Free Sample of Take Center Stage™
“A Hilarious Stage Acting Game with Reader’s Theater ™”

with a mini version of the Playbook® story….
Mini, the Super Watermelon

Sample game cards include a few cards from each of 4 decks. Full games include 108 cards. There are 18 cards here for you to print out and play with this free sample.

Print 1 copy of the cards in color or black and white.
Cut out the cards and tape the star side to the back of the text side. Or if you can print two-sided, simply print and cut out the cards. Place the cards in 4 decks on table separating them by card type.
Mini makes up a new song for the watermelons to sing. It is better than the last one!

**Earn 3 points!**

Mini decides to turn back when she sees the market.

**Lose 2 points.**

Mini makes a special gift for her mom, just because she is special.

**Earn 3 points!**

Mini is sold at the Farmer’s Market because so many people want to buy her!

**Lose 1 point.**

In the Farmer’s Market, someone is willing to buy Mini for $5.99. Someone else is willing to pay $7.99. How much more is the second buyer willing to pay than the first buyer?

**Answer:** ($2.00)

Supreme means:

A. of the highest quality or degree of character
B. very smart
C. angry

**Answer:** (A)

Why are watermelons healthy to eat?

A. They have potassium for muscle contraction and nerve impulses.
B. They have lycopene that can help to prevent some types of cancer.
C. They are full of antioxidants.
D. All of the above.

**Answer:** (D)

Mini Melon learns that:

A. she can’t quite bounce over the fence, so she goes through a hole in it instead.
B. even though she is small, she is supreme.
C. she will never get bigger.

**Answer:** (B)

What sound does the word crop make?

A. long e
B. short o
C. long o

**Answer:** (B)
**In Character™**  
Answer this question and earn 3 points.

What reasons do the people in the market give for wanting to take Mini home? Would you want to take her home for the same reasons? If not, why?

**In Character™**  
Answer this question and earn 2 points.

Why does Mini keep her trip to the Farmer's Market a secret? Does she do the right thing by not telling?

**In Character™**  
Read each clue and let the player guess one character for each clue. Guess correctly on the first clue and receive 3 points. On the second clue, receive 2 points, or on the third clue, receive 1 point.

a. I grew up in the watermelon patch with my family.
b. I like to bounce around.
c. I am a round, miniature watermelon.

Answer: Mini

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**Take the Spotlight™ With Your Body!**  
Hand this card to the player.

Direct the scene on page 4 of your Playbook™ story that includes 3 characters and begins with...

Mini: Daddy, you are the smartest melon...

Wendy: ...It's okay to be little.

The group of actors may agree to perform all parts with one action from the list below, or each player may perform a different action. Director reads the actions and allows players to choose.

- dancing
- juggling
- running

Each actor earns 1 point.

**Take the Spotlight™ With Your Face!**  
Hand this card to the player.

Direct the scene on page 3 of your Playbook™ story that includes 4 characters and begins with...

Farmer: Well, ma'am, you could...

Mini: I wonder what everyone in the patch will think about that?

Assign a different emotion/character type combination from the list below to each actor.

- hungry tiger
- shy teeth model
- sleepy mouse
- fearful duck

Each actor can choose to perform with the emotion, the character type, or both, and earns 1 point for each performed. Director earns 2 points and can also earn points as an actor when performing his or her own role (or can assign the role).

**Take the Spotlight™ With Your Voice!**  
Hand this card to the player.

Recite this single line of dialogue from your Playbook® story as if you were a...

- nauseated tap dancer

"I'm a super hero, small and round. Watch me bounce across the ground. I might be small, but I'm supreme. I have vitamins and Lycopene."

Player can choose to perform with the emotion, the character type, or both, and earns one point for each performed. You can instead assign the line to another actor and let everyone enjoy his or her performance and give up your points to the other actor.

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**Take the Spotlight™ With Your Face!**  
Hand this card to the player.

