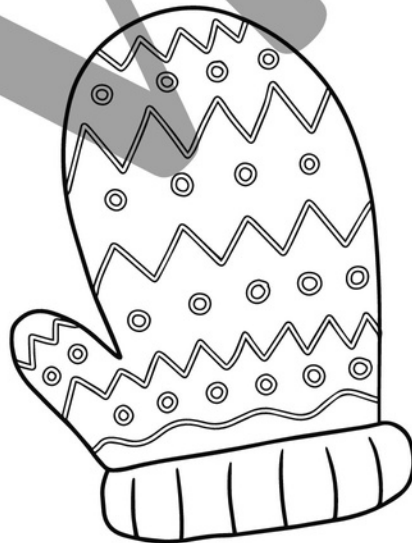




Reader's Theater:

The Magical Mitten Mystery



Characters:

- Narrator
- Ella (brave and determined leader)
- Toby (the logical thinker)
- Clara (creative and observant)
- Mr. Wiggins (the forgetful librarian)
- Mrs. Plum (a nosy but sweet neighbor)
- Jamie (the shy mitten taker)
- Whiskers (the library's cat) - non speaking part that could be played by a stuffed animal

Optional Props:

- A colorful knitted mitten
- Notepad and pencil for Toby
- A scarf or hat for Mrs. Plum
- A small stuffed cat or cat ears for Whiskers
- Tree branch prop for the mitten discovery

Narrator:

On a frosty January morning, the Willow Creek Library was its usual cozy self. Children browsed the shelves, the fire crackled in the hearth, and Mr. Wiggins, the librarian, fussed over the Lost and Found corner, filled with hats, scarves, and one unusually beautiful mitten. Ella was wandering through the library, searching for her next favorite book, when her gaze fell on the mitten. It was colorful, intricately knit, and seemed to almost sparkle in the winter light.

Mr. Wiggins:

Good morning Ella, let me know if you need help finding any books today!

Ella:

Thank you Mr. Wiggins! I'm just browsing around.
(Murmuring to herself) What a beautiful mitten. I wonder who lost it?

Narrator:

Without really thinking, Ella slipped the mitten on. It fit perfectly. As she continued to browse, her luck began to change. She stumbled upon a rare book she had been looking for, then managed to win a quick trivia game in the library lounge—a first for her.

Ella:

(Laughing) Wow, things are really going my way today!

Clara:

(Approaching) Hey, Ella. That's a great book you found... and you won trivia? That's not like you.

Ella:

(Smiling) I know, Clara. It's been an incredible day. And I think it started when I put on this mitten.

Clara:

(Amused) The mitten? Says it's your lucky charm.

Narrator:

Ella wasn't sure, but as the day went on, more and more small lucky things happened. First, she found \$5 on the street and used it to buy her favorite hot chocolate. Then, she arrived at her favorite bakery just as they were giving away a free cookie to the next customer. She couldn't help but feel the mitten was special. However, as she walked home that evening, a strong gust of wind tore the mitten from her hand.

Ella:

(Gasping) No! The mitten. Where did it go?

Narrator:

Ella searched everywhere but couldn't find it. She returned to the library the next morning, distraught.

Ella:

(To Mr. Wiggins) Mr. Wiggins, I lost the mitten! I think it might be magical, and now it's gone.

Mr. Wiggins:

(Fretting) Oh dear! The mitten is gone again? This is terrible!

Narrator:

Ella rallied her friends, Toby and Clara, to help her look for the mitten. They began their investigation in the Lost and Found corner. As they examined the empty mitten stand, a familiar furry figure pattered over.

Whiskers:

(Meowing mischievously and pawing at a toy.)

Toby:

(Inspecting Whiskers) Wait... Whiskers has a piece of yarn stuck to his paw. Could it be from the mitten?

Clara:

Exciting! Let's follow Whiskers and see where he takes us.

Narrator:

Whiskers led the children to the library's window, where Mrs. Plum was peeking inside.

Mrs. Plum:

(Surprised) Oh my! You gave me a start. What are you all up to?

Ella:

We're solving a mystery. The mitten is missing. Did you see anything unusual?

Mrs. Plum:

(Tapping her chin) Well, I did see someone go out of the library earlier, carrying something careful. And I heard a swishing sound, like a scarf or maybe yarn?

Toby:

(Writing in his notebook) Interesting. Did you see where they went?

Mrs. Plum:

(Pointing) Toward the sledding hill. That's all I know.

Narrator:

The kids thanked Mrs. Plum and hurried to the sledding hill. The snow was packed and children were laughing and sliding down. At the edge of the hill, they spotted something half-buried in the snow.

Clara:

(Scooping up) It's my mitten! Whoever took the mitten must have been here.

Ella:

(Scanning the area) Look! The footprints leading into the forest.

Narrator:

The trio followed the footprints, their breath forming clouds in the cold air. Deep in the woods, they found the mitten hanging on a tree branch.

Ella:

(Surprised) There it is! But who is it here?

Narrator:

As they reached for the mitten, a shy voice spoke from behind the tree.

Jamie:

(Quietly) I... I'm sorry. I didn't mean to take it. I just... I thought it might help me make friends.

Clara:

(Kindly) Jamie, you don't need a magical mitten to make friends. You can join us anytime.

