

Reader's
Theater:

Back to School
Blues



BACK
TO
SCHOOL

The graphic features the words 'BACK TO SCHOOL' in a bold, stylized font. 'BACK' is in blue with a black outline, 'TO' is in yellow with a black outline, and 'SCHOOL' is in white with a black outline. The text is surrounded by several small stars: a yellow star above 'BACK', two blue stars flanking 'BACK', and a yellow star below 'SCHOOL'.

Characters:

- Narrator
- Sam (new student, shy but curious)
- Jamie (friendly classmate, energetic)
- Taylor (creative classmate, helpful)
- Ava (funny classmate, loves telling jokes)
- Mrs. Johnson (Teacher)
- Principal Lee
- Mr. Wilson (Custodian)
- Mrs. Carter (Lunch Lady)

Optional Props:

- A backpack
- A lunchbox
- Lost and Found box
- Broom and dustpan (for Custodian)
- Name tags for each character
- School signs (Welcome, Lunchroom, etc.)

Narrator:

It was the first day of school, and the hallway buzzed with laughter and chatter. Backpacks swung, sneakers squeaked, and the smell of new pencils and fresh paper filled the air. But for one student, the day felt extra long and extra lonely.

(Sam enters, looking around nervously, clutching a backpack.)

Sam:

(whispering) Wow, this place is so big. I hope I can find my classroom.

Jamie:

(entering, waving) Hi there! You look a little lost. I'm Jamie—what's your name?

Sam:

(sighing) I'm Sam. It's my first day, and I don't know anyone yet.

Jamie:

(grinning) No problem! Stick with me, and I'll show you around.

Narrator:

Jamie led Sam into the bright, cheerful classroom, where students were busy unpacking supplies and chatting excitedly.

Mrs. Johnson:

(smiling) Good morning, class! I see we have a new student today. Would you like to introduce yourself?

Sam:

(nervously) Um... hi, I'm Sam. I just moved here, and I like reading and soccer.

Taylor:

(excitedly) Soccer? Me too! You'll fit right in.

Ava:

(grinning) Welcome, Sam! Did you hear about the time I spilled spaghetti on my head at lunch? (laughs)

Sam:

(smiling, a little more relaxed) No! That's so funny!

Narrator:

Just as Sam started feeling comfortable, a new problem appeared.

Sam:

(rummaging through backpack) Oh no... where's my lunchbox? I had it this morning, but now it's gone!

Jamie:

(thinking) Don't panic, Sam. Let's think. When was the last time you saw it?

Taylor:

Maybe it's still in the hallway or by the cubbies.

Ava:

(silly voice) Or maybe it sprouted legs and ran away!

Sam:

(chuckling) Very funny, Ava. But I'm really worried—I don't want to be hungry all day.

Narrator:

The friends decided to search the school, determined to find Sam's missing lunchbox.

Jamie:

(pointing) Let's start in the hallway.

Taylor:

(grabbing a notepad and pencil) I'll keep track of where we look.

Ava:

(pointing dramatically) To the Lost and Found!

Narrator:

They looked under benches, behind cubbies, and even in the recycling bin (thanks to Ava's silly suggestion).

Mr. Wilson:

(sweeping) Hey, kids! Are you looking for something?

Sam:

(nodding) Yeah, my lunchbox. It's blue with soccer stickers on it.

Mr. Wilson :

(grinning) I saw a blue lunchbox in the cafeteria earlier. Maybe it got left there.

Jamie:

(excited) Let's go check!

Narrator:

The friends hurried into the cafeteria, where the Lunch Lady was busy stacking trays.

Mrs. Carter:

(cheerfully) What can I do for you, kiddos?

Taylor:

(excited) We're looking for Sam's lunchbox. Did you see one here?

Mrs. Carter:

(thinking) Hmm... I did see a lunchbox left on a table this morning. Let me check.

(Mrs. Carter walks over and holds up a blue lunchbox with soccer stickers.)

Sam:

(relieved) That's mine! Thank you so much!

Mrs. Carter:

(smiling) No problem, sweetie. Glad you found it.

Narrator:

Sam felt a huge weight lift off his shoulders.

Sam:

(grinning) Thanks, everyone! I was so worried.

Jamie:

(smiling) Hey, that's what friends are for.

Taylor:

(nodding) Yeah, we're a team now.

Ava:

(grinning) And next time, we'll put a tracker on that lunchbox!

Sam:

(laughing) Good idea!

Narrator:

As the group walked back to class, they passed the Principal, who overheard them laughing.

Principal Lee:

(smiling) Sounds like you all solved a mystery today.

Jamie:

(grinning) We make a pretty good team.

Principal Lee:

(nodding) Remember, Sam, you're never alone here. We all help each other.

Sam:

(happily) Thanks, Principal. I'm really glad I came to this school.

Mrs. Johnson:

(welcoming them back to class) And I'm glad you're here too, Sam. Let's get ready to learn!

Narrator:

And from that day on, Sam knew that with friends by his side, any problem could be solved—and that even the biggest school could feel like home.

Name: _____

Date: _____

How did Jamie help Sam feel welcome?

Who helped Sam look for the missing lunchbox?

How would you have helped Sam if you were in the story?

Sam



Jamie



Taylor



Ava



Mrs. Johnson



Mr. Wilson



Mr. Lee



Mrs. Carter



Narrator



Sam



Jamie



Taylor



Ava



Mrs. Johnson



Mr. Wilson



Mr. Lee



Mrs. Carter



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.

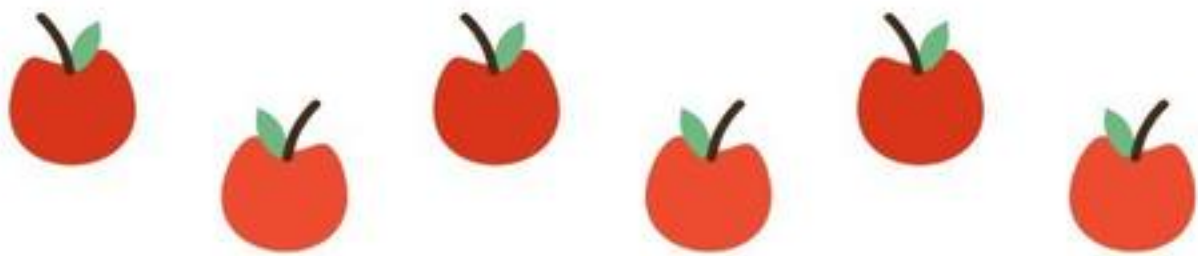
Character Labels: Students can also use the provided character names to either cut out to hang around their neck to help identify characters to the audience or alternatively draw and illustrate what they imagine their character to look like.

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:

- **Character Diary Entries** — Write a short diary entry from the perspective of one character in the play.
- **Design a School Map** — Draw a map showing key places from the story, labeling where Sam's lunchbox might have gone.
- **Role-Play Conflict Resolution** — Practice helping someone who is new, lost, or feeling left out, just like Sam.
- **Friendship Acrostic Poem** — Create a poem using the word "FRIENDSHIP" that describes what it means to be a good friend.
- **Build a Welcome Kit** — Design a small kit with a friendly note, a drawing of the school, and tips to help new students feel at home.



Readers Theater:

The Case of the Missing Apple Pie



Characters:

- Narrator
- Maya (curious and determined, natural leader)
- Leo (easygoing and quick-witted, loves jokes)
- Mrs. Crisp (cheerful orchard owner, a tiny bit forgetful)
- Farmer Green (helpful neighbor farmer)
- Janelle (apple-juggler extraordinaire, energetic)
- Detective Pippin (dramatic, confident, loves “big reveals”)
- Tommy (young orchard helper, eager but shy)

Optional Props:

- Red-and-white checkered cloth for the missing pie
- Small pie tin and serving utensil
- "Entry #7" sign or label for contest table
- Magnifying glass for Detective Pippin
- Apron for Mrs. Crisp
- Straw hat for Farmer Green
- Baskets or crates of apples
- Three apples for juggling (real or fake)
- Oven mitts for Detective Pippin during the baking scene

Narrator:

It was the first Saturday of September, and Crisp's Apple Orchard hummed like a happy beehive. Red, gold, and green apples winked from the trees, scarecrows posed for selfies, and the warm smell of cinnamon and butter drifted toward the hayride line. Today was the Harvest Festival—and nothing drew a bigger crowd than the Great Apple Pie Contest.

Maya:

(Scanning the banners) I read last year's write-up: "A single bite of Mrs. Crisp's pie tastes like autumn decided to sing." No pressure, right?

Leo:

(Grinning) I'll volunteer to confirm that with multiple scientific bites.

Mrs. Crisp:

(Playfully fanning the pie tin lid) Oh, you two! This year I've perfected it—tart apples, flaky crust, a ribbon of caramel, and my secret ingredient.

Maya:

(Leaning in) Tell us the secret?

Mrs. Crisp:

(Tapping her nose) Not until the judges swoon.

Farmer Green:

(Carrying crates, walking by)

A pie so fine, a crust divine,
may luck and flavor sweetly shine!

Leo:

Farmer Green rhymes all the time. It's his thing.

Janelle:

(Practicing with three apples) Want a preview show
before judging? I'm juggling Honeycrisps, Galas, and a
mystery apple!

Tommy:

(Arriving with labels) Mrs. Crisp, I put the "Entry #7" card
by your pie like you asked.

Detective Pippin:

(Sweeping in with a magnifying glass and flair) Citizens!
Be at ease. If any mystery dares to appear, Detective
Pippin shall peel it... like an apple.

Leo:

(Aside) Does he also core it?

Maya:

Okay, team: place the pie, check the table, and nobody touch anything sticky.

Narrator:

Under the big oak, polished pie stands formed a tempting parade. Butter glistened. Crusts crisscrossed. Mrs. Crisp's pie, golden and sugared, sat proudly at center.

Mrs. Crisp:

(Straightening the ribbon) There. Entry #7. Don't you wobble off, sweetheart.

Maya:

I'll guard the table while you greet customers, Mrs. Crisp.

Leo:

And I'll scientifically sniff nearby for quality control.

Janelle:

(Calling) Hayride in five minutes! I'll entertain the line and hand out apple facts.

Tommy:

I'll be at the cider press if anyone needs me.

Detective Pippin:

I, meanwhile, shall patrol!

Narrator:

Festival music struck up. Children painted tiny pumpkins. A gust of wind rattled the oak leaves... and for a moment, the display table stood unwatched.

Mrs. Crisp:

(Returning with a bag of sugar) All right, time to -
(Gasping) Where's Entry #7?

Maya:

(Spinning) It was here. I literally just went to the restroom for a couple of minutes...

Leo:

(Checking both sides of the stand) The pie didn't grow legs.

Detective Pippin:

(Thunderous) Halt, everyone! We have a pie-napping.

Mrs. Crisp:

(Hand to heart) That pie was for the judges! Without it, I can't compete.

Maya:

We'll find it. Step one: secure the scene. Step two: gather clues.

Narrator:

They studied the table. A pie server lay dusted with cinnamon sugar. A faint curve of caramel glistened on the cloth. And, just beyond the grass, a tiny, glittering trail of sugar crystals.

Maya:

Point of entry: here. Point of exit: this sugar trail.

Leo:

(Whispering) Or a very sparkly snail.

Detective Pippin:

Observe the impressions: shoe prints. Flat tread, smallish size. Our thief moved quickly.

Tommy:

(Approaching) I... I heard rustling near the picnic tables a few minutes ago. And I saw a basket with a red-and-white cloth heading toward the old cider barn.

Mrs. Crisp:

That's my pie cloth!

Janelle:

(Flipping her apples into a bag) I'm coming. No apple left behind!