Recite this single line of dialogue from your Playbook® story as if you were a...

- twitchy opera singer

"In the patch, you are the king, are the king, are the king... but we are sweeter when we sing, all day long."

Player can choose to perform with the emotion, the character type, or both, and earns one point for each performed. You can instead assign the line to another actor and let everyone enjoy his or her performance and give up your points to the other actor.

**Take the Spotlight™ With Your Voice!**  
Hand this card to the player.

Recite this single line of dialogue from your Playbook® story as if you were a...

- nervous witch

"She bounced and bounced and before she knew it, she bounced up and over the fence. She found herself on the other side once again. She looked back at the patch and nobody was watching."

Player can choose to perform with the emotion, the character type, or both, and earns one point for each performed. You can instead assign the line to another actor and let everyone enjoy his or her performance and give up your points to the other actor.
When performing “Take the Spotlight” scenes, you can choose to perform only the “emotion” or only “character type.” For a greater challenge and more points you can perform both.

The following provides some quick examples of how you might perform some of the “emotion-character types” included in this story.

Your own creativity is usually best and will fit your personality. So ONLY use these examples if you get stuck for ideas.

Whether the scene is a focus on the voice, body or face, you’ll probably portray all three naturally. So, stand up when you perform and really get into it! Let loose, have fun and remember to support your fellow actors and their hilarious performances. Laugh with them, not at them.

**Take the Spotlight™ With Your Voice, Body, or Face**

**confused chicken**
Fold your arms and flap them, making chicken noises as you say your lines. Shrug your shoulders and look around the room. Say your lines as if they form a question. *(voice)*

**energetic reporter**
Pretend to hold a microphone and speak into it with enthusiasm. Pretend to hold the microphone in front of other players while they say their lines. *(voice)*

**fearful duck**
Waddle around frantically and quack often. Open your eyes wide. *(face)*

**happy yodeler**
Yodel in a high voice with a smile while saying your lines. *(voice)*

**hungry tiger**
Show your teeth, growl, and lick your lips while saying your lines. *(face)*

**loud referee**
Pretend to hold a whistle in your mouth, shout your lines and put your arms in the air as if there has been a touch down. Speak in a loud voice. *(voice)*

**nauseated tap dancer**
Hold your stomach, hang your head, and pretend to tap dance while stumbling slightly. *(body)*

**nervous witch**
Speak with a high, crackly voice, stuttering and showing anxiety. *(voice)*

**shy ghost**
Use a scary voice, saying “oooo” in between words, but speak quietly. Open your eyes wide as if scared and hesitate to say your lines, turning away from the other players. *(voice)*

**shy teeth model**
Smile as if having a picture taken, but turn away or cover your face while speaking. *(face)*

**sleepy mouse**
Let the end of your words or sentences trail off, close your eyes partially, and snore or yawn in between words. Wiggle your nose and speak in a small, squeaky voice. *(face)*

**twitchy opera singer**
Open your mouth wide and speak in a high singing voice, jerking your head, mouth, and arms occasionally. *(face)*

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**Take Center Stage™ Actor Tips for...**

**Mini, the Super Watermelon**

When performing “Take the Spotlight” scenes, you can choose to perform only the “emotion” or only “character type.” For a greater challenge and more points you can perform both.
Take Center Stage™ Score Card

