicholas Day.

Narrator 3: At that time of year, people flocked to the baker's shop to buy his fine Saint Nicholas cookies.

Narrator 1: Made of gingerbread, iced in red and white, they looked just like Saint Nicholas as the Dutch know him--

Narrator 4: tall and thin, with a high, red bishops's cap, and a long, red bishop's cloak.

Narrator 2: One Saint Nicholas Day morning, the baker was just ready for business, when the door of his shop flew open.

Narrator 3: In walked an old woman, wrapped in a long black shawl.

Woman: I have come for a dozen of your Saint Nicholas cookies.

Narrator 1: Taking a tray, Van Amsterdam counted out twelve cookies. He started to wrap them, but the woman reached out and stopped him.

Woman: I asked for a dozen. You have given me only twelve.

Baker: Madam, everyone knows that a dozen is twelve.

Woman: But I say a dozen is thirteen. Give me one more.

Narrator 4: Van Amsterdam was not a man to bear foolishness.

Baker: Madam, my customers get exactly what they pay for--not more, and not less.

Woman: Then you may keep the cookies.

Narrator 2: She turned to go, but stopped at the door.

Woman: Van Amsterdam! However honest you may be, your heart is small and your fist is tight. Fall again, mount again, learn how to count again!

Narrator 3: Then she was gone.

Narrator 1: From that day, everything went wrong in Van Amsterdam's bakery.

Narrator 4: His bread rose too high or not at all.

Narrator 2: His pies were sour or too sweet.

Narrator 3: His cakes crumbled or were chewy.

Narrator 1: His cookies were burnt or doughy.

Narrator 4: His customers soon noticed the difference. Before long, most of them were going to other bakers.

Baker: (to himself) That old woman has bewitched me. Is this how my honesty is rewarded?

Narrator 2: A year passed.

Narrator 3: The baker grew poorer and poorer.

Narrator 1: Since he sold little, he baked little, and his shelves were nearly bare. His last few customers slipped away.

Narrator 4: Finally, on the day before Saint Nicholas Day, not one customer came to Van Amsterdam's shop.

Narrator 2: At day's end, the baker sat alone, staring at his unsold Saint Nicholas cookies.

Baker: I wish Saint Nicholas could help me now.

Narrator 3: Then he closed his shop and went sadly to bed.

Narrator 1: That night, the baker had a dream. He was a boy again, one in a crowd of happy children. And there in the midst of them was Saint Nicholas himself.

Narrator 4: The bishop's white horse stood beside him, its baskets filled with gifts.

Nicholas pulled out one gift after another, and handed them to the children.

Narrator 2: But Van Amsterdam noticed something strange. No matter how many presents Nicholas passed out, there were always more to give.

Narrator 3: In fact, the more he took from the baskets, the more they seemed to hold.

Narrator 1: Then Nicholas handed a gift to Van Amsterdam. It was one of the baker's own Saint Nicholas cookies!

Narrator 4: Van Amsterdam looked up to thank him, but it was no longer Saint Nicholas standing there.

Narrator 2: Smiling down at him was the old woman with the long black shawl.

Narrator 3: Van Amsterdam awoke with a start. Moonlight shone through the half-closed shutters as he lay there, thinking.

Baker: I always give my customers exactly what they pay for--not more, and not less. But why not give more?

Narrator 1: The next morning, Saint Nicholas Day, the baker rose early.

Narrator 4: He mixed his gingerbread dough and rolled it out.
 Narrator 2: He cut the shapes and baked them.
 Narrator 3: He iced them in red and white to look just like Saint Nicholas.
 Narrator 1: And the cookies were as fine as any he had made.
 Narrator 4: Van Amsterdam had just finished, when the door flew open. In walked the old woman with the long black shawl.
 Woman: I have come for a dozen of your Saint Nicholas cookies.
 Narrator 2: In great excitement, Van Amsterdam counted out twelve cookies--
 Narrator 3: and one more.
 Baker: In this shop, from now on, a dozen is thirteen.
 Woman: (smiling) You have learned to count well. You will surely be rewarded.
 Narrator 1: She paid for the cookies and started out. But as the door swung shut, the baker's eyes seemed to play a trick on him.
 Narrator 4: He thought he glimpsed the tail end of a long red cloak.
 Narrator 2: As the old woman foretold, Van Amsterdam was rewarded. When people heard he counted thirteen as a dozen, he had more customers than ever.
 Narrator 3: In fact, Van Amsterdam grew so wealthy that the other bakers in town began doing the same.
 Narrator 1: From there, the practice spread to other towns, and at last through all the American colonies.
 Narrator 4: And this, they say, is how thirteen became the "baker's dozen"--
 Narrator 2: a custom common for over a century,
 Narrator 3: and alive in some places to this day ("The 1-6).