Narrator:

Inside the cool, shadowy barn, afternoon light spilled through the boards in thin golden stripes. On a hay bale: an empty pie tin. Stuck to the rim: a sticky note smudged with cinnamon.

Maya:

(Reading) "Sorry! Needed this for my booth." No name?

Leo:

Rude and unhelpful. Classic villain move.

Detective Pippin:

(Examining) The handwriting slants right. Quick writer. Cinnamon smudge suggests hurried slicing.

Tommy:

Booths are along the orchard lane. Caramel apples, kettle corn, preserves, face painting...

Janelle:

And my juggling stage, which does not sell pie, thank you very much.

Maya:

All right, split up. We'll check each booth, regroup at the scarecrow contest in fifteen minutes. Pippin, you're with me. Leo with Janelle. Mrs. Crisp with Tommy. Farmer Green, ask vendors if anyone saw a red-and-white cloth.

Detective Pippin:

(Flourish) Operation Crust-Catcher commences!

Narrator:

Maya and Detective Pippin marched to the preserves booth, where Mrs. Appleton sliced a pie beneath a gingham awning.

Maya:

(Direct) Ma'am, have you served any apple pie in the last twenty minutes?

Mrs. Appleton:

(Kindly) Only peach. Want a slice?

Detective Pippin:

(Grave) Tempting... but no. Any vendors carrying a red-and-white cloth?

Mrs. Appleton:

I saw someone jogging by with one, headed toward the corn maze.

Maya:

Thank you!

Narrator:

Meanwhile, Leo and Janelle investigated the popcorn stand. The vendor held up buttery hands.

Vendor:

No pies here, just kernels.

Leo:

Any suspicious pie-shaped activity?

Vendor:

A group of kids ran past shouting "Shortcut!" and waving something red-and-white.

Janelle:

The cloth again! To the corn maze!

Narrator:

Mrs. Crisp and Tommy checked the face-painting tent. Glitter sparkled everywhere.

Face Painter:

Haven't seen any pie, but someone left caramel fingerprints on my table. Eww.

Tommy:

(Spotting) There's a sugar crystal stuck to this brush!

Mrs. Crisp:

(Determined) We're close.

Narrator:

They all converged at the corn maze entrance. Stalks rustled. Laughter echoed. A sign read, "Left for LADDER, right for LOOKOUT."

Maya:

We'll sweep the maze in pairs. Keep eyes open for the cloth, caramel drips, or crumbs.

Detective Pippin:

(Hand to ear) I hear... chewing.

Leo:

That's me. Sorry.

Janelle:

(Grinning) Incentive: whoever spots the next clue gets first bite of the finished pie.

Narrator:

Turn after turn, they found... nothing. No cloth. No crumbs. At the lookout platform, Maya paused, scanning the fair below.

Maya:

If the thief promised “for my booth,” they need to sell fast. A maze detour wastes time. I think the cloth runner was a false lead, maybe a different person entirely.

Detective Pippin:

(Approving) Sound deduction. Back to the lane!

Narrator:

They burst from the maze and followed the sweet, unmistakable aroma of cinnamon sugar wafting stronger now. The line at one booth stretched long.

Leo:

(Shielding eyes) Is that... pie being served?

Janelle:

And is that... Mrs. Crisp’s star cutout on top? At Farmer Green’s booth?!

Maya:

Everyone, move!

Narrator:

They reached the booth. Behind the counter stood... Farmer Green, knife in hand, placing generous slices on paper plates.

Mrs. Crisp:

Farmer Green! That's my contest pie!

Farmer Green:

(Startled, then mortified)

I, I thought it was extra stock to share.

Folks wanted pie; I tried to care.

Leo:

Dude. It was the contest entry.

Farmer Green:

(Hands trembling, rhyming faster)

I saw the cloth, I saw the tin,

The barn gets hot, flies sneak in.

I feared it'd spoil sitting there,

So to my booth I brought it... here.

Tommy:

You left a note that said "needed this for my booth."

Farmer Green:

(Winces) A note I wrote, a rushed excuse, But still, no right to take or use.

Detective Pippin:

(Softening) Motive: misguided helpfulness. Means: opportunity and a very fast walk. Verdict: guilty of poor judgment.

Mrs. Crisp:

(Exhales) I know you meant well, Green. But the judges start in an hour. Without a pie, I can't compete.

Farmer Green:

(Resolute)

Then let me fix the harm I've done;
We'll bake another, everyone!

Maya:

Yes. Team bake. We can do this.

Janelle:

I'll wash up and prep a clean station.

Leo:

I'm on apple peeling, speed peel mode.

Tommy:

I'll fetch flour, sugar, and uh, no glitter.

Detective Pippin:

I shall coordinate timing like a metronome of justice.

Mrs. Crisp:

And I'll handle the crust and the, (winks), secret ingredient.

Narrator:

They moved like a well-oiled kitchen orchestra at the demo table near the oven shed.

Mrs. Crisp:

(Teaching) Cold butter, cold hands. Tommy, sprinkle the ice water slowly and listen for the dough to sigh.

Tommy:

(Concentrating) Like this?

Mrs. Crisp:

Perfect. Fold, turn, chill.

Maya:

(Measuring) Apples: six cups. Cinnamon: two teaspoons. Nutmeg: a whisper. Sugar: just enough to taste the orchard.

Leo:

(Shaving peels into ribbons) I'm timing myself. New personal record: one apple in eight seconds. Someone call the Olympics.

Janelle:

(Slicing) Thin and even, like juggling, but with knives I don't throw.

Farmer Green:

(Beating an egg wash)

A brush of gold, a shine of pride,
We'll bake a beauty none can hide.

Detective Pippin:

(Oven mitts poised) Preheat achieved! I'll stand sentry
to ensure no second pie-napping.

Mrs. Crisp:

(Whispering to Maya and Leo) Secret ingredient: fresh
apple cider reduced to syrup. It deepens the flavor.

Maya:

(Grinning) Mystery solved!

Leo:

Permission to taste the evidence later?

Mrs. Crisp:

Granted.

Narrator:

They assembled the pie: bottom crust, layered apples,
ribbons of cider syrup, a lattice top, and sugared edges.
Into the oven it went with a hopeful squeak of the door.

Tommy:

Timer set for forty minutes!

Narrator:

The timer dinged. Detective Pippin opened the oven with operatic care. A golden lattice gleamed. Bubbles of syrup winked along the seams.

Mrs. Crisp:

(Brushing with cider glaze) Shine, little pie. The judges are almost here.

Leo:

(Placing the entry card) "Entry #7—Rebaked with Teamwork."

Farmer Green:

(Quiet pride)
A second chance, a sweeter way,
To end what started as a fray.

Narrator:

The judges approached, clipboards poised. They sampled crusts, murmured over fillings, and finally reached Entry #7.

Judge 1:

(Delighted) Flaky layers.

Judge 2:

Warm apple flavor—depth from... reduced cider?

Judge 3:

Balanced spice. Comforting. Confident.

Narrator:

They tallied. The crowd hushed. A blue ribbon waited on a velvet pillow.

Head Judge:

By a unanimous vote, the winner is... Entry #7 - Mrs. Crisp and Team!

Mrs. Crisp:

(Glowing) We did it!

Detective Pippin:

Justice is served, à la mode.

Farmer Green:

(Sincere)

I'm grateful, friends, for pardon sweet.

Next time, I'll ask before I eat.

Mrs. Crisp:

(Placing a mini ribbon in his hand) And next time, you'll bake with us from the start.

Narrator:

The sun slid lower, gilding the orchard rows. Music swirled; laughter rose. And somewhere between apology and cinnamon, the festival found its favorite flavor: teamwork.

Maya:

(Softly) Best day ever.

Leo:

(Chewing) Best pie ever.

Detective Pippin:

Case closed.

Everyone:

(Laughing, enjoying pie)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Who actually took the pie and why?

How did the group work together to solve the problem?

What was Mrs. Crisp's secret ingredient?

Maya



Leo



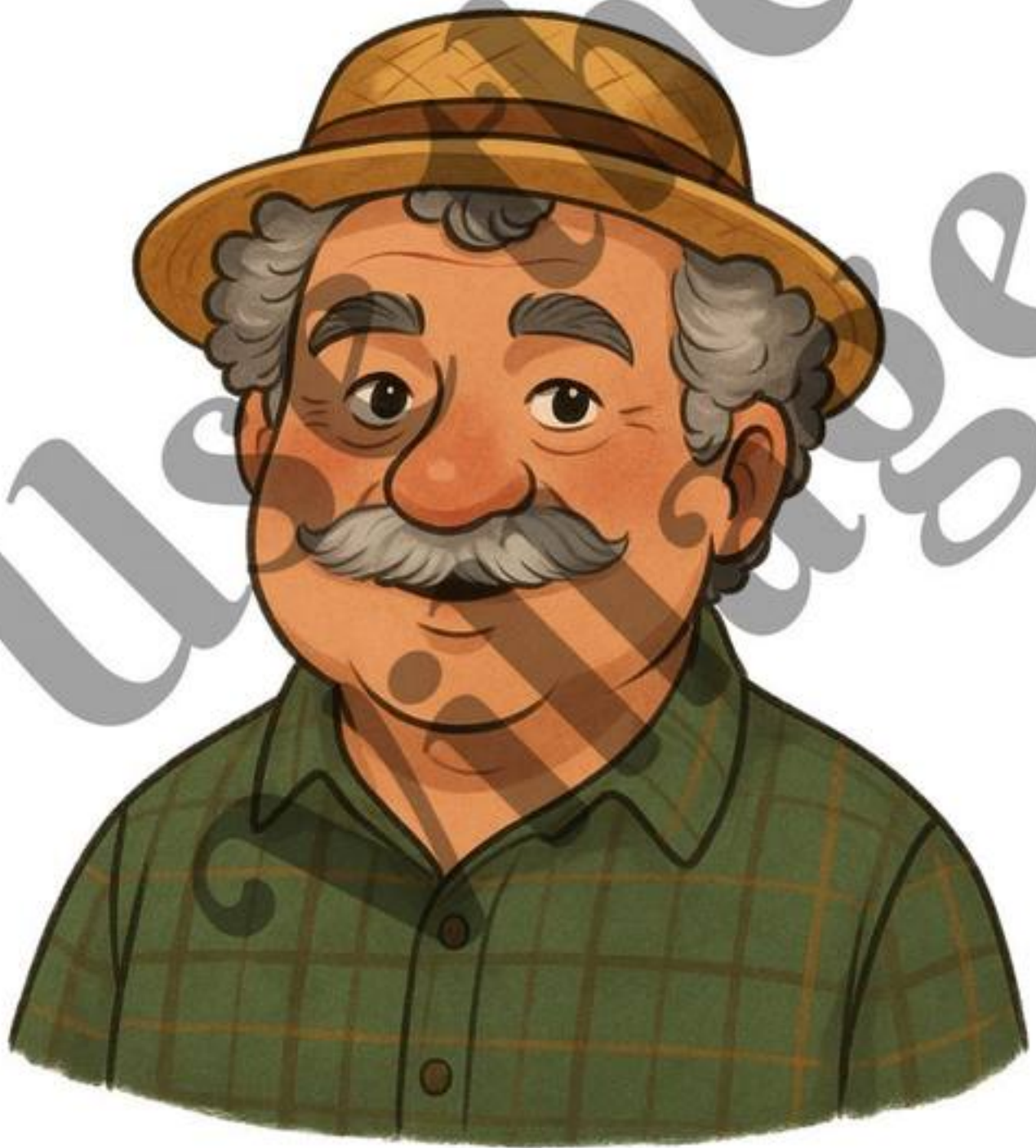
Mrs. Crisp



Janelle



Farmer Green



Detective Pippin



Narrator



Maya



Leo



Mrs. Crisp



Janelle



Farmer Green



Detective Pippin



Narrator



Teacher Suggestions:

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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:

- Pie Poster: Design a poster advertising Entry #7 for the contest.
- Apple Science: Research different apple varieties and taste-test them.
- Write a New Ending: Have students create an alternative ending to the story. What if someone different had stolen the pie? What was their motive?
- Harvest Festival Map: Have students draw a map of Crisp's Apple Orchard, including all the places mentioned in the play (pie table, cider barn, corn maze, booths, etc.). Label each spot where clues were found.
- Recipe Writing: Students create their own apple pie recipe, complete with a list of ingredients, step-by-step instructions, and a "secret ingredient" that makes it special.