Player 1 is the oldest player and Player 6 is the youngest player. Agree on how many rounds (or Acts) you wish to play. The player with the most points wins! Game starts with Player 1 drawing from the Take the Spotlight deck. Then, Player 2 is instructed to Choose a Deck as indicated in Act 1. Players continue to draw as assigned until all have completed Act 1. Award points as indicated on each card. When a player draws from the Take the Spotlight cards, other players can earn points as co-players. If these points are earned write them in the box for each player and total each player’s points per round. See the example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Story</th>
<th>Player 1</th>
<th>Player 2</th>
<th>Player 3</th>
<th>Player 4</th>
<th>Player 5</th>
<th>Player 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example</td>
<td>Take the Spotlight</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Beyond the Script</td>
<td>In Character</td>
<td>Plot Twist</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points earned for each player’s assigned card and for any co-plays</td>
<td>3+2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2+1+2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1+2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 1</td>
<td>Take the Spotlight</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Beyond the Script</td>
<td>In Character</td>
<td>Plot Twist</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points earned for each player’s assigned card and for any co-plays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 2</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Take the Spotlight</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Beyond the Script</td>
<td>In Character</td>
<td>Plot Twist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points earned for each player’s assigned card and for any co-plays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 3</td>
<td>Plot Twist</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Take the Spotlight</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Beyond the Script</td>
<td>In Character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points earned for each player’s assigned card and for any co-plays</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 4</td>
<td>In Character</td>
<td>Plot Twist</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Take the Spotlight</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Beyond the Script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points earned for each player’s assigned card and for any co-plays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 5</td>
<td>Beyond the Script</td>
<td>In Character</td>
<td>Plot Twist</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Take the Spotlight</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points earned for each player’s assigned card and for any co-plays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 6</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Beyond the Script</td>
<td>In Character</td>
<td>Plot Twist</td>
<td>Choose a Deck</td>
<td>Take the Spotlight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points earned for each player’s assigned card and for any co-plays</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total All</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Remember - the person to your left draws and reads your card unless it’s a “Take the Spotlight” card! Also, remember to focus on your Face, Body or Voice as shown at the top of each “Take the Spotlight” card! Be sure to clap for your fellow players when they over-act!
How to Play

Object of the Game: Earn the most points after drawing at least once from each of the 4 unique Performance Card Decks and answering questions, reading plot twists, and performing or directing scenes from the Playbook® story with hilarious emotions and character types.

Take Center Stage™ can be played by two or more people and involves reading a story like a play, but without memorizing your lines! This is called Reader's Theater and is an educational and entertaining way to read with kids and build reading fluency while having fun. That's edu-tainment! It's not just for kids. No matter how old you are, you can enjoy reading, acting, and especially over-acting!

Reading the Playbook® Story Before You Play

1. Using the Guide for your Playbook® story, assign character roles based on the age or reading ability of the readers in your group. Depending on the number of readers, some or all players may be assigned more than one character role.

2. Read the Playbook® story aloud together with every reader beginning with his or her Character Summary (shown in the front of each book) and reading his or her role with expression and enthusiasm throughout the story. Bring the story to life together with creativity and excitement! (The story needs to be read at least once before playing the game for the first time.)
# Playing the Game

1. After reading the Playbook® story, set up your game by placing each of the four decks of cards separately face down in the center of the table within reach of all players.

2. Player 1 is the oldest player and Player 6 is the youngest player. Assign all player numbers in order based on oldest to youngest. Write their names on the Score Card along with the character(s) they portrayed in the story. Also, write the name of the Playbook® story you read aloud together.

3. Each player plays the game as the same character he or she portrayed while reading the story. If a player reads more than one role in the story, he or she should choose only one character to play in the game for scoring purposes. If you have only 4 players, for example, cross out Player 5 and 6 on the score card. However, in any "Take the Spotlight" scenes that involve a player’s second or third character role from the story, he or she still reads these parts in the game and still receives points in the normal manner. Players that portray more than one role in the story have the potential to earn more points in the game.

4. The game starts with Player 1 drawing from the "Take the Spotlight" deck. Then, Player 2 is instructed to "Choose a Deck" as indicated in Act 1. Players continue to draw as assigned in the instructional Score Card until all have completed Act 1. Award points as indicated on each card. When a player draws from the "Take the Spotlight" cards, other players can earn points as co-players. If these points are earned, write them in the box for each player and total each player’s points per round. See the example on the Score Card.

