



Reader's Theater Interactive Workshop for After School Program Site Directors

Reader's Theater is a compelling and easy-to-implement reading enrichment activity that meets literacy requirements for after-school programs. After-school programs that include the "arts" add a special dimension because arts learning experiences can alter the attitudes of young people toward themselves and each other. According to the *National Endowment for the Arts*, students involved in sustained theater arts often show gains not only in reading proficiency, but also in self-control and motivation and in empathy and tolerance for others. **Learning in and through the arts can even help students overcome the obstacles of disadvantaged backgrounds.** Reader's Theater, which doesn't require memorization, props, or a stage is much easier to implement than typical theatrical plays and provides a balanced platform for all students, rather than a spotlight for just a few.

In this interactive workshop, participants take roles in specially-designed reader's theater stories and bring them to life in small groups while learning first-hand the power of this exciting type of reading activity in building reading fluency and confidence. Participants learn how to structure and assign roles with multi-aged groups of students and how to implement a successful and fun reader's theater experience for their after-school programs. **Reader's Theater is an approved form of "Repeated Guided Oral Reading" which is a research-based and proven method for improving reading fluency and comprehension, especially when it includes reading role models.** Students become those role models in small non-threatening groups in a fun and entertaining setting.

The 90-minute workshop is usually structured for 30-50 people and includes:

- Introduction to Reader's Theater, how it's used, its benefits, and how it meets literacy requirements as a reading enrichment program. Review of the advantages of using materials with multi-leveled and color-coded roles.
- View an implementation DVD in two parts: one for staff and one designed to play for students. The DVD explains materials and how to use them.
- Review of multi-leveled and color-coded reader's theater books and what is included in story kits. There will be an explanation of how each kit component can be used, including supplemental cross-curricular activity worksheets.
- Explanation of character role assignments based on student age, grade, reading ability level, and other factors using a Reader Assignment Guide. Since after-school program instructors may not be familiar with all their students' reading aptitude, a simple system and chart is provided to help them gain and organize information about students' personalities, desires and skills, along with useful tips on how to combine students in the most productive reading groups.
- Review of coaching acting techniques and read-aloud etiquette, the optional use of mini-costumes, and rewarding students for exceptional effort and performance through award certificates.
- Workshop participants will break into small non-threatening groups to read a story aloud the same way that students will in the program. Each participant will take a character role in a Reader's Theater story and bring it to life by reading his or her part with expression, enthusiasm, and acting techniques. Participants will understand how easy it is to implement a reader's theater story group and how much fun students can have reading aloud together.
- If time allows, participants will play a supplemental Reader's Theater "over-acting" game reading scenes with funny expressions and character types.
- A Question and Answer session will complete the workshop.

Workshop offered by
Playbooks® Reader's Theater
www.playbooks.com
1-800-375-2926