Reader's
Theater:

The Fall
Festival
Mystery

Characters

- Narrator
- Max (a kid who loves pranks)
- Lily (Max's little sister)
- Oliver (a curious friend)
- Grandma Hazel (the grandmother who tells spooky stories)
- Scarecrow Sam (a talking scarecrow)
- Pumpkin Pete (a friendly but clumsy pumpkin)

Optional Props:

- **Scarecrow:** A life-size or small scarecrow to represent Scarecrow Sam, complete with straw arms and a floppy hat.
- **Pumpkins:** Real or plastic pumpkins scattered around the stage or used as props for the characters to gather during the search for the missing pumpkins.
- **Pumpkin Pete:** A large, round pumpkin costume or a decorated pumpkin prop to represent Pumpkin Pete. You can also use a pumpkin with facial features to make him look clumsy and friendly.
- **Basket of Pumpkins:** A small basket of mini-pumpkins for Grandma Hazel to carry at the beginning of the play.
- **Autumn Leaves:** Fake autumn leaves to scatter on the ground to give a fall atmosphere. Some could be in a pile for Pumpkin Pete to roll into.
- **Wind Sound Effect:** A fan or a sound machine to create the sound of a breeze or wind, adding to the spooky and mysterious atmosphere.
- **Hay Bales:** Small or pretend hay bales placed around the stage to create the setting of a pumpkin patch or backyard during fall.
- **Flashlight:** A flashlight for the characters to "search" for the missing pumpkins, adding a sense of mystery as they explore.
- **Fall Decorations:** Additional fall-themed props like corn stalks, fall wreaths, or paper leaves to decorate the set.
- **Costumes:** Simple costumes for the characters, such as flannel shirts, scarves, and boots to give the feeling of fall. Scarecrow Sam can wear a plaid shirt, hat, and gloves stuffed with straw for a more authentic look.

Narrator:

It's a crisp fall evening, and Max, Lily, and Oliver are getting ready for the annual Fall Festival. But something feels different this year... a little spooky, even. Could it be the chilly wind, the rustling leaves, or something more mysterious? Let's find out as they head to Grandma Hazel's house.

(Scene: Max, Lily, and Oliver walk through Grandma Hazel's backyard, which is decorated with pumpkins, scarecrows, and hay bales.)

Max:

(Laughing) Hey, Oliver, I bet this year's festival won't be as exciting as last year. Remember how we spooked everyone with the fake ghost?

Oliver:

Yeah, that was hilarious! But... don't you think something feels weird this time?

Lily:

(Shrugging) It's just the wind. Besides, Grandma says fall is the perfect time for mysteries!

(Grandma Hazel enters, holding a basket of pumpkins.)

Grandma Hazel:

Ah, there you are! Just in time to help me with these pumpkins. And maybe... hear a little story?

Lily:

Oh no, not one of your spooky stories again!

Grandma Hazel:

(Smiling) Don't worry, this one's more of a mystery. They say that when the full moon rises during the Fall Festival, Scarecrow Sam comes to life!

Max:

(Scoffing) Come on, Grandma. Everyone knows scarecrows don't talk.

Grandma Hazel:

(Laughing) Maybe not during the day... but when the moon is full, anything is possible. Now, you three better hurry if you don't want to miss the fun. And watch out for Scarecrow Sam!

(Grandma Hazel exits. Max, Lily, and Oliver look at each other.)

Oliver:

(Shrugging) Well, I guess we better go to the festival.

(They head towards the pumpkin patch. Suddenly, Scarecrow Sam starts moving behind them. His straw arms creak as he turns his head.)

Scarecrow Sam:

(Hoarsely) Psssst... I need your help!

Lily:

(Backing away) Did that scarecrow just... talk?

Max:

(Grinning) Okay, which one of you is pulling this prank?

Scarecrow Sam:

(Sighing) No prank. I'm Scarecrow Sam, and I need you to help solve the mystery of the missing pumpkins!

Oliver:

(Mind racing) Wait, you're really alive? What happened to the pumpkins?

Scarecrow Sam:

Every year, I protect the pumpkin patch. But this year, someone... or something... has been stealing them! If we don't find them before the festival starts, there'll be no pumpkin pies, no carving contest, nothing!

Max:

(Laughing nervously) So, you're saying we have to find these pumpkins... with a talking scarecrow?

Lily:

(Looking determined) We're on it, Sam! Let's solve this mystery.

(As they search the pumpkin patch, they see a pumpkin rolling down a hill and crash into a pile of leaves. They rush over and find Pumpkin Pete.)

Pumpkin Pete:

(Clumsily trying to get up) Oops! Sorry! I didn't mean to roll away again!

Oliver:

(Surprised) You've been rolling away... again? Wait, are you the one making all the pumpkins disappear?

Pumpkin Pete:

(Embarrassed) Well... yes, sort of. You see, I have trouble staying still. The wind picks me up, and I just roll... and roll... and next thing I know, I'm taking the other pumpkins with me!

Max:

(Laughing) So, you're telling me you're an out-of-control pumpkin bowling ball?

Pumpkin Pete:

(Nodding) Pretty much! And the others just get caught up in my roll! I didn't mean to cause any trouble.

Scarecrow Sam:

(Laughing) Mystery solved! Pete, you've been the pumpkin thief all along, rolling away with half the patch!

Lily:

(Smiling) It's okay, Pete. We'll help you roll back all the pumpkins before the festival starts.

Narrator:

And so, Max, Lily, Oliver, and Scarecrow Sam worked together to gather all the missing pumpkins in time for the festival. Pumpkin Pete even made it back without rolling away again—for now!

Scarecrow Sam:

(Smiling) Sometimes, even a little mystery can bring friends together.

Narrator:

And the moral of the story is, don't jump to conclusions—sometimes the answer is right in front of you, even if it's a little clumsy! The end.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Who was accidentally causing the pumpkins to disappear?

What does Scarecrow Sam ask Max, Lily, and Oliver to do?

What is the moral of the story?

Max

A mischievous kid
who loves pranks.



Lily

A brave but
cautious little sister.



Oliver

A curious and
imaginative friend.



Grandma Hazel

A wise, quirky
grandmother who
tells spooky stories.



Scarecrow Sam

A mysterious,
talking scarecrow
with a kind face.



Pumpkin Pete

A clumsy, friendly
pumpkin character.



Narrator



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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:

1. Create Your Own Fall Mystery

- Have students brainstorm their own fall-themed mystery stories. They can choose a different setting (like a haunted house or a forest) and create their own characters. Each student or group can then perform their short play for the class.
- Objective: Encourages creativity, writing skills, and collaboration.

2. Character Portrait Drawing

- After performing the reader's theater, students can draw or color their own versions of the characters (Max, Lily, Oliver, Scarecrow Sam, etc.). Provide them with descriptions from the script to guide their artwork.
- Objective: Combines reading comprehension with visual art skills.

3. Fall-Themed Scavenger Hunt

- Organize a classroom or outdoor scavenger hunt where students look for fall-themed objects (like acorns, leaves, or pinecones) or clues that help them solve a mini-mystery inspired by the play.
- Objective: Promotes teamwork, problem-solving, and outdoor exploration.

4. Vocabulary Challenge

- Create a list of fall and mystery-related vocabulary words from the play (like "harvest," "mystery," "clue," "scarecrow"). Have students define the words and use them in sentences, or incorporate them into a word search or crossword puzzle.
- Objective: Expands vocabulary and comprehension skills.

5. Debate: Is Pumpkin Pete a Hero or a Villain?

- Divide the class into two groups. One group argues that Pumpkin Pete, despite his clumsiness, is a hero for being the key to solving the mystery. The other group argues that his accidental actions created a lot of trouble. The class can vote afterward.
- Objective: Develops critical thinking, public speaking, and debate skills.

Reader's
Theater:

The
Thanksgiving
Feast Mystery



Characters

- Narrator
- Tommy the Turkey (a mischievous and clever turkey)
- Emma (a helpful and kind-hearted kid)
- Ben (Emma's brother, who loves to eat)
- Grandma (the wise and skilled cook)
- Cousin Mia (a fun cousin who loves to plan games)
- Uncle Jake (a jokester who's always ready with a pun)

Optional Props:

1. Turkey Costume or Turkey Hat (for Tommy the Turkey)
2. Apron for Grandma
3. Chef Hat for Uncle Jake
4. Thanksgiving Feast Decorations (small table setup with pretend or real plates, cups, cutlery, etc.)
5. Plastic or Paper Food (toy fruits, veggies, or mini pies to represent the feast)
6. Feathers (fake turkey feathers to scatter around for the feather trail)
7. Autumn Leaves (fake leaves for the pile Tommy hides behind)
8. "Missing Turkey" Sign (small, humorous sign to enhance the mystery)
9. Pie Prop (plastic or paper pumpkin pie for Mia's "first slice" moment)
10. Gobble Sound Effect (recording or off-stage sound for Tommy's reveal)
11. Chef Apron for Ben (for the character helping in the kitchen)
12. Thanksgiving Hats (optional festive hats for family members)

Narrator:

Thanksgiving is just around the corner, and the table is set for a wonderful feast. Emma and Ben are getting ready to help Grandma and Uncle Jake prepare the meal. But there's one little problem—Tommy the Turkey is missing! Will they find Tommy in time for the feast? Or will Thanksgiving take a surprising twist?

(Scene: The kitchen is busy. Pots and pans are clanging, and delicious smells fill the air. Emma and Ben stand at the counter helping Grandma chop vegetables while Uncle Jake tells a joke.)

Uncle Jake:

(Laughing) What did the turkey say to the computer?
"Google, gobble, gobble!"

Ben:

(Laughing) Good one, Uncle Jake! But where's the turkey? It's not Thanksgiving without turkey!

Grandma:

(Smiling) The turkey's around here somewhere... but it seems like Tommy has gone missing! We need to find him before the big feast.

Emma:

(Looking around) We've got to find him! He can't have gone far, right?

Narrator:

Just then, they hear a noise—a gobble from the pantry! The family rushes to check, but all they find are cans of pumpkin pie filling and a pile of mashed potatoes.

Ben:

(Sighing) No turkey in here. Where could he be?

Emma:

(Looking determined) Don't worry, Tommy's clever, but we can find him! Let's keep searching.

Narrator:

As the family searches the house, Cousin Mia arrives, excited to join the feast preparations.

Mia:

(Excited) What's going on? Are we playing hide-and-seek with the turkey?

Uncle Jake:

(Laughing) Something like that. Tommy the Turkey has pulled a disappearing act!

Mia:

(Clapping) Oh, this sounds like fun! I love a good mystery. Let's make it into a game! Whoever finds Tommy gets the first slice of pumpkin pie!

Grandma:

(Smiling) Now that's some motivation! But don't forget—Thanksgiving is about more than just food. It's about being thankful for family and friends.

Narrator:

The group splits up and searches every corner of the house, but Tommy is nowhere to be found. Just when they're about to give up, Emma notices a trail of feathers leading outside.

Emma:

(Laughing) I think I found something! Follow me!