5. Cards are drawn from the decks and read aloud by the player to the left of the current player! This is important as answers are on the cards! Certain cards will instruct that the card be handed to the player and the player then reads and completes the instructions on the card. Usually all "Take the Spotlight" cards are handed to the player.

6. If game play has to stop before all players have completed an Act (round), then total the points for each player up to the last completed round to determine the winner. The player with the most points at the end of the game wins!
The Performance Card Decks

**Take the Spotlight™** cards give players a chance to read lines from the story with different meaning and inflection by focusing on face, body, or voice expressions. It also gives them a chance to really “act” and even “over-act” which makes for hilarious fun! Kids learn that “how” you say or read something can really change its meaning.

Cards either instruct the player to recite a specific line from the story using a particularly funny combination of emotional expression and character type, or to be the “director” of a specific scene from the story and direct other readers to read their lines in this way. Each card indicates at the top whether the readers should focus their expression with their face, body, or voice. However, even when you focus on your face or body, your voice will typically change, too! That’s the way it naturally happens and the result is hilarious and hugely entertaining!

**Actors can choose to perform with the emotion, the character type, or both, and earn 1 point for each performed.** Players can also assign the acting of any role to another player and let everyone enjoy his or her performance and give up their own points to the other actor. **For "Direct a Scene" cards, the director earns 2 points and can also earn points as an actor when performing his or her own role (or can assign the role).**

**Create Your Own Scene** cards prompt players to act or direct a scene with a certain plot twist in the story. Actors earn 2 points for their creative expression and directors earn 4 points for devising the scene. Directors do not act in scenes they create.

**Take the Spotlight with your Voice!™**
Players recite lines from the story while focusing on expressing the emotion and character type indicated on the card with their voices. Actors have unlimited opportunities to change the volume, pitch, speed and accent of their voices!

**Take the Spotlight with your Body!™**
Players recite lines from the story while focusing on expressing the emotion and character type indicated on the card with their bodies. Actors should stand up and have fun with physical movement! Feel free to change your voice, too!

**Take the Spotlight with your Face!™**
Players recite lines from the story while focusing on expressing the emotion and character type indicated on the card with their faces. Actors can have fun with silly and serious faces! Feel free to change your voice, too!

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*Be sure to clap for your fellow over-actors!*

Direct the scene on page 7 of your Playbook® story that includes 3 characters and begins with...

**Grasak:** Why don’t you just talk to her, for starters?

...and ends with...

**Pess Garban:** Do you want a note from my mother?

Assign a different emotion/character type combination from the list below to each actor.

- mad ballerina
- frustrated crossing guard
- excited race car driver
- tired baby
- happy chipmunk
- bashful monster
- snobby rich person

Each actor can choose to perform with the emotion, the character type, or both, and earns 1 point for each performed. Director earns 2 points and can also earn points as an actor when performing his or her own role (or can assign the role).

Direct the scene on page 2 of your Playbook® story that includes 4 characters and begins with...

**King:** Who did she say she was?

...and ends with...

**Grasak:** Then maybe we can all go to bed.

Assign a different emotion/character type combination from the list below to each reader.

- tired baby
- happy chipmunk
- bashful monster
- snobby rich person

Direct the scene on the page of your Playbook® story that includes 3 characters and begins with...

**Grasak:** Why don’t you just talk to her, for starters?

...and ends with...

**Pess Garban:** Do you want a note from my mother?

Assign a different emotion/character type combination from the list below to each actor.

- mad ballerina
- frustrated crossing guard
- excited race car driver
- tired baby
- happy chipmunk
- bashful monster
- snobby rich person

Each actor can choose to perform with the emotion, the character type, or both, and earns 1 point for each performed. Director earns 2 points and can also earn points as an actor when performing his or her own role (or can assign the role).
Plot Twist™ cards are simple changes in the story that can affect the plot in complex ways. Players simply earn points or lose points based on the twist of the plot.

