



Reader's Theater:

The Great Apple Cider Showdown



Characters

- Narrator
- Sophie (apple cider enthusiast, clever and sometimes a bit stubborn)
- Leo (hot chocolate fan, loves to joke and enjoys a good debate)
- Maya (Sophie's friend, loves fall and tries to keep the peace)
- Ben (Leo's friend, a bit mischievous, supports Leo)
- Grandma Ruth (wise and humorous, with lots of patience)

Optional Props:

- **Mugs:** One for each character, with some mugs labeled as hot chocolate and others as apple cider.
- **Small Notebooks and Pencils:** For Sophie, Leo, Maya, and Ben to jot down notes about people's fall drink stories.
- **Signs:** A sign for an "Apple Cider Stand" and another for a "Hot Chocolate Stand" to represent different areas of the festival.
- **Fake Apples and Cinnamon Sticks:** For the apple cider lovers, to highlight the fresh ingredients.
- **Mini Marshmallows:** For the hot chocolate fans to illustrate their favorite toppings.
- **Fall Decorations:** Such as small pumpkins, leaves, and a scarecrow to create a harvest festival atmosphere.
- **Grandma Ruth's Basket:** A small basket that she could hold while she walks around the festival.
- **Name Tags or Labels:** To help each character stand out and make it easy for young readers to identify their parts. (Or use the included character images around the necks of each reader)

Narrator:

It's fall in the town of Pinehill, and the harvest festival is in full swing. The smell of caramel apples and cinnamon fills the air, and everyone's excited to try all the delicious fall treats. Well... almost everyone. In one corner of the festival, two friends, Sophie and Leo, are bickering again—this time, about which fall drink is the best: apple cider or hot chocolate.

(Scene: Sophie and Maya are near the apple cider stand, each holding a mug of steaming cider. Leo and Ben approach, each with hot chocolate in hand.)

Leo:

(Smiling) Here we go again, Sophie. Tell me why you think cider is even close to hot chocolate. I mean, can you even put marshmallows in it?

Sophie:

(Shrugging) Why would I need to? Apple cider doesn't need marshmallows to taste amazing. It's like drinking the essence of fall!

Maya:

(Trying to keep the peace) They're both pretty great... Can't we just enjoy them both?

Ben:

(Grinning) Not a chance, Mrs. T. About pride now. Leo and I have been saying it for years—hot chocolate is unbeatable.

Narrator:

This isn't the first time Sophie and Leo have clashed. From pumpkins to scarecrows, they've managed to argue about nearly every fall tradition. The apple cider vs. hot chocolate debate is just the latest battle in their long-running "Fall Festival Feud."

Sophie:

(Rolling her eyes) I just don't get how you don't see it, Leo. Apple cider is local. It's made with apples from the orchard right down the street. Plus, it's healthier!

Leo:

(Smiling) Local, schmocal! Hot chocolate is cozy and perfect by the fire. And you get that nice warm feeling, like a big hug.

Ben:

(Suppressing a groan) And don't forget the whipped cream! Nothing says "fall" like whipped cream mountains.

Narrator:

Maya sighs, looking around for help. She spots Grandma Ruth, who's watching them with a smile and a twinkle in her eye.

Maya:

(Sighing) Maybe Grandma Ruth can help us settle this once and for all!

(The group looks over to Grandma Ruth, who's holding a cup of tea and enjoying the festival.)

Grandma Ruth:

(Grinning) Oh, are you two debating again? What's the great mystery this time?

Sophie:

(Frustrated) Leo just won't admit that apple cider is better than hot chocolate. We're at an impasse, Grandma!

Leo:

(Challenging) That's because hot chocolate actually is better, Grandma! Tell them I'm right!

Grandma Ruth:

(Laughing) Well, now, that depends on what you're looking for, doesn't it? Why don't you try a little experiment?

Narrator:

Intrigued, the kids agree. Grandma Ruth hands each of them a small notebook and pencil.

Grandma Ruth:

(Smiling) Here's what I want you to do. Go around the festival, talk to people, and ask them why they love cider or hot chocolate. See if you can learn something new from each person. Then come back home, and we'll see what you've discovered.

Narrator:

The group splits up, each talking to festival-goers and jotting down notes. They hear stories from people who love the feeling of cider on a chilly day, who remember drinking hot chocolate with their families around the fire.

(Later, the friends reconvene with Grandma Ruth, all carrying their notes.)

Sophie:

(Surprised) I talked to Mr. Turner, who owns the orchard. He said apple cider reminds him of picking apples with his family when he was a kid. It's like a memory in a cup for him.

Leo:

(Nodding) And Mrs. Hart said she loves hot chocolate because she used to make it with her grandma every fall. It's like a family tradition.

Ben:

(Smiling) So I guess people like different drinks because of their memories, huh?