Narrator:

They follow the trail of feathers to the backyard, where they find Tommy the Turkey hiding behind a big pile of leaves, looking mischievous.

Ben:

(Laughing) There you are, Tommy! Trying to skip out on dinner?

Tommy the Turkey:

(Giggling) Gobble, gobble! I wasn't hiding from dinner—I was just playing a game of my own. You found me fair and square!

Mia:

(Smiling) Does that mean I get the first slice of pumpkin pie?

Grandma:

(Laughing) We'll see about that. But first, let's all sit down to our Thanksgiving meal together.

Narrator:

And so, the family gathers around the table, thankful for a delicious meal and the time they've spent together. Tommy the Turkey joins them at the table—not on the table—and everyone laughs and shares what they're most thankful for this year.

Emma:

(Gratefully) I'm thankful for family and for finding Tommy!

Ben:

(Smiling) I'm thankful for food... and pie!

Mia:

(Laughing) I'm thankful for fun games and time spent with all of you.

Grandma:

(Wisely) And I'm thankful for the laughter, the love, and the memories we make together.

Uncle Jake:

(With a grin) And I'm thankful for a good turkey joke. You could say I'm "stuffed" with happiness!

Narrator:

And with that, the family enjoys their Thanksgiving feast, filled with laughter, love, and the knowledge that sometimes, the best part of Thanksgiving isn't what's on the table—it's the people around it.

Name: _____

Date: _____

How did the family work together to solve the mystery of the missing turkey?

What role did Cousin Mia play in helping the family?

What was Grandma's message about the true meaning of Thanksgiving?

Tommy the Turkey



Emma



Ben



Grandma



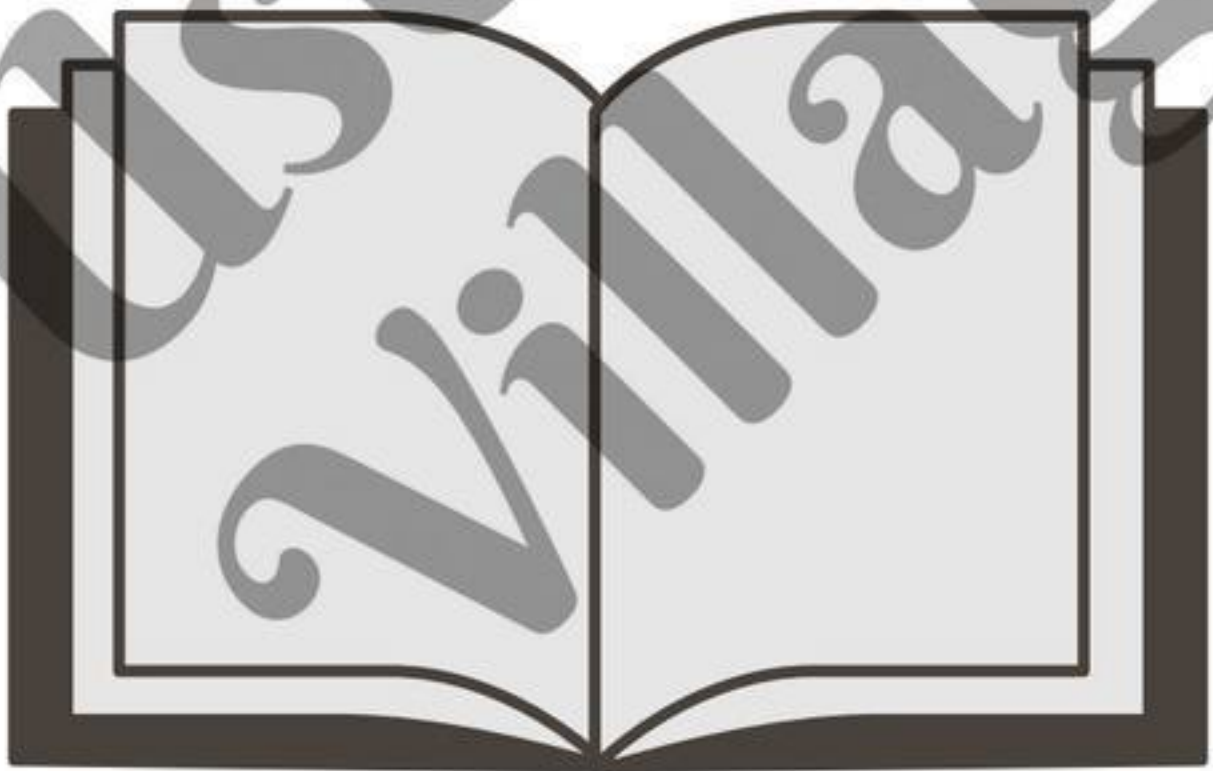
Cousin Mia



Uncle Jake



Narrator



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Extension Activities:

Extension Activities:

1. Thankfulness Tree:

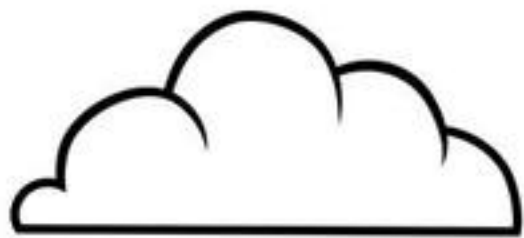
- Have students create a "Thankfulness Tree" by writing what they're thankful for on leaves and attaching them to a paper tree on the wall. (There is a version of this available in my store!)

2. Cooking and Sharing:

- Ask students to imagine their own family Thanksgiving or Friendsgiving meal. What dishes would they cook? Who would they share it with? Have them draw and write about it.

3. Turkey Hunt Game:

- Set up a classroom game where students search for hidden "turkeys" (small cutouts or decorations) and then share what they're thankful for when they find one.



Reader's Theater:



Frosty the Snowman



Characters

- Narrator
- Jack (curious and adventurous, the leader of the group)
- Lila (imaginative and quick-witted)
- Milo (playful and a little skeptical)
- Rosie (kind and thoughtful)
- Frosty (a snowman brought to life by a magical hat)

Optional Props:

- Black Top Hat: A central prop representing the magical hat that brings Frosty to life.
- Carrot Nose: For the snowman's nose, either a real carrot or a paper cutout.
- Buttons or Paper Cutouts: For Frosty's eyes and decoration.
- Scarf: To wrap around Frosty's neck for added character.
- Snowman Arms: Sticks or pretend arms to attach to the snowman (could be drawn or crafted).
- Paper Snowflakes: To decorate the setting and create a snowy ambiance.
- Snow Globe: A small snow globe to represent Frosty's magical winter home at the end of the story.
- Broomstick: Optional for Frosty to hold as a classic snowman accessory.
- Blue Cloth or Streamers: To represent the icy wind or magical swirl when the wish is made.
- Tree Cutouts or Greenery: To represent the shady spot where the kids try to keep Frosty safe.
- Winter Hats and Gloves: For the kids' costumes, to emphasize the chilly setting.

Narrator:

It was the first snowfall of the season, and Jack, Lila, Milo, and Rosie couldn't wait to go outside. The four friends bundled up and dashed into the yard, ready for snowball fights and sledding. But they didn't know this winter would be anything but ordinary.

(Scene: The group stands around a pile of snow, rolling it into a giant snowman.)

Jack:

(Laughing) This is going to be the best snowman ever! Look how big we made the base.

Lila:

(Patting the snow) And the middle part is just the right size. Rosie, you're great at making the head. Make sure it's round!

Rosie:

(Concentrating) I've got it. Perfectly round... almost there... done!

Narrator:

The kids admired their snowman. Jack added a carrot for the nose, Lila placed buttons for the eyes, Milo found sticks for the arms, and Rosie tied a scarf around its neck. But something was missing.

Milo:

(Scratching his head) It's not a real snowman until it has a hat. Anyone got one?

Jack:

(Spotting something) Hey, what's that over there by the bushes?

Narrator:

Jack ran over and picked up an old black top hat. It looked a little worn, but it was perfect for their snowman.

Jack:

(Excitedly) Look what I found! Let's put it on him.
(Jack places the hat on the snowman's head. Suddenly, the snowman shivers and stretches.)

Frosty:

(Surprised) Whoa! What's going on? It's chilly out here! Oh wait, I guess I'm made of snow.

Narrator:

The kids jumped back, startled.

Lila:

(Shocked) Did he just... talk?

Milo:

(Rubbing his eyes) I must be imagining things. Snowmen don't talk... right?

Frosty:

(Laughing) Well, they don't usually. But thanks to this magical hat, here I am! Hi there, I'm Frosty.

Rosie:

(Amazed) You're alive! This is incredible! What's it like being... you know... made of snow?

Frosty:

(Shrugging) Oh, it's not bad. A little cold, but I guess that's to be expected. Now, what's the plan? Snowball fight? Sledding? Building more snowmen?

Narrator:

The kids were overjoyed. They spent the day playing with Frosty, building forts and sliding down hills. But as the sun started to set, Frosty began to look worried.

Frosty:

(Concerned) Uh... guys? The sun isn't good for me. It might melt me.

Lila:

(Determined) We can't let that happen! What should we do?

Jack:

(Looking thoughtful) Maybe if we find a shady spot, like under the trees, you'll stay safe until it gets colder tonight.

Narrator:

The kids hurried to move Frosty into the shade. But Frosty's worried look didn't go away.

Frosty:

(Sadly) The shade helps, but I don't think I can stay outside forever. I need a colder place, like the North Pole.

Milo:

(Worried) The North Pole? How are we going to get you there?

Rosie:

(Smiling) We'll figure it out. We always do.

Narrator:

Lila had an idea. She took off the magical hat and looked at it closely.

Lila:

(Hopeful) Maybe the hat has more magic in it. What if we wish for a way to get Frosty to the North Pole?

Jack:

(Encouraging) It's worth a try. Everyone, close your eyes and wish together.

Narrator:

The kids held hands and made their wish. Suddenly, a gust of icy wind swirled around them. When they opened their eyes, Frosty was surrounded by a sparkling, snow-filled globe.

Frosty:

(Laughing) Whoa! It's a snow globe! It's like my own little North Pole. This is perfect!

Rosie:

(Relieved) Now you'll be safe, Frosty. We can visit you whenever we want.

Frosty:

(Smiling) Thanks, friends. This has been the best day ever. Don't forget me!

Narrator:

And with that, Frosty waved goodbye as the snow globe shimmered and disappeared, heading to a magical winter land. The kids looked at each other, knowing they had created something special they'd never forget.

Moral of the Story:

Friendship and teamwork can make anything possible, even saving a magical snowman.

Name: _____

Date: _____

What made Frosty come to life?

Why did the kids need to move Frosty into the shade?

How did the kids solve Frosty's problem of needing to get to the North Pole?

Jack



Lila



Rosie



Frosty



Milo



Narrator



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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:

- **Create Your Own Magical Hat Story:** Have students write or draw their own story about a magical object and what it brings to life.
- **Snowman Craft Project:** Students can make snowmen out of paper, cotton balls, or craft supplies, and decorate them with hats and scarves.
- **Winter Wishes Journal:** Have students write about what they would wish for if they had a magical hat and why.



Reader's
Theater:

The Snow Day
Mystery



Characters:

- Narrator
- Max (an inquisitive boy)
- Ella (Max's best friend)
- Mrs. Jenkins (their kind but mysterious neighbor)
- Detective Frost (a playful and clever detective)
- Snowy (a talking snowman)

Optional Props:

- A scarf for Max
- A hat and gloves for Ella
- A shawl or apron for Mrs. Jenkins
- A blue scarf for Detective Frost
- A carrot, buttons, and a small bucket (props for the snowman)
- A small sign reading "Detective Frost"

Narrator:

It was a crisp January morning, and the world was covered in a soft blanket of snow. Max and Ella, bundled up in coats and scarves, were walking through their neighborhood when they noticed something unusual.