In Character™ cards expand on character depth by asking questions about how characters deal with certain situations in the story. Also included are fun "Guess the Character" cards with up to three clues and chances to earn up to three points.

Beyond the Script™ cards are supplemental questions that help to reinforce concepts from the story and go beyond the story into the content areas of Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Art, Health, etc., as well as Character Education. These cards provide great educational opportunities and are fun to answer for earning points.

Take Center Stage™

The Game for Actors.... and Over-Actors!™

A Hilarious Stage Acting Game with Reader’s Theater™

The queen realizes she has used up her usual supply of peas, and has to go searching for one before Princess Garbanza can go to sleep.

Lose 1 point.

Finding and carrying all those mattresses was a lot of work for Grasak! If you were a princess or a prince, would you be willing to help your servant with extra work?

Why or why not?

Prince Borso and his family have traveled around the world to find a princess for him to marry. If they were to visit the castle of King Henry VIII, where would they go?

a. France  
b. Spain  
c. England  

Answer: (c)
This next section provides all Playbook® story documents.

Print only 1 copy except for the actual story (which you print a copy for each reader).

Print in color or black and white, however, color is best for viewing the color-coded text which helps readers identify their roles more easily during reading.
Welcome to the world of Playbooks® and the beginning of a wonderful reading adventure! When you read a Playbook®, you and other readers become the characters in the story. As you read your part out loud, you will have fun acting like your character. Together with the other readers, you’ll explore the story plot learning what will happen next. It’s an exciting journey of discovery that pulls you into the story and you’ll want to read it out loud again and again.

HOW DO YOU GET STARTED?

Begin your reading adventure with the character summary, which is located in the front of the book. You’ll notice right away that the words and sentences for each character appear in a different color on this page and throughout the book, which makes it easy to follow along and read your part. As a reminder, the top of each page shows a chart with each character’s name in the assigned color.

It doesn’t matter whether you are a beginning reader or experienced reader, there is a part for everyone. The number of characters in the story may not necessarily match the number of readers in your group. Readers can play more than one main character role, or they can combine a main character role with a shorter role. Have each person read the character summary from his or her own copy of the book to become familiar with all the characters and their personalities. Then, based on each person’s reading comfort level, he or she can pick one or more characters to read out loud. The most experienced reader typically reads the narrator role. It’s important for teachers and parents to refer to the Teacher or Parent Guide when assigning roles. Consult the reference section on the next page for more information.

Sometimes you will see black italicized text inside parenthesis before or in the middle of sentences. These are called “cues” and tell you how to read a sentence with expression. For example, if the “cue” says (with surprise), speak the sentence with surprise in your voice! Cues are not read out loud. Have fun bringing your character to life by bringing your voice up and down, speaking softly or loudly, changing your facial expressions, and moving your hands or body. Trying different voices or accents can also be lots of fun. You can even wear simple costumes to help you get in character. Consider going on a scavenger hunt around your house or in your classroom to find simple items you can wear such as a hat or pair of glasses. Playbooks®, Inc. offers optional mini costume kits at www.playbooks.com.
MAKING THE MOST OF THE STORY

You can start the story by reading it out loud the first time or by practicing your part on your own. As you get better with your role, you may want to change the way you express your character’s personality or you may want to switch roles with another reader. Be creative! When all your readers get comfortable with their roles, you may want to perform in front of a friendly audience.

Reading out loud is so much fun that it’s easy to forget about the other readers. **So be sure to read with good manners!** Here are some helpful hints. Don’t talk when other readers are reading. Keep up and be ready to read when it’s your turn. Speak loudly and clearly so everyone can hear you. Stay in character for the whole story! **Most importantly, enjoy your Reader’s Theater experience.**

You and your cast of characters are ready to begin your Playbook® adventure!

FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Being an active participant in a story spikes the reader’s curiosity to learn more about the story’s theme. Playbooks®, Inc. provides classroom activity suggestions and worksheets to reinforce concepts from the story and go beyond the story into the content areas of Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Art, Health, etc., as well as Character Development. Activities range in skill level and age appropriateness, so the teacher or parent can choose activities that best suit the readers. Activities include: comprehension quizzes, crossword puzzles, word search, vocabulary, discussion and writing prompts, story mapping, word problems, etc. To download FREE supplemental activity sheets currently available, please go to: www.playbooks.com/supplements. Visit the Playbook® website frequently as we are continually updating it with new story-specific supplements.

RESOURCES/RESEARCH

The Playbook® format is based on current instructional research. Using the Department of Education’s published standardized measurement scales as a guide, **credentialed teachers edit and approve all the Playbook® stories and supplemental activity sheets for multiple reading levels and content.**

A Recommended Reader Assignment chart that identifies the reading level for each story character is included in the group set. For additional FREE copies, please go to: www.playbooks.com/rra.htm, and locate the story’s title.

Rewarding a child for exceptional effort and performance is an excellent practice for boosting a child’s reading confidence. To download **FREE Award Certificates** to recognize star performers, please go to: www.playbooks.com/award/certificate.htm.

For specific guidance on implementing a Playbook® story in the classroom or in the home, download a FREE Teacher or Parent Guide at the following link.

TEACHERS: www.playbooks.com/schools/teacherguide.pdf
PARENTS: www.playbooks.com/parents.shtml

Seeing readers develop a passion for reading while working with the Playbook® format will be one of your greatest rewards.
Webster Melon
My name is Webster Melon. I am a seedless watermelon just like all the watermelons in my family. **Seedless** means we don’t have any black seeds. Most grown-up watermelons are **oblong** shaped. **Oblong** is like a rectangle but with round corners. I am just full of information. If you ever want to know anything, just ask me! I’m also happy to sing for you anytime.

Wendy Melon
My name is Wendy Melon. Webster is my husband, and yes, he is the smartest melon in the patch! Some would say that I am the sweetest. I don’t know about that, but I do know that I love my little one. Mini is very special. Even though she is small, she sure thinks big.

Mini Melon
My name is Mini Melon. I am very small, but I am bigger than a baseball and just as round. Most watermelons are oblong shaped and much bigger than me. Only baby melons look like me. Some of the kids tease me and that’s not very fun. It makes me feel bad and I don’t feel much like singing. I wish I knew why I am so different. My parents say I’m special, but who would want a little melon?

**Small Parts- People at the Farmer’s Market**
Farmer
Woman with Family (same reader as Wendy)
Young Woman
Married Man (same reader as Webster)

Narrator
As the narrator, I am the master storyteller! It’s up to me to keep the story alive and interesting with each exciting detail. So, I must read everything with expression and excitement!
In the Valley of the Sun, there was a big, beautiful watermelon patch that was covered every morning in sparkling dew. In this patch were two kinds of watermelons. There were watermelons that had big, black seeds and those that didn’t. Although they knew they were different from each other, they lived happily together, as they were all red, sweet and juicy on the inside. They were so happy that they sang all the time.

Now there was one watermelon that was very different from the rest … different on the outside. She was very small, much smaller than all the other melons her age, and she was round even though she was not a baby melon. She was a miniature watermelon. Her parents worried about her and wondered why she was so small. But they loved her the same, and told her she was special. They named her Mini Melon.

One day while the other watermelons were singing, Mini wandered away from the vine. Her parents were busy with group activities and did not notice her roll over to the fence. She began hopping, trying to see through a
hole in the fence. She hopped, and hopped, and soon realized she was bouncing. This was something other watermelons could not do.

Mini                      Wow! This is neat! I think I’d like to bounce some more.
Narrator                  She bounced and bounced and before she knew it, she bounced up and over the fence. She found herself on the other side once again. She looked back at the patch and nobody was watching.