Toby:

(Smiling) And we're glad you told the truth.

Narrator:

Jamie smiled and handed the mitten to Ella.

Jamie:

(Shyly) I'm sorry I didn't bring it to you right away when I found it, but here's your mitten back.

Ella:

(Gratefully) Thank you, Jamie! That means so much to me.

Narrator:

The group decided to take the mitten back to Mr. Wiggins at the library, thinking its rightful owner could be looking for it. When they arrived, Mr. Wiggins was waiting eagerly.

Mr. Wiggins:

(Beaming) You found it! Oh, this is wonderful!

Ella:

We thought you'd want to put it back in the Lost and Found.

Mr. Wiggins:

(Thoughtfully) Hmm, I've been thinking. You should keep it, Ella. It's been in the lost and found for over a month. I don't think anyone is missing it. You found it, and it seems to bring you and your friends joy. Besides, I happen to have its match right here!

Narrator:

Mr. Wiggins reached into a drawer and pulled out another mitten, just as colorful and magical-looking as the first. Ella's eyes widened in surprise.

Ella:

(In awe) Both of them! That's amazing!

Mr. Wiggins:

(Smiling) They're a pair and they're meant to be shared. Use them wisely.

Narrator:

From that day on, Ella kept the magical mittens, and she loaned them to her friends whenever they needed a little extra luck. Jamie became close friends with Ella, Toby, and Clara, and together they made sure the mittens were always used to spread joy. Whiskers, as always, supervised every adventure with a mischievous glint in his eye.

Name: _____

Date: _____

What made Ella realize the mitten might be magical?

What does the story teach about sharing and kindness?

What lesson did Jamie learn by the end of the story?

Ella



Toby



Clara



Jamie



Mr. Wiggins



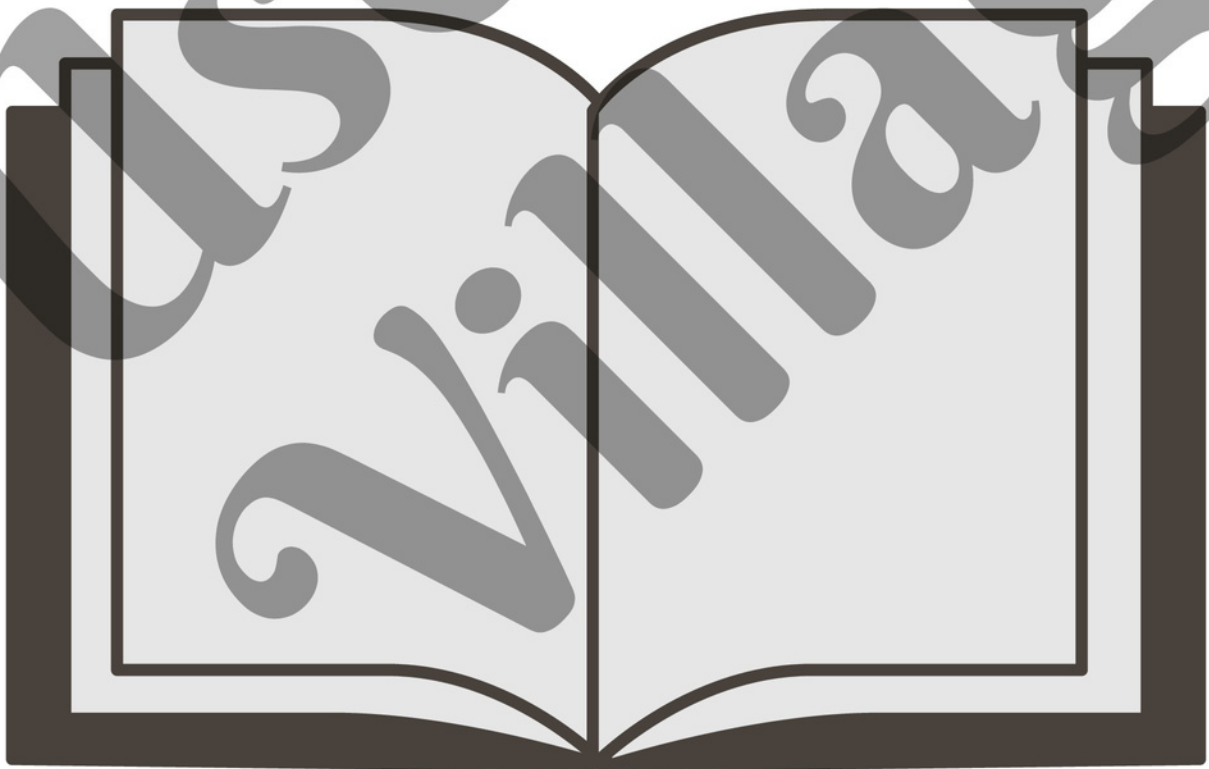
Mrs. Plum



Whiskers



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 Magical Mitten:** Have students draw or craft their own mitten with unique powers. Write an explanation of their mitten's special power.
- **Lost and Found Game:** Set up a classroom activity where students hide and find small items to simulate solving a mystery, encouraging teamwork and observation skills.
- **Winter Science Exploration:** Use the mitten theme to teach about how different materials insulate. Create mittens from various materials and see which are warm, testing in a small ice water experiment.