Max:

Ella, look at Mrs. Jenkins's front yard! There's a trail of footprints leading up to her snowman, but none leaving it. Isn't that strange?

Ella:

Very strange, Max. Let's ask Mrs. Jenkins if she noticed anything.

Narrator:

The two friends knocked on Mrs. Jenkins's door. She opened it with a warm smile.

Mrs. Jenkins:

Oh, hello, Max and Ella! Out enjoying the snow?

Ella:

Yes, Mrs. Jenkins, but we noticed something odd. There are footprints leading to your snowman, but none coming back. Did you see who made them?

Mrs. Jenkins:

Hmm, I did notice the footprints this morning. It's a mystery, isn't it? Maybe you should ask Detective Frost. He's excellent at solving snowy puzzles.

Max:

Detective Frost? Where can we find him?

Mrs. Jenkins:

Follow the trail of snowflakes down the road. The snowflakes seem to sparkle and swirl in the air as if they're leading the way. You'll know when you see him.

Narrator:

Max and Ella followed the faint trail of snowflakes until they came upon a small wooden shack with a sign that read, "Detective Frost: Mysteries Solved in a Flash." Inside, a tall, cheerful man wearing a bright blue scarf greeted them.

Detective Frost:

Welcome! What snowy mystery brings you here today?

Max:

We saw footprints leading to Mrs. Jenkins's snowman but none leaving. Can you help us figure out what happened?

Detective Frost:

A classic case of the Snowman Shuffle! That's what we call it when mysterious footprints appear around snowmen. Let's take a closer look.

Narrator:

Detective Frost followed Max and Ella back to Mrs. Jenkins's yard. He examined the footprints, the snowman, and the surrounding snow. Then he knelt beside the snowman and tapped its frosty surface lightly.

Detective Frost:

Aha! Look closely at the snowman. Do you see anything unusual?

Ella:

Wait... one of the snowman's buttons is missing!

Max:

And there's a carrot on the ground that doesn't look like it's from the snowman's nose. What could this mean?

Narrator:

Just then, a small gust of wind blew, carrying the crisp scent of pine and the faint sound of jingling. The snowman suddenly twitched, its twig arms shivering as if waking up. Max and Ella froze, their eyes wide with disbelief. With a creak and a soft puff of snow, the snowman opened its eyes, which sparkled like tiny frost-covered marbles, and spoke in a gentle, raspy voice.

Snowy (Snowman):

(sniffing) I can explain! I didn't mean to scare anyone...

Max:

A talking snowman? That's amazing! But what happened to the footprints?

Snowy:

Last night, I got hungry and decided to borrow a carrot from Mrs. Jenkins's kitchen. They looked so delicious sitting in a basket on the counter.

Ella:

Wait, Snowy! You said you took those carrots? Oh no! Mrs. Jenkins needed those for her grandson's birthday cake! How could you not know?

Snowy:

I didn't realize how important they were! If I'd known, I never would have taken them. I feel awful about it now. I'll do whatever I can to make it right.

Detective Frost:

Let's replace the carrots so Mrs. Jenkins can still make her cake, and we'll fix your missing button too. But first, let's make sure you're warm enough — even snowmen can catch a chill!

Narrator:

With everyone pitching in, the mystery was solved, and Snowy promised to be more thoughtful about his actions and to consider how they might affect others.

Detective Frost even gave him a special blue scarf as a reminder of the importance of taking responsibility for his actions and making things right.

The scarf, with its deep blue hue and delicate silver embroidery, symbolized warmth, kindness, and the importance of making thoughtful choices. It became a treasured keepsake for Snowy, reminding him to always act with care and consideration.

Name: _____

Date: _____

What clues led Detective Frost to suspect that the snowman was involved?

What was Snowy's excuse for his actions, and how could he have handled it differently?

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

Max



Ella



Mrs. Jenkins



Detective Frost



Snowy



Narrator



Teacher Suggestions:

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Extension Activities:

Creative Writing- Snowman's Diary

Have students write a short diary entry from Snowy's perspective. They can describe his feelings about borrowing the carrots, the moment he realized they were for a birthday cake, and his gratitude for the new blue scarf.

Snowflake Science Experiment

Introduce students to the science of snowflakes. Provide paper and scissors to create their own paper snowflakes, then discuss how real snowflakes form and why each one is unique.

Design a Detective Badge

Let students create their own detective badge or logo inspired by Detective Frost. Provide craft supplies like paper, markers, and glitter. Encourage them to include a unique slogan for their detective work.

Role-Play Conflict Resolution

Set up scenarios where students can practice resolving conflicts thoughtfully, as Snowy did. For example, a situation where someone "borrows" a classroom item without asking. Discuss how to make amends and improve communication.

A decorative border at the top of the page features several vertical lines of varying lengths. Each line has a heart shape at its end, with some hearts being solid black and others a light gray. The hearts are scattered across the top, creating a whimsical, hanging effect.

Reader's Theater:

A Valentine For
Everyone



Characters:

- Narrator
- Charlie (a cheerful and creative student)
- Priya (Charlie's best friend, practical and witty)
- Mr. Thompson (a friendly teacher with a love of puns)
- Luna (a shy new student)
- Noah (a jokester)

Optional Props:

- A large Valentine's Day card
- A scarf and sweater for Priya
- A clipboard or folder for Mr. Thompson
- A backpack for Luna
- A stack of small Valentine cards for Noah
- A table decorated with craft supplies

Narrator:

It was the day before Valentine's Day at Sunnyside Elementary, and Mrs. Rivera's classroom buzzed with excitement. Students were busy preparing their Valentine's Day cards. At one table, Charlie and Priya were surrounded by glitter, markers, and a mountain of pink paper hearts.

Charlie:

(excitedly) Look, Priya! This card has googly eyes that actually wiggle! Everyone's going to love it.

Priya:

(teasing) Charlie, you've already made twenty cards. You don't even know that many people.

Charlie:

(grinning) You can never have too many friends, Priya. Plus, Valentine's Day is about making everyone feel included.

Narrator:

At the next table, Noah was scribbling jokes on his cards.

Noah:

(laughing to himself) This one's perfect. "What did one piece of candy say to the other?" "You're sweet!"
(laughing harder) Classic Noah.

Narrator:

Meanwhile, in the corner of the room, Luna sat quietly, doodling on a piece of paper. She was new to the school and hadn't spoken to many classmates yet. Priya noticed Luna and nudged Charlie.

Priya:

(whispering) Hey, Charlie. Luna looks kind of lonely. Maybe we should invite her to join us.

Charlie:

(nodding) Great idea. Let's go.

Narrator:

Charlie and Priya walked over to Luna's table.

Charlie:

(friendly) Hi, Luna! Want to make some Valentine's cards with us?

Luna:

(smiling shyly) Thanks, but I don't know what to write.

Priya:

(encouraging) That's okay. You can draw pictures instead. Valentine's cards don't need words to be awesome.

Narrator:

As Luna joined their table, Mr. Thompson strolled over, holding a clipboard.

Mr. Thompson:

(cheerfully) Good work, team! Remember, tomorrow's Valentine's party is about kindness and inclusivity. Let's make sure no one feels left out. Oh, and don't forget my favorite pun: "You're the write kind of Valentine!"

Noah:

(snorting) That's worse than my candy joke. But I guess it's kind of funny... in a dad-joke way.

Narrator:

The students laughed and continued working. By the end of the day, everyone had a pile of colorful, creative cards. On Valentine's Day, the classroom was decorated with streamers and balloons. As the party began, Charlie noticed Noah handing out his joke-filled cards.

Charlie:

(raising an eyebrow) Noah, you made cards for everyone? That's a lot of work for someone who usually pranks people.

Noah:

(grinning) I figured, why not? Even I can spread some laughs and kindness for a day.

Narrator:

Charlie, Priya, and Luna smiled as they passed out their cards. When Luna handed a card to Mr. Thompson, he read it aloud.

Mr. Thompson:

(reading) "Thank you for making our classroom feel like home." (smiling warmly) That's the best Valentine I've ever received.

Narrator:

Charlie grinned, Priya gave a thumbs up, and Luna blushed with pride, feeling truly part of the group for the first time. The room buzzed with laughter and smiles as everyone enjoyed the party. Luna's eyes sparkled as she read the cards she received, each one a little reminder that she belonged.

Luna:

(happily) This is the best Valentine's Day ever. Thanks, everyone.

Charlie:

(grinning) That's what it's all about—making sure everyone feels special.

Narrator:

And so, the students of Sunnyside Elementary learned that Valentine's Day wasn't just about cards and candy—it was about kindness, laughter, and making sure no one was left out. A day of love and friendship could brighten anyone's heart, one card at a time.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Who actually took the pie and why?

How did the group work together to solve the problem?

What was Mrs. Crisp's secret ingredient?

Charlie



Priya



Mr. Thompson



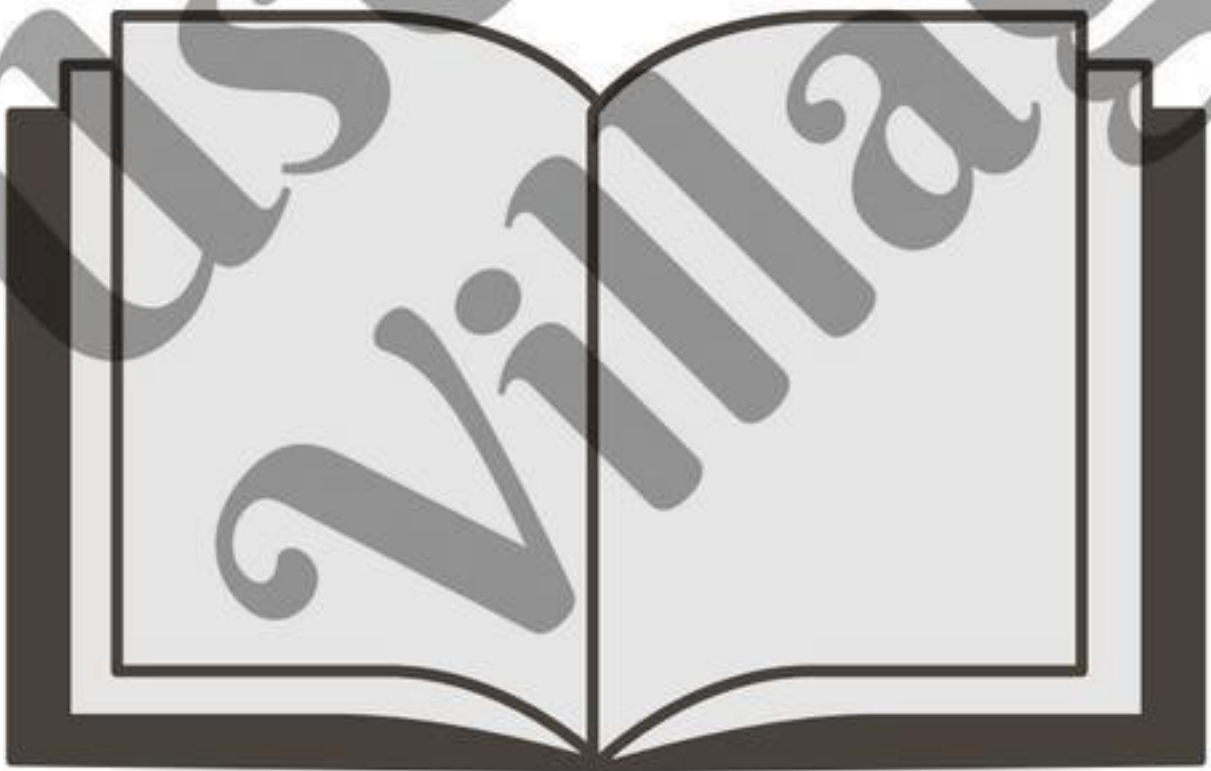
Luna



Noah



Narrator



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Extension Activities:

- **Design Your Own Card:** Have students create a Valentine's card that includes a kind message or fun joke.
- **Acts of Kindness List:** Ask students to brainstorm ways to include everyone during special celebrations.
- **Role-Play Inclusivity:** Encourage students to act out scenarios where they can make someone feel welcome and included.