And Sarah:

(Nodding) Exactly, Ben. Sometimes it's not just about which drink tastes better. It's about what those drinks mean to each person. For some, cider brings back memories of the orchard, and for others, hot chocolate feels like home.

Narrator:

Sophie and Leo look at each other, realizing that they've been so focused on their "feud" that they forgot what really matters.

Leo:

(Smiling sheepishly) Guess I can see why cider means a lot to you, Sophie. It's more than just the drink.

Sophie:

(Nods) Yeah, and hot chocolate is pretty great for those cozy nights. I can see why you love it so much.

Narrator:

They both laugh, realizing how silly their debate has been. They agree to call a truce, raising their cups in a toast.

Sophie, Leo, Ben, and Maya:

(Together) To fall! And to friendship!

Grandma Ruth:

(Smiling warmly) Now that's the spirit of the season. Remember, kids, sometimes it's not about being right. It's about understanding why something matters to someone else.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Why did Sophie and Leo argue so much about cider and hot chocolate?

What did Grandma Ruth suggest they do to resolve their argument?

What did Sophie and Leo realize about their debate after talking to people?

Grandma Ruth



Ben



Maya



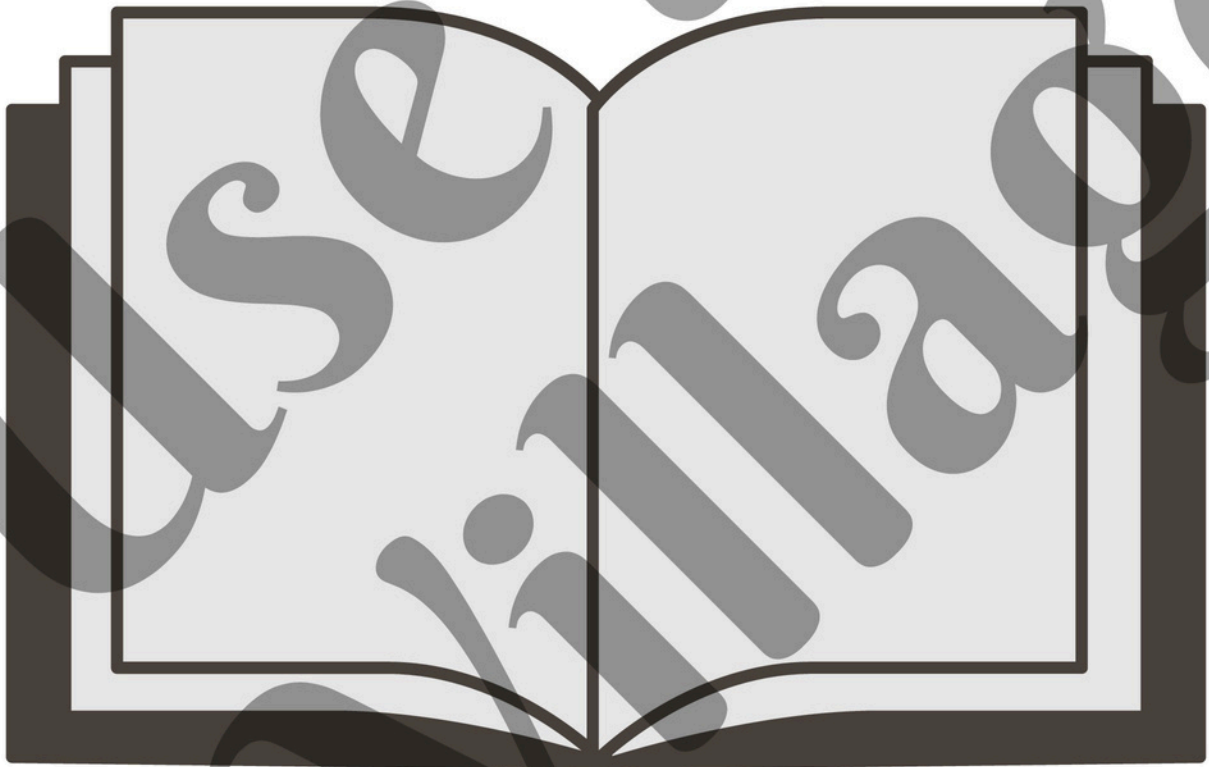
Leo



Sophie



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:

Fall Favorites Survey:

Have students conduct a “favorite fall drink” survey in the classroom. They can collect responses, then create a bar graph or pie chart to show the class’s favorite drink.

Write a Memory Poem:

Students can write a short poem or paragraph about their favorite fall memory connected to a special taste or family tradition.

Thank-You Letter to Local Farmer or Shopkeeper:

Students can write a thank-you letter to a local farmer or café, expressing appreciation for the seasonal flavors they bring to the community.