



Reader's
Theater:

The Best
Christmas
Gift



Characters

- Narrator
- Sophie (thoughtful, loves making gifts, and loves painting)
- Grace (Sophie's best friend, excited about Christmas)
- Charlie (Grace's brother, loves toy trains but values friendship even more)
- Ethan (Charlie's friend, loves to make people laugh)
- Mrs. Lopez (the kind and wise neighbor)

Optional Props:

1. Sophie: Paintbrush or small palette
2. Charlie: Toy train or train set piece
3. Grace: Christmas ornaments or decorative items
4. Ethan: Snow globe (real or handmade)
5. Paint set (for Sophie)
6. Toy train (Charlie's gift trade)
7. Wooden shelf (for Charlie's train set)
8. Christmas tree (small, decorated)
9. Ornaments and paper snowflakes
10. Wrapped gift boxes
11. Hot cocoa mugs
12. Plate of cookies for Mrs. Lopez's scene
13. Christmas lights to string in the background
14. Holiday table setting with napkins or tablecloth

Narrator:

It's Christmas Eve in the small town of Pine Grove, and excitement is in the air. Sophie, Grace, Charlie, and Ethan are ready to exchange gifts, but this Christmas will be different. Sophie and Charlie have both made sacrifices to make sure they give the perfect gift—without realizing that their thoughtful trades are connected in a surprising way!

(Scene: Sophie and Grace are sitting by the Christmas tree in Sophie's living room, chatting as they wrap presents.)

Sophie:

(Smiling) I can't wait for tomorrow, Grace. I finally finished the shelf I made for Charlie's trains. He's always running out of space for them.

Grace:

(Laughing) He does have a LOT of trains. He's going to love that! But... what did you have to give up to make it?

Sophie:

(Shrugs) Well... I traded my paint set to get the wood for the shelf. It's okay, though. Charlie's my friend, and I know he'll really appreciate it.

Grace:

(Surprised) You gave up your paints? You love painting! What will you do without them?

Sophie:

(Smiling warmly) I figure it out. Christmas is about giving, right?

Narrator:

Meanwhile in the next room, Charlie is talking with Ethan about the gift he's gotten for Sophie.

Charlie:

(Excited) I traded one of my toy trains to get Sophie a brand-new paint set. She's always talking about how she needs more paints. It was hard to part with one of my favorite trains, but it'll be worth it when she sees her gift.

Ethan:

(Laughing) You traded your train for paints? That's a great gift for Sophie, but... didn't she just make you a shelf for your trains?

Charlie:

(Confused) A shelf? Really? Well, I guess I won't need it as much now, but I can still use it for the rest of my trains. Sophie loves painting, so I know she'll be happy with the paints.

Narrator:

Both Sophie and Charlie have made thoughtful trades to get gifts for each other, without realizing they traded the very things they valued most—Charlie's train and Sophie's hints! But what will happen when they exchange gifts?

(Scene shifts to Mrs. Lopez's house, where the friends are gathering for their annual Christmas Eve party.)

Mrs. Lopez:

(Smiling) Merry Christmas everyone! I see some very excited faces. But before we exchange gifts, I'd like to share a story with you.

Narrator:

The friends sit down to listen to Mrs. Lopez, who has a knowing smile on her face.

Mrs. Lopez:

There once were two friends who wanted to give each other the perfect Christmas gift. They both made sacrifices to get something they knew the other would love. One gave up their most prized possession to get something meaningful for their friend. But when they exchanged gifts, they realized they had traded what they loved most for something that could help the other enjoy it even more.

Grace:

(Smiling) That sounds a lot like Sophie and Charlie!

Charlie:

(Laughing) Yeah, Sophie's giving me a shelf for my trains, and I traded one of my trains for her paints!

Sophie:

(Laughing) And I traded my paints to get the wheels for your shelf, Charlie.

Narrator:

They all look at each other, realizing the sweet irony of the situation. They each gave up something they loved to make their friend happy.

Ethan:

(Teasing) Well, looks like you two need to start a new hobby!

Charlie:

(Grinning) Hey, I still have plenty of trains left to use that shelf. And Sophie, now you've got new paints to replace the ones you traded!

Sophie:

(Smiling) It's funny how it all worked out. But you know what? The best part isn't the gifts themselves—it's knowing we were both thinking about each other.

Mrs. Lopez:

(Nods) That's exactly the spirit of Christmas. It's not about the gifts, but about the love and thought behind them.

Narrator:

The friends laugh and enjoy their time together, grateful for each other and the thoughtful gifts they've exchanged. They realize that sometimes, the best gifts are the ones that come from the heart—even if you have to make a little trade to get there.