Reader's Theater:

The First Signs of Spring



Characters:

- Narrator
- Lena – An adventurous and curious girl.
- Malik – A thoughtful and observant boy.
- Grandma Rosa – Wise and kind
- Mr. Finch – A friendly park ranger.
- Robin – A lively and talkative bird.
- Buzzy – A curious and energetic bee.

Optional Props:

- Lightweight scarves, jackets, or sweaters for Lena and Malik
- A walking stick or shawl for Grandma Rosa
- A ranger hat or badge for Mr. Finch
- Paper bird cutout or plush toy for Robin
- Bee antenna headband or small bee plush for Buzzy
- Small paper flowers or a floral garland to represent blooming flowers
- A picnic basket or small garden tools for the final scene

(The stage is set in a park with bare trees and patches of snow lingering on the ground. Lena and Malik walk along a path, bundled up in coats and scarves.)

Narrator: It was late winter, and the air was still crisp. But something was changing. Lena and Malik walked through the park, looking for the first signs of spring.

Lena: (shivering) It still feels like winter! Are you sure spring is coming, Malik?

Malik: (pointing) Look over there! The ice on the pond is starting to melt. That's a sign, right?

Narrator: Just then, Grandma Rosa, who loved walking in the park, waved to them from a bench.

Grandma Rosa: (smiling) Ah, my little explorers! Do you feel that? The sun is warmer today than last week. That's how nature whispers that spring is near.

Lena: But how can we know for sure? What should we look for?

Grandma Rosa: Keep your eyes and ears open, my dear. Nature always tells a story if you listen.

(Lena and Malik walk further into the park and hear a bird chirping from a tree branch.)

Robin:

(happily) Chirp, chirp! The sun is back, the worms are waking up, and I'm building my nest! Spring is almost here!

Malik:

Wow, Robin! So, when you come back, that means spring is coming?

Robin:

That's right! We robins love the warmer weather. And look—(flaps wings)—the buds are growing on the trees. Soon, there will be flowers!

Lena:

(excitedly) I see them! Tiny buds on the branches!

(The kids continue walking and stop near a flower bed. A small bee flies in, buzzing around the flowers.)

Buzzy:

Bzzz! Hello, friends! It's about time for spring! These flowers are starting to bloom, which means it's time for me to get to work.

Malik:

Hey, Buzzy! What do you do when spring starts?

Buzzy:

I collect nectar to make honey! And see all these little yellow flowers? They weren't here last week. The earth is waking up!

Lena:

(laughing) It's like nature is stretching after a long nap!

(The kids spot Mr. Finch, the park ranger, picking up branches near the trail.)

Mr. Finch:

Hello, Lena! Hello, Malik! Out looking for spring?

Malik:

Yes! We heard birds, saw flowers, and even met a busy bee! Is there anything else to look for?

Mr. Finch:

Absolutely! The days are getting longer, which means more sunshine. And soon, the frogs in the pond will start singing at night. Have you noticed the air smells different?

Lena:

(sniffing) It smells... fresh!

Mr. Finch:

That's right! The ground is thawing, and new plants are growing. Spring is full of surprises!

(Lena and Malik run back to Grandma Rosa, excited.)

Lena:

Grandma Rosa, we saw so many signs of spring! The birds, the flowers, even the smell in the air!

Grandma Rosa:

(nodding) See? Nature always tells us when it's time for a new season. And soon, everything will be green again.

Malik:

I can't wait! Let's come back tomorrow and see what else has changed!

Lena:

And we can start planning fun spring activities! I want to plant a garden with lots of colorful flowers.

Malik:

I want to have a picnic with my family in the park!

Grandma Rosa:

(smiling) Those are wonderful ideas! Spring is a time for new beginnings. Let's make the most of it!

Narrator:

And so, Lena and Malik learned that spring is not just a day on the calendar—it's a slow and beautiful change, bringing new life everywhere.

(The end!)

Name: _____

Date: _____

What are some signs of spring mentioned in the play?

Why do the animals and plants start changing when spring arrives?

What fun activities do you like to do in the spring?

Lena



Malik



Grandma Rosa



Mr. Finch



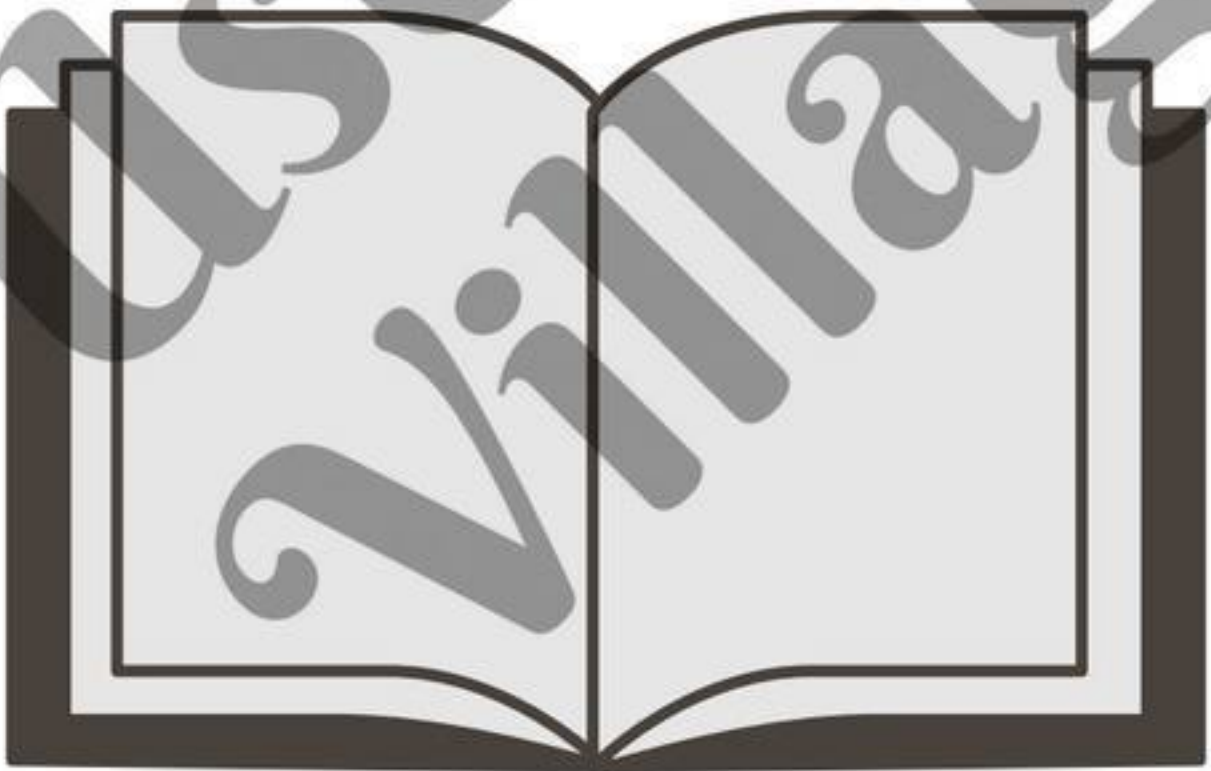
Robin



Buzzy



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:

- **Nature Walk Journal:** Have students go on a nature walk and write or draw the signs of spring they observe.
- **Planting Seeds:** Give each student a small cup with soil and seeds to grow their own spring flowers.
- **Spring Poetry:** Have students write a short poem about what they love about spring.
- **DIY Bird Feeders:** Teach students how to make simple bird feeders using pinecones, peanut butter, and birdseed.
- **Create a Spring Mural:** Work together as a class to make a big mural of all the signs of spring they discovered in the play.
- **Act It Out:** Have students create their own scenes about what happens next for Lena, Malik, and the animals as spring continues.

Reader's Theater:

A Caterpillar's Big Change



Characters:

- Narrator
- Maya (curious and determined, natural leader)
- Leo (easygoing and quick-witted, loves jokes)
- Mrs. Crisp (cheerful orchard owner, a tiny bit forgetful)
- Farmer Green (helpful neighbor farmer)
- Janelle (apple-juggler extraordinaire, energetic)
- Detective Pippin (dramatic, confident, loves “big reveals”)
- Tommy (young orchard helper, eager but shy)

Optional Props:

- 🌿 Leaves: Real or paper leaves for caterpillars to hold or sit on.
- 🧶 Green Scarves or Felt: To wrap around shoulders or heads as "caterpillar bodies."
- 🦋 Butterfly Wings: DIY paper wings, felt, or store-bought butterfly wings for Mariposa.
- 🦋 Antennae Headbands: For Callie, Benji, and Leafhopper (pipe cleaners attached to headbands).
- 📖 Notebook: For Jamie, the Curious Human, to hold while taking notes.
- 🌸 Flower Headband or Costume: For the Flower character.
- 🌿 Small Branch or Stick: To represent a safe place for caterpillars to build their cocoons.
- 🧶 Yarn or String: To mimic spinning a cocoon.
- 🌸 Fake or Real Flowers: For setting the garden scene (on a table or taped to the backdrop).
- 🏷️ Name Tags: For each character to wear for easy identification.

Narrator:

In a sun-dappled garden filled with green leaves and bright blossoms, two caterpillars named Callie and Benji chewed happily on their favorite leaves.

Callie (excited):

Mmm, nothing beats fresh leaves for breakfast! Benji, have you heard the news? We'll be making our cocoons soon!

Benji (nervous):

I know, Callie. I've heard the older caterpillars talk about it. But... I don't know if I'm ready. What if I mess up and get stuck? Or what if my wings don't work?

Callie (encouraging):

Oh, Benji! You're going to be the best butterfly ever. Just think—floating from flower to flower, sipping nectar all day long!

Benji:

But what if I can't find you? What if you change and forget about me?

Narrator:

Callie paused, thinking about Benji's fears. Just then, a bright green Leafhopper bounced onto their leaf, his antennae twitching with curiosity.

Leafhopper (teasing):

Wings, huh? Sounds scary! I'd rather keep my legs and bounce around. Why do you caterpillars even want wings anyway?

Callie:

Well, wings help us explore new places, and we can visit flowers that are too far to crawl to. Plus, butterflies are important for the garden!

Leafhopper (shrugging):

I guess that's true. But I'd be scared to change too! I like being a leafhopper.

Benji (sighing):

See, even Leafhopper thinks it's scary. What if I don't recognize myself when I'm a butterfly?

Narrator:

At that moment, a graceful butterfly named Mariposa fluttered down, her wings shimmering like a sunset.

Mariposa (kindly):

Hello, little ones. I overheard your worries. Change can be scary, but it's also a chance to grow. When I was a caterpillar, I was nervous too.

Benji (eyes wide):

Really? You were scared?

Mariposa:

Of course! I worried that I'd lose all the things I loved about myself. But guess what? When I emerged from my chrysalis, I felt free and strong, like I'd always had wings.

Callie:

Wow! Did you still remember your friends?

Mariposa:

Yes, I did! And I made new friends too. Change doesn't erase who we are. It helps us discover who we can become.

Leafhopper (curious):

But what if something goes wrong?

Mariposa:

That's why we look out for each other. We help each other, just like I'm helping you now.