Three Billy Goats Gruff

Characters:

Narrator

Little Billy Goat Gruff = Little BG

Middle-Size Billy Goat Gruff = Middle BG

Big Billy Goat Gruff = Big BG

Troll

Bridge

Narrator: "Welcome to our show. The play is 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff.' "

Scene One

Narrator: Little Billy Goat Gruff sees a rickety, old bridge. On the other side of the bridge is a meadow with green, green grass and apple trees.

Little BG: "I'm the littlest billy goat. I have two big brothers. I want to go across this bridge to eat some green, green grass and apples so that I can be big like my two brothers."

Narrator: Little Billy Goat Gruff starts across the bridge.

Bridge: "Trip, trap, trip, trap, trip, trap."

Narrator: Just as the Little Billy Goat Gruff came to the middle of the bridge, and old troll popped up from under the bridge.

Troll: "Who is that walking on my bridge?"

Little BG: "It is I, Little Billy Goat Gruff."

Troll: "I'm a big, bad troll and you are on my bridge. I'm going to eat you for my lunch."
Little BG: "I just want to eat some green, green grass and apples in the meadow. Please don't eat me. I'm just a little billy goat. Wait until my brother comes along. He is much bigger than I am."

Troll: "I guess I will. Go ahead and cross the bridge."

Little BG: "Thank you very much. You ugly troll."

Troll: "What did you call me? Come back here!"

Little BG: "Bye!"

Bridge: "Trip, trap, trip, trap, trip, trap."

Narrator: Little Billy Goat Gruff ran across the bridge. He ate the green, green grass and apples. The troll went back under his bridge and went to sleep.

Scene Two

Narrator: Middle-Size Billy Goat Gruff walks up to the rickety, old bridge. He too sees the meadow with the green, green grass and apple trees.

Middle BG: "I'm the middle-size billy goat. I have a big brother and a little brother. I want to go across this bridge to eat some green, green grass and apples so that I can be big like my brother."

Narrator: Middle-size Billy Goat Gruff starts across the bridge.

Bridge: "Trip, trap, trip, trap, trip, trap."

Narrator: Just as the Middle-size Billy Goat Gruff came to the middle of the bridge, an old troll popped up from under the bridge.

Troll: "Who is that walking on my bridge?"

Middle BG: "It is I, Middle-size Billy Goat Gruff."

Troll: "I'm big, bad troll and you are on my bridge. I'm going to eat you for my lunch."

Middle BG: "I just want to eat some green, green grass and apples in the meadow. Please don't eat me. I'm just a middle-size billy goat. Wait until my brother comes along. He is much bigger than I am."

Troll: "I guess I will. Go ahead and cross the bridge."

Middle BG: "Thank you very much, you ugly troll."

Troll: "What did you say? Come back here!"

Middle BG: "Bye!"

Bridge: "Trip, trap, trip, trap, trip, trap."

Narrator: Middle-size Billy Goat Gruff ran across the bridge. He ate the green, green grass and apples. The troll went back under his bridge and went to sleep.

Scene Three

Narrator: Big Billy Goat Gruff sees the rickety, old bridge. On the other side of the bridge is a meadow with green, green grass and apple trees.

Big BG: "I'm the biggest billy goat. I have two brothers. I want to go across this bridge to eat some green, green grass and apples so I can get even bigger."

Narrator: Big Billy Goat Gruff starts across the bridge.

Bridge: "Trip, trap, trip, trap, trip, trap."

Narrator: Just as the Big Billy Goat Gruff came to the middle of the bridge, an old troll popped up from under the bridge.

Troll: "Who is that walking on my bridge?"

Big BG: "It is I, Big Billy Goat Gruff."

Troll: "I'm a big, bad troll and you are on my bridge. I'm going to eat you for lunch."
Big BG: "Come on and make my day! If you come up here, you will be going, going, gone!"

Narrator: The troll climbs onto the bridge. Big Billy Goat Gruff lowers his head and charges the troll! Big Billy Goat Gruff knocks the troll off the bridge!

Big BG: "That bully won't bother us again. I have done my job. Now, I'm going to eat that green, green grass and apples."

Bridge: "Trip, trap, trip, trap, trip, trap."

Narrator: Big Billy Goat Gruff ran across the bridge. he ate the green, green grass and apples. That mean old troll never came back to the bridge. He learned that being mean never pays ("Three 1-4).

Reader's theatre can be adapted from poetry as well. The following is an example of an adaptation that I created. Students should practice at creating scripts from different genres.

