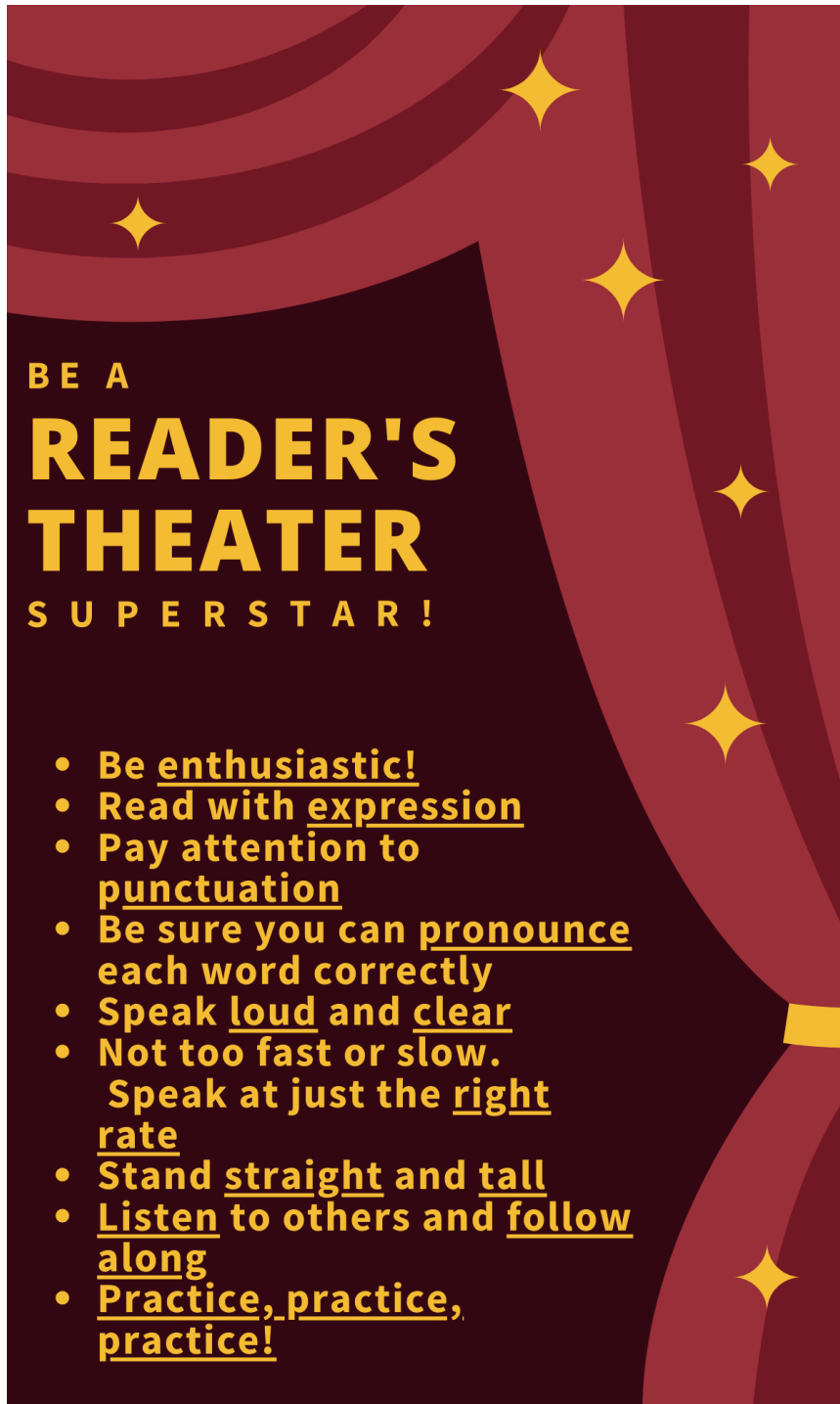


## What is Reader's Theater?

Well, it's like regular theater in its most simple form. There is no memorizing of lines – each actor holds their script throughout the performance. They convey the action and feeling of the story using their voices and bodies. It's short and scripts are based on books, folk or fairy tales, or poetry. The actors can choose to include extras like simple costumes, props, or sets, but it's not required. It can be done in a living room or on a stage – either way, it's a lot of fun!

**Be sure to stop by the library to pick up your packet with three scripts. Due to copyright reasons, we will not be including these (based on books) in our online packet.**



**BE A  
READER'S  
THEATER  
SUPERSTAR!**

- **Be enthusiastic!**
- **Read with expression**
- **Pay attention to punctuation**
- **Be sure you can pronounce each word correctly**
- **Speak loud and clear**
- **Not too fast or slow. Speak at just the right rate**
- **Stand straight and tall**
- **Listen to others and follow along**
- **Practice, practice, practice!**

To check out our Reader's Theater video tutorial, visit the Mooresville Public Library's Virtual Program page <https://tinyurl.com/mplvirtual>

# Reader's Theater Tips and Tricks

Courtesy Aaron Shepard via his website: <http://www.aaronsherp.com/rt/Tips3.html>

## Preparing

- Highlight your part in your copy of the script. Mark only words you will *spea*k—not the identifying role tags or the stage directions.
- Underline the words that tell about anything you'll need to act out—words in either the stage directions or *othe*r readers' speeches. If you're given extra stage directions later, write them in the margin in *pencil*.
- Read through your part silently. If there are words you don't understand or aren't sure how to pronounce, look them up in a dictionary or ask someone who knows. If there are words you must remember to stress, underline them. If there are places you'll need to pause between sentences, mark them with a couple of slashes ( // ). For instance, a narrator must sometimes pause to help the audience know there's a change of scene or time.
- Read through your part out loud. If you're a character, think about how that character would sound. Should you try a funny voice? How would the character feel about what's happening in the story? Can you speak as if you were feeling that?
- Stand up and read through the script again. If you're a character, try out faces and movements. Would your character stand or move in a special way? Can you do that? If possible, try all this in front of a mirror.

## Rehearsing

- Hold your script at a steady height, but make sure it doesn't hide your face. If there's anyone you can't see in the front row of the audience, your script is too high.
- While you speak, try to look up often, not just at your script. When you do look down at it, keep your head up and move just your eyes.
- S-l-o-w d-o-w-n. Say each syl-la-ble clear-ly.
- TALK LOUD! You have to be heard by the person in the back row.
- *Spea*k with *feeling*. Audiences love a ham!
- Stand and sit straight. Keep your hands and feet still, if they're not helping your acting!
- Face the audience as much as you can, whether you're moving or standing still. If you're rehearsing without an audience, pretend it's there anyway and remember where it is.
- Narrators, you're important even when the audience isn't looking at you. You control the story! Be sure to give the characters enough time to do what they must. And remember that you're talking to the audience, not yourself.
- Characters, you give the story its life! Remember to *be* your character even when you're not speaking, and be sure to react to the other characters.

## Performing

- If the audience laughs, stop speaking till they can hear you again.
- If someone talks in the audience, don't pay attention.
- If someone walks into the room, don't look.
- If you make a mistake, pretend it was right.
- If you drop something, try to leave it at least till the audience is looking somewhere else.
- If a reader forgets to read, see if you can read their part instead, or make something up, or maybe just skip over it. But *don't* whisper or signal to the reader!
- If a reader falls, pretend they didn't

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