Narrator:

Nearby, a delicate Flower swayed in the breeze, listening to the conversation.

Flower (gentle):

And when you become butterflies, you'll help me too. Butterflies drink my nectar and carry my pollen to other flowers so we can grow new blooms.

Callie (smiling):

That's so cool! We get to help you, too!

Benji (thinking):

I never thought of it that way. Maybe change isn't just for us; it's for the whole garden.

Narrator:

Just then, a curious Human named Jamie peeked over the garden fence, a notebook in hand.

Jamie (excited):

Whoa! Caterpillars talking about change? This is amazing! I've always wondered how you feel about becoming butterflies.

Benji (grinning shyly):

It's... a little scary, but also exciting. I want to help the flowers like Mariposa said.

Jamie:

That's wonderful! I'll make sure your garden has plenty of flowers for you to visit. I'll plant even more next spring!

Callie:

Thank you, Jamie! That makes us feel safe and welcome.

Mariposa:

See, Benji? Change can bring new friends, new adventures, and even new ways to help the world around you.

Benji (smiling):

I think... I'm ready to try. Callie, will you help me build my cocoon?

Callie (enthusiastic):

Of course, Benji! Let's do it together.

Narrator:

And so, Callie and Benji began to spin their cocoons, carefully weaving each thread with hope and excitement. With every turn, Benji felt a little braver and a little stronger.

Flower (singing softly):

Spin your dreams, little ones, and trust the magic within. When the time is right, you'll spread your wings and dance with the wind.

Narrator:

When the time came, they would emerge as butterflies, ready to explore the garden, help the flowers, and share their stories of change with others.

Jamie (closing notebook):

I can't wait to see you both again. I'll be waiting with my camera and lots of flowers!

Narrator:

Change had come to the garden, but it had brought hope, friendship, and a beautiful new beginning for everyone.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Why was Benji nervous about changing?

What role do butterflies play in helping flowers?

How does the story show that change can help the whole community?

Jamie



Mariposa



Leafhopper



Flower



Callie



Benji



Narrator



Jamie



Mariposa



Leafhopper



Callie



Flower



Benji



Narrator



Teacher Suggestions:

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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:

- **Character Diary Entries** — Write a short diary entry from the perspective of one character in the play.
- **Design a School Map** — Draw a map showing key places from the story, labeling where Sam's lunchbox might have gone.
- **Role-Play Conflict Resolution** — Practice helping someone who is new, lost, or feeling left out, just like Sam.
- **Friendship Acrostic Poem** — Create a poem using the word "FRIENDSHIP" that describes what it means to be a good friend.
- **Build a Welcome Kit** — Design a small kit with a friendly note, a drawing of the school, and tips to help new students feel at home.



Reader's Theater:

The Easter Egg Dance Off



Characters:

- Narrator
- Benny the Bunny (a mischievous but lovable Easter Bunny)
- Ella (a smart and curious kid)
- Max (Ella's enthusiastic but slightly clueless best friend)
- Grandma Lou (wise and full of surprises)
- Henrietta (a giant, sassy chicken)

Optional Props:

- Bunny Ears – For Benny the Bunny
- Chicken Headband or Feather Boa – For Henrietta
- Easter Baskets – For Ella and Max
- Colorful Plastic Eggs – To represent the missing Easter eggs
- A Rocking Chair – For Grandma Lou
- A Toy Radio or Boombox – To play "music" for the dance-off

Narrator:

It was a bright and sunny Easter morning in the town of Hoppington. Kids were ready for the annual Easter egg hunt—except something was very, very wrong.

Ella:

(Max holding an empty basket) Max, is it just me, or do you also notice the complete and total lack of eggs?

Max:

(Checking under a bush) I thought maybe they were just really well hidden this year... like, super well hidden.

Narrator:

Just then, a flash of fluffy white zipped past them, zigzagging across the park.

Ella & Max (together):

Benny the Bunny!

Benny the Bunny:

(Stops and waves, looking guilty) Oh, hey, kids. Uh, lovely day for an egg hunt, huh?

Ella:

Benny, where are the eggs? Did you forget to hide them?

Benny the Bunny:

(Holding up one paw) Now, let's not throw around words like forget. Let's say... I had a tiny mix-up.

Max:

(Tilting his head) A mix-up?

Benny the Bunny:

(Sighing) Okay, okay. I was up late watching 'Dancing with the Ducks,' and I may have accidentally left the eggs in the worst possible place.

Ella:

Oh no... where?

Benny the Bunny:

Grandma Lou's backyard.

Max:

(Eyes wide) The one with the GIANT, TERRIFYING CHICKEN?

Narrator:

Everyone in Hoppington knew about Grandma Lou's hen, Henrietta—a chicken the size of a small horse with a major attitude.

Ella:

Well... I guess we have to get them back!

Max:

(Holding basket tightly) I'd rather just start a new tradition... you know, the Invisible Egg Hunt?

Narrator:

But Ella was already marching toward Grandma Lou's house, with Benny and Max reluctantly following behind.
(Scene shift: Grandma Lou's backyard)

Grandma Lou:

(Rocking in her chair) Well, well, well. If it isn't the Scrambled Egg Squad.

Benny the Bunny:

(Nervously) Hi, Grandma Lou. Uh, so, funny story...

Grandma Lou:

(Chuckling) Oh, I know. Henrietta found the eggs, and now she thinks they're HER babies.

Max:

(Whispers) This is why I don't trust chickens.

Ella:

Grandma Lou, how do we get them back?

Grandma Lou:

(Laughing) Well, you could ask Henrietta nicely.

Narrator:

The trio cautiously approached Henrietta, who stood protectively over a pile of brightly colored eggs.

Benny the Bunny:

(Uplifting his paws) Hey, Henrietta, those eggs aren't actually baby chicks. They're just Easter eggs filled with candy!

Henrietta:

(Clutching the eggs dramatically) Lies! My precious babies are not made of sugar!

Max:

(Nodding) Actually... they kinda are.

Ella:

(Kindly) Henrietta, we promise they're just for fun. No baby chicks, just delicious treats for the kids in town.

Henrietta:

(Squinting) Hmm... well, I might believe you, but I'm not giving them up that easily.

Benny the Bunny:

(Shrugging) Sooo... what do we have to do?

Henrietta:

(Grinning) Win a dance-off. You win, you get the eggs. You lose, I keep 'em.

Max:

(Clutching his head) I can't believe this is happening.

Benny the Bunny:

(Stretching) Alright, Henrietta. Let's DANCE!

Narrator:

Before Benny could reconsider, Grandma Lou turned on her radio. A funky tune played, and Henrietta strutted out of the coop, looking ready to boogie.

Benny wiggled, spun, and twitched his nose in perfect rhythm. Henrietta flapped her wings, tapped her feet, and spun in a circle. The crowd gasped—it was close!

Ella:

(Whispering to Grandma Lou) Who's winning?

Grandma Lou:

(Grinning) Henrietta. But she's impressed.

Narrator:

Finally, with a dramatic flourish, Henrietta clucked proudly.

Henrietta:

(Nods) Alright, alright! I admit it—you've got moves, Bunny. I technically won, but I respect the effort. And since I don't actually eat chocolate, I suppose you can have your eggs back.

Benny the Bunny:

(Bowing) Thank you, Henrietta. You truly are the queen of funky moves.

Max:

(Relieved) Can we please go now before she changes her mind?

Narrator:

With the eggs safely returned, the Great Easter Egg Hunt was back on!

Ella:

(Waving a hand) Next year, Benny, maybe don't leave the eggs with a giant chicken.

Benny the Bunny:

(Grinning) But then we wouldn't have this amazing story to tell!

Narrator:

And so, the kids of Hoppington celebrated with a hunt filled with laughter, candy, and a new town legend—the time Benny the Bunny challenged a chicken to a dance-off... and almost won.

The End!

Name: _____

Date: _____

Why were the Easter eggs missing at the start of the story?

Why did Henrietta decide to give the eggs back anyway?

If you were in this story, what other creative way could you have tried to get the eggs back?

Benny



Ella



Max



Grandma Lou



Henrietta



Narrator



Benny



Ella



Max



Grandma Lou



Henrietta



Narrator



Teacher Suggestions:

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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:

- **Choreograph Your Own Dance-Off:** Have students create their own dance moves and hold a friendly class-wide dance battle.
- **Design an Easter Egg Hunt Map:** Students can draw a creative map of where they would hide Easter eggs in their own version of the story.
- **Rewrite the Ending:** What if Henrietta didn't give up the eggs? Have students brainstorm and write an alternative ending where they still manage to retrieve the eggs.
- **Create a Character Puppet Show:** Using simple paper puppets or stick figures, students can act out the story with their own creative twists.
- **Henrietta's Diary Entry:** Have students write a diary entry from Henrietta's perspective, describing how she felt about the whole situation.
- **Easter Egg Art Challenge:** Each student decorates an egg with a design that represents their favorite scene from the story.



Reader's Theater:

Bees On Strike!



Characters:

- Narrator
- Maya (curious and determined, natural leader)
- Leo (easygoing and quick-witted, loves jokes)
- Mrs. Crisp (cheerful orchard owner, a tiny bit forgetful)
- Farmer Green (helpful neighbor farmer)
- Janelle (apple-juggler extraordinaire, energetic)
- Detective Pippin (dramatic, confident, loves “big reveals”)
- Tommy (young orchard helper, eager but shy)

Optional Props:

- Red-and-white checkered cloth for the missing pie
- Small pie tin and serving utensil
- "Entry #7" sign or label for contest table
- Magnifying glass for Detective Pippin
- Apron for Mrs. Crisp
- Straw hat for Farmer Green
- Baskets or crates of apples
- Three apples for juggling (real or fake)
- Oven mitts for Detective Pippin during the baking scene

Narrator:

Just a few years ago, Bloomville was buzzing with life. Every yard had patches of dandelions, wildflowers bloomed along every sidewalk, and bees happily floated from blossom to blossom. The town was full of color, laughter, and buzzing wings. It was a paradise for pollinators.

But over time, things started to change. People wanted perfect, green lawns with no "weeds." Dandelions were sprayed, clover was pulled, and pesticides became more common. The flowers began to disappear, and with them, the bees.

Now, on this sunny spring morning, something was wrong. The gardens were quiet. The fruit trees were bare—no apples, no cherries, not even a single plum. And while the air once hummed with bees, today... there was only silence.

Mayor Maple:

(Sniffing a daisy sadly) What's going on? Where are the bees? No buzz, no bloom, no blueberries!

Narrator:

Meanwhile, deep inside the hive, the bees were having a serious meeting.

Beatrix:

(Sternly) Bees of Bloomville! We are officially on strike! We refuse to pollinate until the humans clean up their act!

Buzzy:

(Laughing) You heard the queen! No pollen parties until there's less trash and more wildflowers!

Moxie:

(Holding up a sign) We're tired of dodging lawnmowers, pesticides, and soda cans! It's time for action!

Petal:

(Concerned) But what if the humans don't listen?

Beatrix:

Then they'll learn what life is like without bees. No apples, no cucumbers, no flowers...

Narrator:

The bees buzzed in agreement, stomping their tiny feet and waving mini protest signs. Back at the farm, Farmer Fran was scratching her head.

Farmer Fran:

(Squinting at her apple tree) Why aren't my blossoms turning into apples? Did I plant duds?

Narrator:

That's when Mayor Maple arrived, holding a very wilted bouquet.

Mayor Maple:

Fran! The bees are gone, and the town is in trouble. What do we do?

Farmer Fran:

(Thinking) Maybe the bees are upset. Let's go see them. Bring a muffin. Bees like muffins, right?

Narrator:

And so, Farmer Fran and Mayor Maple tiptoed to the hive with a peace offering.