Name: _____

Date: _____

What sacrifices did Sophie and Charlie make to give each other their gifts?

How did the friends feel after they realized the connection between their gifts?

What did Mrs. Lopez's story teach the friends about giving?

Sophie



Grace



Charlie



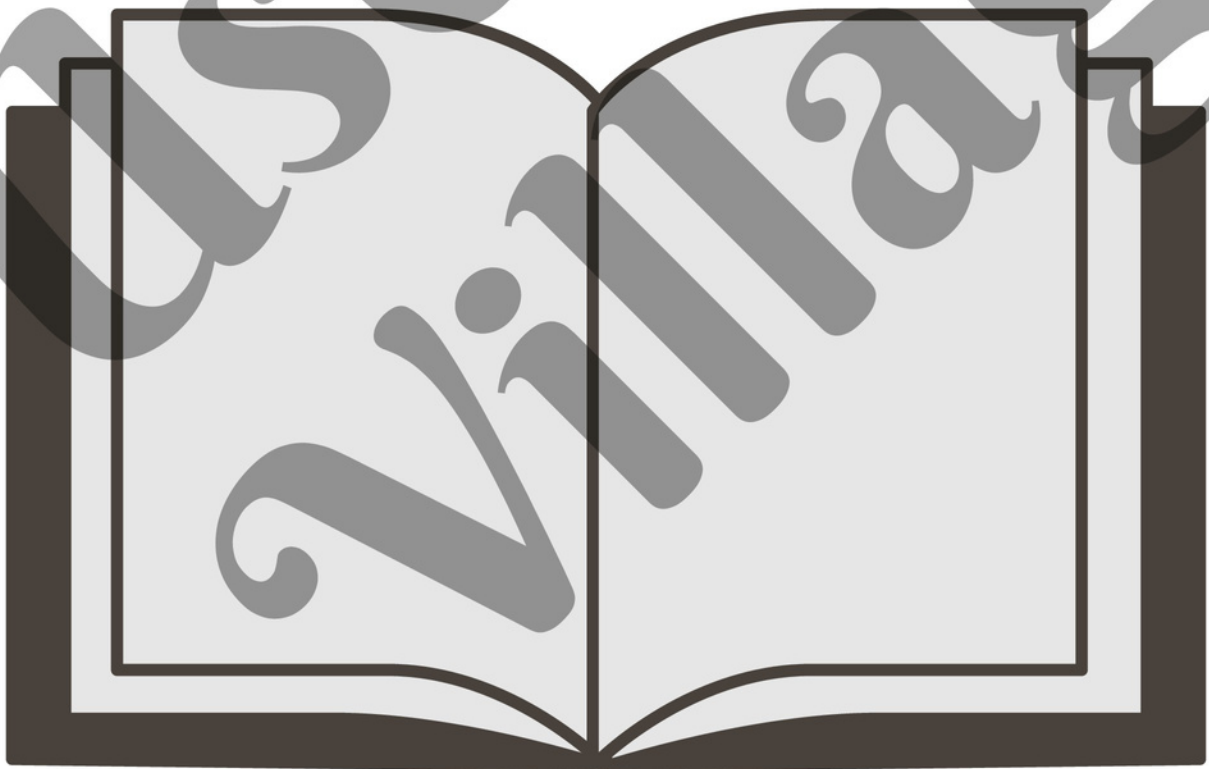
Ethan



Mrs. Lopez



Narrator



Teacher Suggestions:

Assigning Roles: Consider your students' reading levels and confidence when assigning roles. Encourage students to practice their parts at home or during independent reading time.

Practicing Fluency: Have students practice their parts multiple times to build fluency and expression.

Props & Costumes: Use the optional props list to create simple, engaging props.

Character Labels: Students can also use the provided character names to either cut out to hang around their neck to help identify characters to the audience or alternatively draw and illustrate what they imagine their character to look like.

Performance: Arrange a space in the classroom where students can perform. Invite other students to watch the final performance to boost students' confidence and make it more special.

Reader Response Questions: Use the provided questions to facilitate a post-performance discussion. This will help assess comprehension and encourage students to think critically about the play.

Extension Activities:

- **Design a Thoughtful Gift:** Have students think of a thoughtful gift they could give to a friend or family member, focusing on what that person loves. They can draw and explain why the gift is meaningful.
- **Write a Reflection on Sacrifice:** Ask students to write about a time when they gave up something they cared about to help a friend or make someone else happy. This could be turned into a short story or paragraph.
- **Create Christmas Trading Cards:** Students can create "Christmas Trade" cards, where they draw two items that could be traded in the spirit of friendship. Have them explain why each item would be valuable to the other person.