

Readers Theater:

The Harvest Day Talent Show



Characters:

- Narrator
- Harper – Confident and dramatic, loves magic.
- Eli – Shy but creative, builds props and puppets.
- Sofia – Energetic dancer, struggles with stage fright.
- Caleb – Class clown who tells jokes.
- Priya – Organized and encouraging, keeps the group calm.
- Lila – New student, brags about her talent but hides her own stage fright.
- Principal Torres – Supportive, loves seeing kids shine.

Optional Props:

- Wand, hat, or deck of cards for Harper's magic tricks
- Small puppet or cardboard stage for Eli
- Ribbon or scarf for Sofia's dance
- Joke cards for Caleb
- Notepad and clipboard for Priya
- Banner or poster reading "Harvest Day Talent Show"
- Pumpkins, leaves, or hay bale decorations for a fall theme

Narrator:

Every fall, Maplewood Elementary filled the gym with laughter, music, and cheers at the Harvest Day Talent Show. This year, the students were bursting with excitement — and maybe a few jitters too.

Harper:

(Grandly) Prepare yourselves for the greatest magic act ever performed on a school stage! Coins will vanish, cards will fly, and rabbits will appear out of nowhere.

Caleb:

(Laughing) If a rabbit shows up, I'm running. But hey, my jokes are going to be the best part of the show. Want to hear one?

Sofia:

Not right now, Caleb. I have to practice my dance before my knees forget how to work.

Eli:

I built a puppet show with juggling squirrels. They're going to toss acorns while telling riddles.

Priya:

(Checking clipboard) Great, everyone has an act. If we stay organized, we'll be ready.

Narrator:

Just then, the gym doors opened.

Lila:

(Sweeping in confidently) Make room everyone. I'm new here, but I've been in three talent shows already. This one will be the easiest yet.

Harper:

(Surprised) Oh, you're performing too?

Lila:

Of course. My act will be the star of the show.

Caleb:

(Groans) Great, now we've got competition.

Narrator:

Later that day, the students began to rehearse. But things didn't go exactly as planned.

Harper:

(Waving wand) And now the coin will disappear! (The wand tip snaps off.) Oh no!

Eli:

(Trying to fix puppet stage) My stage is wobbly. If it tips, the squirrels will tumble.

Sofia:

(Freezes mid-dance) Uhh... what comes after the spin? I can't remember. Everyone's looking at me!

Caleb:

(Staring at joke card) Wait, what was the punchline? Oh no, I forgot!

Narrator:

The kids groaned. Nothing was going right.

Lila:

(Teasing) Are you sure you're ready for this? My act is going to look perfect compared to this mess.

Priya:

Come on, everyone. This is just a rehearsal. We'll figure it out.

Narrator:

Backstage before the show, the kids gathered in a nervous circle.

Sofia:

I don't know if I can do this. My heart is pounding. What if I mess up?

Harper:

I'm scared too. What if my trick fails in front of everyone?

Caleb:

(Quietly) What if no one laughs at my jokes?

Eli:

(Clutching puppet) I don't think I can go out there alone. Will someone do it with me?

Priya:

(Encouraging) Let's share our fears. Sometimes saying them out loud makes them smaller.

Narrator:

The friends nodded. One by one, they admitted their fears.

Sofia:

Okay, so... what do we do about stage fright?

Harper:

I take a deep breath and pretend I'm practicing at home.

Caleb:

I tell myself the audience wants me to succeed.

Priya:

And if you need help, ask a buddy. Eli, I'll stand with you during your puppet show.

Eli:

(Relieved) Thanks, Priya. That makes me feel braver.

Sofia:

Would someone cheer for me while I dance? Just once, really loudly?

Caleb:

(Shouts) GO SOFIA!

Sofia:

(Laughs) Okay, that helps.

Narrator:

That evening, the gym was packed. Families and friends filled the bleachers. One by one, the kids performed.

Narrator:

Harper's tricks amazed the crowd, even with a taped-up wand. Caleb's jokes had the audience giggling. Sofia danced beautifully, her ribbon swirling through the air. Eli and Priya's puppets juggled and cracked jokes without tumbling.

Principal Torres:

(Clapping) Wonderful! And now, our new student, Lila.

Narrator:

Lila stepped on stage holding a microphone. She opened her mouth to sing... but no sound came out. Her hands shook, and her eyes filled with tears.

Sofia:

(Whispering from the sidelines) She's frozen.

Harper:

We have to help.

Narrator:

The friends leaned forward from the wings.

Priya:

(Encouraging, calling softly) You can do it, Lila. We believe in you!

Caleb:

Pretend it's just us at recess.

Eli:

You've got this.

Narrator:

Still, Lila stood frozen. Finally, Sofia stepped onto the stage beside her.

Sofia:

(Smiling) I'll start the song with you. Ready? One, two, three—

Narrator:

Sofia sang the first lines softly. Lila's eyes widened, then she took a shaky breath and joined in.