Beatrix:

(Confidently) Welcome, humans. We've been expecting you.

Buzzy:

(With a wink) We're on a buzz-break. Want honey? Fix the planet.

Moxie:

(Handing over a tiny clipboard) Here's our list: less spraying, more planting, no plastic near flowers, and bee hotels. We're serious.

Mayor Maple:

(Awkwardly) What's a bee hotel? Does it have tiny pillows?

Beatrix:

(Sighing) It's a safe spot for wild bees to rest. Your gardens are full of flowers, but nowhere to stay.

Petal:

Excuse me, but if we stop pollinating forever... won't we miss the flowers too?

Beatrix:

That's why we hope they change. But we'll hold strong until they do.

Farmer Fran:

Gosh. I didn't know it was that bad. I just wanted my apples.

Narrator:

The bees pointed to trash near their clover patch, wilted flowers, and a sign that read “Lawn chemicals in use.”

Moxie:

See this? Bees can't thrive with poison in the pollen.

Mayor Maple:

(Reading the list) This is totally doable. We can help!

Narrator:

And so, the town of Bloomville got to work. Kids planted wildflowers. Adults pulled weeds and picked up trash. Ricky, a local student, started the Bloomville Clean-Up Crew!

Ricky:

(Excited) We planted bee-friendly herbs and painted signs that say “Bee Kind!”

Narrator:

Even the grocery store put out a “Bee Safe” pledge for customers. Everyone wanted the bees back.

Buzzy:

(Sniffing a tulip) This pollen smells pesticide-free!

Petal:

(Squealing) We did it! We made a difference!

Beatrix:

Very well. Bees, prepare for pollination!

Moxie:

Let the pollination parade begin!

Narrator:

And that Friday, Bloomville hosted its first-ever Bee Day, complete with flower cupcakes, face paint, and a new song:

All Bees (together):

(Singing) Buzz, buzz, we're back again, With gardens blooming thanks to friends. You heard our plea, you saved the day, Now bees and blooms are here to stay!

Narrator:

From that day forward, Bloomville and its bees worked together, keeping the planet—and each other—buzzing along.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Why did the bees decide to go on strike?

What problems did Bloomville face when the bees stopped working?

How did the humans respond once they understood the bees' message?

Beatrix



Moxie



Buzzy



Farmer Fran



Mayor Maple



Petal



Ricky



Narrator



Beatrix



Moxie



Buzzy



Farmer Fran



Mayor Maple



Petal



Ricky



Narrator



Teacher Suggestions:

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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:

- Pie Poster: Design a poster advertising Entry #7 for the contest.
- Apple Science: Research different apple varieties and taste-test them.
- Write a New Ending: Have students create an alternative ending to the story. What if someone different had stolen the pie? What was their motive?
- Harvest Festival Map: Have students draw a map of Crisp's Apple Orchard, including all the places mentioned in the play (pie table, cider barn, corn maze, booths, etc.). Label each spot where clues were found.
- Recipe Writing: Students create their own apple pie recipe, complete with a list of ingredients, step-by-step instructions, and a "secret ingredient" that makes it special.

Reader's Theater: The Last Assignment



Characters:

- Narrator
- Maya (curious and determined, natural leader)
- Leo (easygoing and quick-witted, loves jokes)
- Mrs. Crisp (cheerful orchard owner, a tiny bit forgetful)
- Farmer Green (helpful neighbor farmer)
- Janelle (apple-juggler extraordinaire, energetic)
- Detective Pippin (dramatic, confident, loves “big reveals”)
- Tommy (young orchard helper, eager but shy)

Optional Props:

- Clipboard or planner (for Jada)
- Sunglasses and pool floaties (for Liam)
- Graduation cap or scarf (for Mr. Markley)
- Tissue box (for Ava)
- Microphone or walkie-talkie (for Principal Puddle)
- Giant whistle and stopwatch (for Coach Boom)
- School supplies for comedic effect: a giant pencil, overstuffed backpack, a paper airplane

Narrator:

The sun was shining. The classroom fans were humming. The hallway smelled like leftover field day popsicles and sweaty sneakers. It was the last week of school.

Sam:

(Fanning himself) This is it. One more week. I've already mentally clocked out.

Liam:

(Wearing sunglasses) I clocked out last Friday. I brought sunscreen and a beach ball today.

Jada:

(Glaring) We still have folders to clean out and at least three anchor charts to review. Don't even think about relaxing yet!

Ava:

(Sniffles softly) I'm just trying to soak it all in. These desks... this whiteboard... this mysterious stain on the carpet. I'll miss it all.

Narrator:

Just then, Mr. Markley entered the classroom with flair. A coffee in one hand. A folder in the other.

Mr. Markley:

My dear students! I present... your final assignment!

All Students:

(Gasping) WHAT?!?

Liam:

I thought we were DONE.

Sam:

Please tell me it's to nap until dismissal.

Mr. Markley:

Even better. I want you to write a reflection.

"A Letter to Your Future Self."

Due by the last day. And it must include:

1. Your favorite memory.
2. The weirdest moment.
3. What you learned this year.

Jada:

Ooh! I already have bullet points!

Sam:

(Panicking) But my brain is already on vacation! Can I just draw a stick figure doing jumping jacks and call it a metaphor?

Mr. Markley:

Absolutely not. Now begin! Reflection time starts... now!

Narrator:

The students groaned louder than a rusty classroom door. But soon...

Ava:

(Smiling) Remember the day our class hamster escaped and Liam tried to bribe him back with a granola bar?

Liam:

Hey! It almost worked. Peanut butter chip is his favorite.

Jada:

And the time Sam replaced all the vocab words on the word wall with pizza toppings?

Sam:

You're welcome. Pepperoni is basically a synonym for joy.

Narrator:

Laughter filled the classroom as memories came flooding back.

Ava:

I remember when I read my first chapter book cover to cover. I felt like a real author!

Sam:

And when we tried to bake a volcano for science and it exploded blue foam everywhere—even on Principal Puddle's shoes!

(Cue Principal Puddle entering.)

Principal Puddle:

(Soggy) Still haven't forgiven the blueberry foam incident...

Liam:

That was SCIENCE, sir.

Principal Puddle:

It was also sticky. Very, very sticky.

Narrator:

Even Coach Boom stopped by, confused but energetic.

Coach Boom:

(Blowing whistle) WHO'S READY FOR REFLECTION LAPS?! Wait... we're writing letters? Can I use glitter pens?

Mr. Markley:

Only if you promise not to yell “YEET” when you turn it in.

Coach Boom:

NO PROMISES.

Narrator:

By the end of the hour, every student was smiling, scribbling, and remembering.

Jada:

(Sincerely) This was actually... kind of fun.

Ava:

I don't want to forget this year.

Liam:

I still want to cannonball into summer, but... yeah. This was a good ride.

Sam:

Can we staple a snack to our letter?

Mr. Markley:

Sure. As long as it's not tuna salad.

Narrator:

And with that, the final assignment was complete. Not just a letter—but a reminder of everything they'd learned, laughed at, and lived through.

All (together):

Best. Year. Ever.

Use the
Villages

Name: _____

Date: _____

What was the final assignment Mr. Markley gave?

Why didn't the students want to do it at first?

How did the students' feelings change during the assignment?

Sam



Jada



Mr. Markley



Ava



Liam



Principal Puddle



Coach Boom



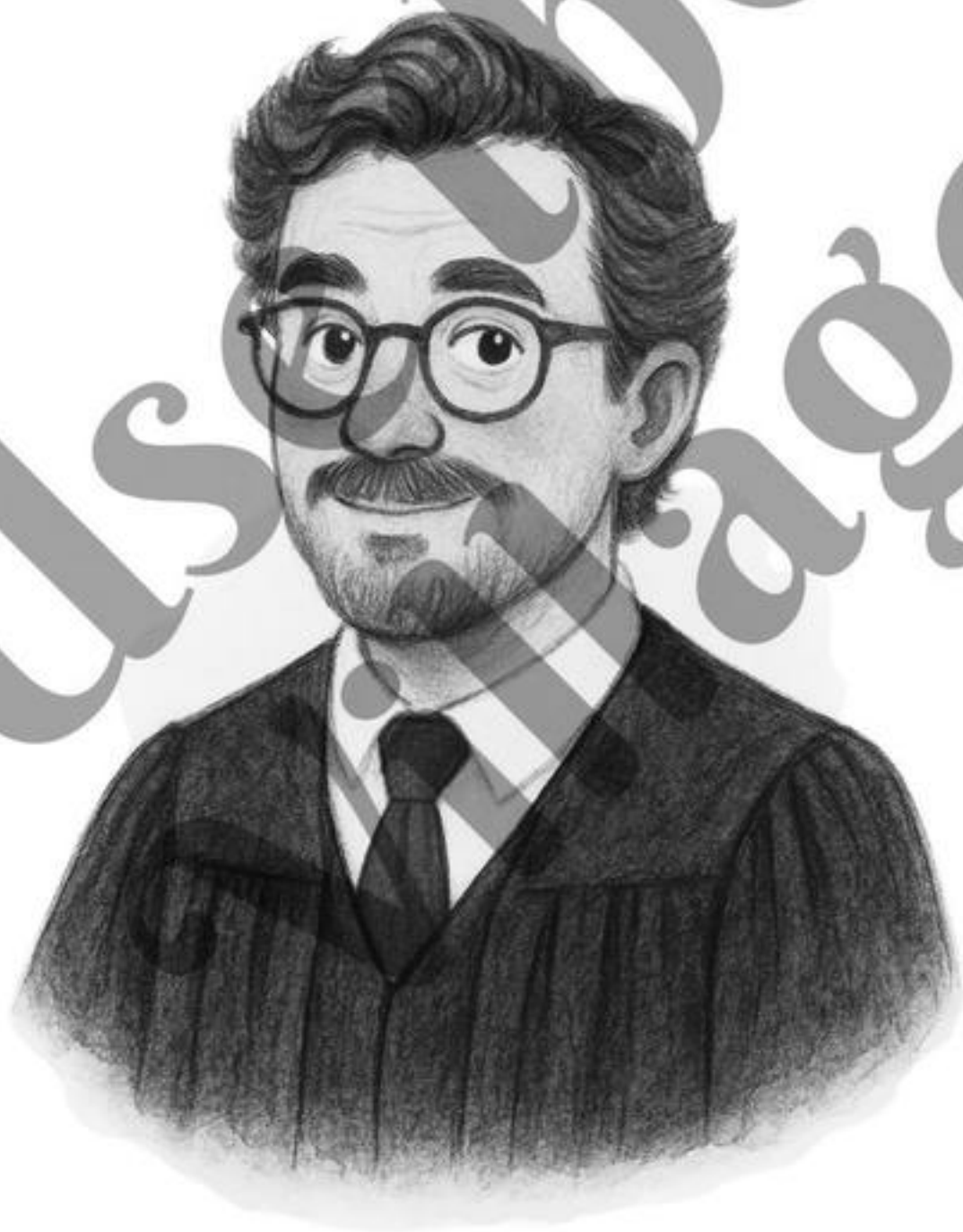
Sam



Jada



Mr. Markley



Ava



Liam



Principal Puddle



Coach Boom



Narrator



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:

- Pie Poster: Design a poster advertising Entry #7 for the contest.
- Apple Science: Research different apple varieties and taste-test them.
- Write a New Ending: Have students create an alternative ending to the story. What if someone different had stolen the pie? What was their motive?
- Harvest Festival Map: Have students draw a map of Crisp's Apple Orchard, including all the places mentioned in the play (pie table, cider barn, corn maze, booths, etc.). Label each spot where clues were found.
- Recipe Writing: Students create their own apple pie recipe, complete with a list of ingredients, step-by-step instructions, and a "secret ingredient" that makes it special.