

# IMPACTFUL ACTING: INCORPORATING READER'S THEATRE INTO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM



## WHAT IS READER'S THEATRE?

Reader's Theatre is a strategy used in education in which students read books aloud in a performance setting to practice their fluency skills, though it can also be used to promote reading comprehension, and to expose children to new vocabulary. The aspect of performance introduces the students to public speaking opportunities, helping them to gain confidence in this area from an early age.

"I LIKE WHEN WE DO READER'S THEATRE DURING LANGUAGE ARTS BECAUSE IT IS FUN TO PERFORM IN FRONT OF MY FRIENDS"

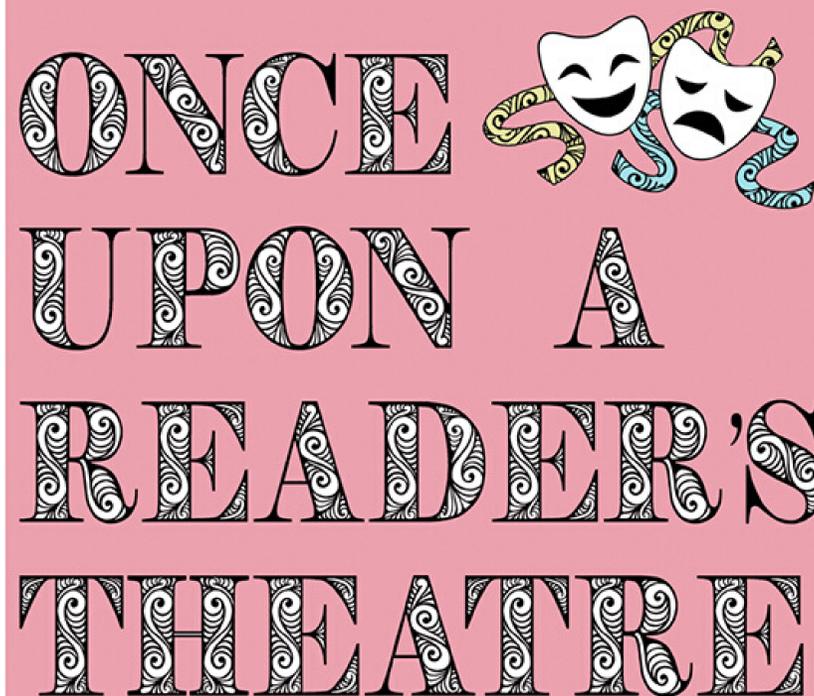
- Carmella, Second Grade Student

## THE PROJECT

I have created a book of scripts titled Once Upon a Reader's Theatre, that features adapted texts from children's literature into a performance format. Each script fits into one of five main genres of children's literature, Traditional Literature, Historical Fiction, Realistic Fiction, Nonfiction, and Fantasy, and includes a list of the PA State Standards that each script falls under during implementation.

## YOUNG PERFORMERS

Young Performers is an after school program at Kutztown Elementary School in which college students direct plays with children in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade, for a class credit. The program meets every Monday and Wednesday from 3:30-5:00 and lasts approximately eight weeks. The program culminates with a final performance before the school and the community. My role in this program was as a Teacher's Assistant in the college level-course. This allowed me to provide one of my scripts to be implemented during the program, in addition to helping to facilitate each group's performance.



Written by Abigail Greco

## IMPLEMENTATION

Reader's Theatre has already proven to be a useful classroom strategy. My research now is focusing on the social benefits of implementing this educational tool. This program brings together children between the ages of five and ten, unlike the traditional classroom.

This age range of the students has provided mentorships between the students that does not occur during most school experiences. Oftentimes, at rehearsals, the older children will help the younger students who have yet to learn how to read, or who lack the confidence to read in front of other people. Not only is the program creating learning opportunities, but it is also forging positive friendships between children who may not interact otherwise.

There are quite a few children who were extremely nervous to stand in front of their peers on the first day of rehearsal. Throughout the process, these children have gained more confidence and are much more comfortable performing in front of their friends, and ultimately, the audience. This gives them the life skill of being comfortable with public speaking early on in their education.