

Lesson: Readers' Theatre

Readers' Theatre is a joint dramatic reading from a script with the emphasis on oral expression. It brings a text to life, offers less confident readers support from peers and provides a social purpose for attentive reading. *Readers' Theatre* benefits students by increasing their skills as readers, listeners and speakers.

ONTARIO CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Curriculum Grades 1-2
ORAL COMMUNICATION Specific Expectations
1. Reflecting on Oral Communication Skills and Strategies 3.2
2. Listening to Understand 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6
READING Specific Expectations
1. Reading for Meaning 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.7
2. Reading with Fluency 3.1, 3.3
3. Reflecting in Reading Skills 4.2
Extension
THE ARTS AND DRAMA Specific Expectations
B1, B1.2, B1.3, B1.4, B3.2

Following is a *Readers' Theatre* script for the story "**Zahra & Binti**" story contained in the book "***It's Not About The Crumbs***". This script has been fully classroom tested.

Assessment and Evaluation considerations:

Note students' efforts to communicate meaning through voice (volume, pitch, stress), facial expressions and body language.

Observe students' interest in participating

Video record presentations (for students' reference and for parents)

Readers' Theatre of: ZAHRA AND BINTI
(Hansel and Gretel from Africa)
 From the book: It's Not About the Crumbs!
 By Veronika Martenova Charles

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Zahra
 Binti
 Giant Woman

Crocodile
 Narrator
 All (Everybody in unison)

Narrator: Zahra and Binti were sisters. They lived with their father in a village on the River Nile.

All: Once their father went away and left them with his relatives who were cruel and beat them.

Zahra: We can't stay here. Let's run away!

Narrator: The next day, the sisters left and walked until evening came.

All: Far off, they saw two fires, a big one and a little one.

Binti: Where should we go?

Zahra: Let's go to the big fire.

All: They came to a house in the desert.
 A giant woman with red eyes came from inside.

Giant woman: Welcome! Come in and have something to eat. You can stay the night.

All: After they had eaten, Zahra and Binti went to bed.
 But they couldn't sleep.

Narrator: They heard the sound of metal scraping against a rock and the woman singing:

Giant woman: *Rock is smooth, rock is hard,*

and it makes my dull axe sharp.

Narrator: The sisters were frightened, and Binti cried out.

Binti: *AHHH!* Did you hear that?

Narrator: The giant woman came inside.

Giant woman: *What's the matter?*

Zahra: We can't sleep,
The camels are keeping us awake.

All: The woman left her house and walked
to the little fire to talk to the camel owners.

Giant woman: *You there!*
Move your camels out of here!

All: But as soon as the woman left,
Zahra and Binti jumped out of their bed.

Zahra: Let's put rocks under the blanket,
and run away from here!
She will think we're sleeping.

Narrator: When the woman returned, she picked up her axe.

All: *Whoosh!* She swung it at the two bumps in bed.
Clang, clang! The axe hit the rocks.

Narrator: The woman screamed in rage.

Giant woman: *I will get you! You will pay for this!*

Narrator: She ran after the girls.

All: Soon Zahra and Binti saw a cloud of dust behind them.

Binti: Look! The woman is chasing us!

Narrator: The girls came to a wide river.
A crocodile was swimming there.

- Crocodile: What a juicy dinner they will make!
- Binti: Please crocodile, take us to the other side!
- Crocodile: I will eat you up!
- Zahra: If you take us, I promise you a bigger dinner.
- All: So the crocodile took them across.
Soon, the giant woman arrived on the other riverbank.
- Zahra: Crocodile, go back and bring our auntie.
- All: The crocodile went back
and the woman jumped on his back.
- Narrator: When he was halfway across, Zahra shouted,
- Zahra: Crocodile! Your dinner is on your back!
- Crocodile: *Splash!*
- Narrator: The crocodile dove under the water
and ate the woman up.
- All: Zahra and Binti went back to the village
and arrived just as their father returned.