

PARENT GUIDE SERIES

# Putting on a Show

Reader's Theatre and poetry performances at home



## For Parents & Caregivers

Dr. Chase Young · LiTerrific Reading  
lfcreading.com · thebestclass.org

## Why Performance Builds Readers

When children prepare to read aloud for an audience, something powerful happens: they want to re-read. They practice because they don't want to stumble. This is Reader's Theatre — one of the most effective ways to build fluency. No costumes. No memorization. No stage. Just scripts, practice, and an audience.

## Reader's Theatre at Home

Search "free Reader's Theatre scripts" online, or make your own by rewriting a favorite story into dialogue. [thebestclass.org](http://thebestclass.org) has free scripts. Nursery rhymes work great for younger children.

## A Simple Weekly Schedule

Day	Activity	Time
Day 1	Read through the script together. Assign parts.	10 min
Day 2	Practice reading parts. Help with tricky words.	10 min
Day 3	Focus on expression. How would this character sound?	10 min
Day 4	Full run-through. Add simple staging.	15 min
Day 5	Perform! Invite family or video call grandparents.	15 min

## Poetry at Home

### Poetry Slams

Let your child choose a poem they love. Practice for a few days, then host a living room poetry slam. Dim the lights, snap instead of clap.

### Silly Sentences & Chants

Choral reading works great with rhythmic text. Try: 'Cinnamon, aluminum, linoleum' three times fast. Children love the challenge.

**Teddy Talks:** Help your child research 3–5 fun facts about something they love. They prepare a short talk and present to the family. Fun fact: "In Blythe, California, you're only permitted to wear cowboy boots if you own at least two cows."

## Tips for a Great Home Performance

- Be an enthusiastic audience — clap, cheer, ask for an encore
- Record performances so your child can watch themselves improve
- Invite extended family in person or over video call
- Let your child pick the material — ownership = motivation
- Perform with them. Parents reading dramatically is modeling at its best