Narrator:

After a few lines, Sofia smiled, gave Lila a nod, and quietly backed off the stage. Lila kept singing, her voice growing stronger with each note.

Audience:

(Cheering and clapping along)

Narrator:

When the song ended, the gym thundered with applause. Lila bowed, singing with relief and pride.

Principal Torres:

That was true courage. You began afraid, but you found your voice. And you had friends who encouraged you.

Lila:

(Grateful) Thank you, everyone. I thought I had to prove I was the best. But really... I just needed a little help.

Harper:

We all do, sometimes.

Sofia:

And it feels pretty amazing when someone's cheering for you.

Narrator:

And so, the Harvest Day Talent Show ended with more than just talents. It ended with encouragement, teamwork, and the sound of voices lifting each other up.

Name: _____

Date: _____

How did the kids support Eli when he said he was too scared to perform alone?

What happened to Lila when she went on stage?

What lesson did the students learn about courage and encouragement?

Harper



Eli



Sofia



Priya



Caleb



Lila



Principal Torres



Narrator



Harper



Eli



Sofia



Priya



Caleb



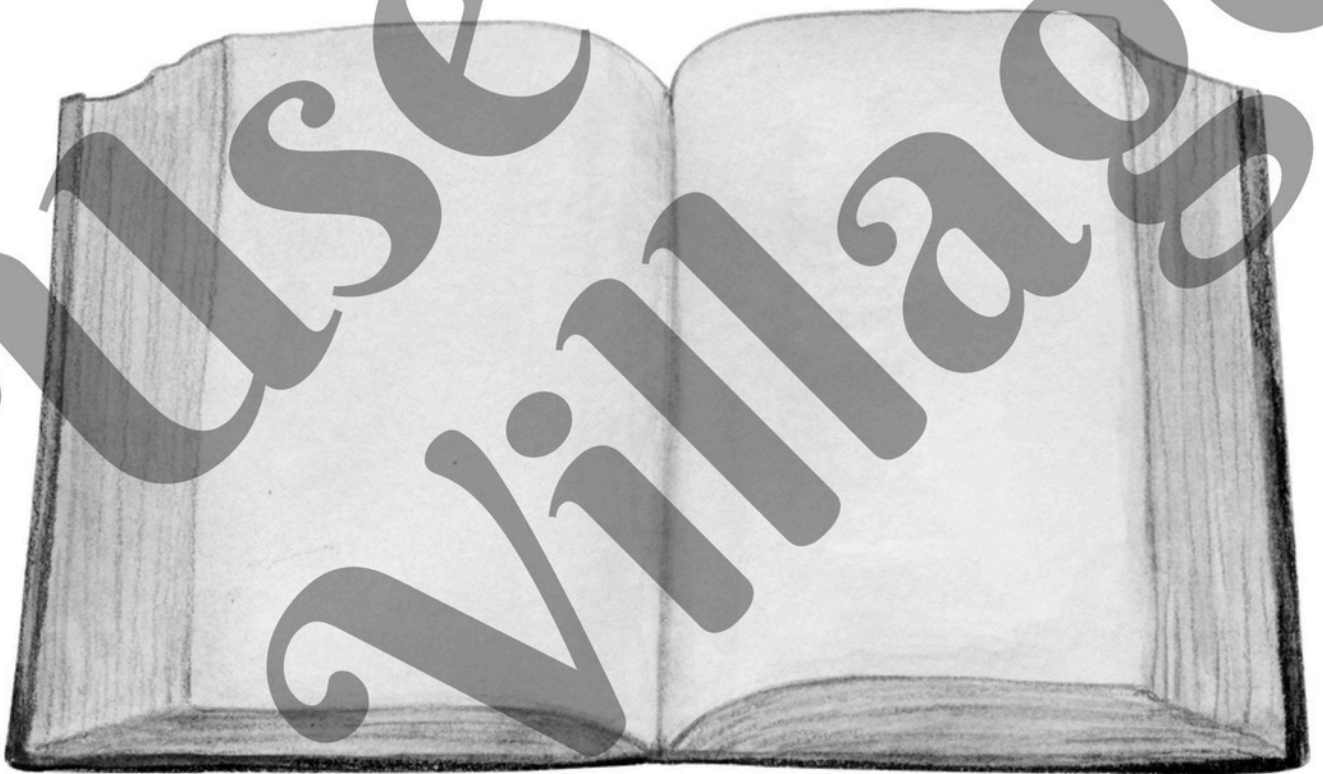
Lila



Principal Torres



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

- Stage Fright Solutions – Students brainstorm coping strategies for when they feel nervous.
- Talent Brainstorm – Have students share what act they would perform in a talent show.
- Buddy System Role Play – Practice encouraging a peer before presenting to the class.
- Poster Project – Design a Harvest Day Talent Show Flyer.
- Kindness Letters – Write a short note of encouragement to a classmate about their talents.