A Day in the Life of a Teacher

Vignettes based on the poetry collection Hide Your Ex-Lax Under the Wheaties by Cheryl

Miller Thurston Adapted by Joellen Weis for reader's theatre

Staging: Girl 1, Girl 2 in row 1; Boy 1, Boy 2 in row 2; Zeke in row three with Narrator behind him off to left

Narrator: 1st period

Chorus: Zeke sat

Zeke: (sighs) just sat

Girl 1: (snottily) In 8th grade English for half of one semester before he was kicked out of school for good

Chorus: Ha Ha

Chorus: Zeke sat

Zeke: (sighs deeper) just sat

Girl 2: doing no work

Boy 1: answering no questions

Boy 2: showing no interest in anything at all

Narrator: except briefly, Lauren, two rows over

Chorus: Zeke sat

Zeke: (bored) just sat

Narrator: And I was grateful because there were 32 other including

Girl 1: (tune of 12 days of x-mas) one inventive drug abuser

Boy 1 & Boy 2: two gang wannabees

Girl 2, Boy 1, & Girl 1: 3 non-readers

Chorus: And a mainstreamed special ed student who hummed all the time

Narrator: My heart tells me I should have tried to reach Zeke, but I just let him sit.

Zeke: just sit

Everyone bows heads

Staging: Claire in front with Alter ego 1 and Alter ego 2 at each side of Claire with backs to each other. LeAnn to the left and back from AE2. Teacher from back and right of AE1.

Narrator behind Claire and to the far back.

Narrator: 2nd period

Teacher: Linda!

Claire: (mumbles looking down) My name is Claire.

AE1: My underwear's itching.

AE2: My shirt has a tear.

(As AE1 and AE2 talk Claire needs to respond to their words if she can.)

Claire: Miss Fox moved me here to keep Bobby from Boomer. I'm absent on Fridays, but no one asks why.

AE1: My brother got busted.

AE2: My mom's got a tumor.

Claire: LeAnn said

LeAnn: (whispering) she's weird

Claire: She talked soft, but I heard it.

AE1: My daddy, he beats me.

AE2: I guess I deserve it.

Narrator: Miss Fox was asked, "How's that girl Claire?"

Teacher: Oh fine! No problem there!

Everyone bows heads.

Staging: Teacher stands in the middle of a circle of her students. the students face outward from the circle. Teacher has hands clasped looking up praying.

Teacher: I'm trying to make it to noon, dear Lord-- so give me strength. I can't afford to take a bat and bash it in-- the intercom I mean--and grin cackling madly, "You interrupting fiend from hell!" And save me from the kids with coughs.

Chorus: (coughs)

Teacher: Make me tough and let me shrug off stupid stuff like untied sneakers, purple hair, and kids who holler--

Chorus: That's no fair!

Teacher:--pep rallies, knuckle poppers, and kids who say they--

Chorus: babysitted

Teacher: Lord, deliver me from whiners and complainers and kids who've lost their retainers and the question--

Chorus: (whining) Do we have to turn this in?

Teacher: And make me patient, keep me sane at fire drills held in freezing rain...and maybe for a final touch you'll help me not to show my rage when someone asks...(sigh)...again...

Chorus: What page?

Everyone bows heads.

Staging: Narrator at the back with Miss Lee to her left and Mrs. Fuller to her right in the shape of a "V"

Narrator: Plan period A comparison of two teachers-Miss Lee and Mrs. Fuller

Narrator: Miss Lee's rows are straight and her cabinets are dusted. Her blotter is fresh and her shades are adjusted.

Miss Lee: (condescending) I ALWAYS have staples and Elmer's and tissues. I NEVER misplace a pass that I issue.

Narrator: Mrs. Fuller does.

Mrs. Fuller: (squirm guiltily as narrator says this)

Narrator: Miss Lee's books have covers. She hasn't lost any. Her book order forms come right to the penny.

Miss Lee: (bragging) My class in assembly is quite in control. I NEVER miscount or forget to take roll.

Mrs. Fuller: (sheepishly) I do.

Narrator: Miss Lee has a grade book that's neat not a smear. Her lesson plan book is complete for the year.

Miss Lee: My duties for playground or lunch never tire me. I never have principals trying to fire me.

Mrs. Fuller: (embarrassed) I do.

Miss Lee: I see no value in things that don't fit.

Narrator: Her warmest remarks run to--

Miss Lee: Quiet!

Narrator: And--

Miss Lee: Sit!

Narrator: She never sparks passion, excitement, or dreams. She never sees minds that are bursting their seams

Narrator: Mrs.

Mrs. Fuller & Narrator: I (Fuller) do (does).

Bows heads

Resources

The following resources were taken from Aaron Shepard's web site. This is a beginning list for the teacher who is looking for immediate sources, and it is by no means all the sources that are out there for reader's theatre. However, it is a good start. No descriptions were available for the books on this web site. Yet, the titles offer some idea of the content.

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Closing Remarks

Reader's theatre truly is a way to bring literature alive for students. They see the stories come alive through their creation. Not only is it a dramatic art, but it pulls together many literary skills as well as dramatic ones. Hopefully the excitement reader's theatre creates in the classroom will inspire students to become lifelong readers and maybe even actors. Children begin to enjoy reading , and ultimately that is what we're all in it for!

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VITA

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