Mini                      I wonder what is beyond this patch. I think I’ll take a little peek.
Narrator                  Mini bounced through the trees and heard sounds of people talking. She followed the sounds into an open area where there was a Farmer’s Market.

Mini                      Wow! Look at all the fruits and vegetables. They all look so pretty. Look at all the people!
Narrator                  She rolled under the tables to get a closer look. It was when she bumped into one of the table legs that she looked up and saw the watermelon bin.

Mini                      Look at all the watermelons. Gee, they all look so different.
Narrator                  Mini decided to bounce up to the bin and get inside for a better view of the people. But suddenly it was the people that had a better view of her! An old woman called out.

Young Woman               Farmer, sir, I wish to purchase that miniature watermelon. Please hand it to me.
Narrator                  A young woman was already reaching for it.

Young Woman               No wait, I saw it first. It’s the only one. It’s mine.
Farmer                    Well, miss, this woman did ask for it first.
Man Here, I’ll solve the problem. I’ll purchase it instead.
Woman Now hold on there, I asked for it first.
Young Woman But, I reached for it first.
Man Well I’ll pay more for it. What will you take for it, sir?
Farmer Well I don’t know. I didn’t even know my crop had any miniature watermelons. So, let me think….
Mini (talking to herself) Wow, everyone thinks I’m special. Just like my parents always say.
Woman I simply must have that watermelon, sir. It is packed with vitamins A, B6, and C, which are good for me and my family.
Young Woman Hands off! It’s my watermelon. It has potassium, which is something I need. And, it’s small and portable and I can take it to work in my bag. It’s perfect for me and I reached for it first!
Man But it’s the perfect size for me and my wife. We can’t eat a regular watermelon before it spoils. It’s too big. This one is just perfect for the two of us. And watermelon has lycopene, which is an anti-oxidant. That makes it a super food.
Mini (talking to herself) Did he just say I was a super food? Wow! I’m a super hero!
Farmer Well, ma’am, you could purchase one of these larger melons.
Woman But the miniature watermelons are much sweeter, and my children think they are cute. I simply must have it for my family. I will take it now, please.
Farmer Well … sir … miss, I do believe she spoke up first, so maybe you can come back next week.
Narrator The farmer turned around to reach for the miniature melon, but it had disappeared. Mini had quietly rolled out of the bin and started for home.
Mini Wow! So, people think miniature melons are better than regular melons. I wonder what everyone in the patch will think about that!
Narrator Mini began to sing….
Mini (singing to the tune of I’m a Little Teapot) I’m a super hero, small and round. Watch me bounce across the ground. I might be small, but I’m supreme I have vitamins and Lycopene.
Narrator As she bounced through the trees happily singing her song, she remembered how much she loved her parents and living in the patch. The more she thought about her family and all the families in the patch, she realized she would never want to make anyone feel bad. She would never want the other watermelons to think that people didn’t want them. So she decided to keep her trip to the farmer’s market a secret. When she arrived back at the patch,
she bounced up over the fence and rolled towards her parents. They had not noticed that she was gone.

Mini
Hi, Mommy … hi, Daddy.

Wendy
Hi, sweetie, did you have fun with the other kids today?

Mini
Yes, it was fun.

Narrator
Mini looked at her parents with love in her eyes.

Mini
Daddy, you are the smartest melon in the whole patch, and Mommy, you are the sweetest.

Webster
Thank you, Mini. You know, that makes you the smartest and sweetest melon of all, no matter how small you are.

Wendy
That’s right, my sweet one. It’s okay to be little.

Mini
Yes, Mommy, I know. Now I really know.

Narrator
Mini hopped up and gave both her parents a kiss. She then turned and bounced away singing her little tune.

Mini
I’m a super hero, small and round.
Watch me bounce across the ground.
I might be small, but I’m supreme
I have vitamins and Lycopene.

All Readers
She’s a super hero, small and round.
Watch her bounce across the ground.
She is smaller than all the rest,
And that makes her the very best!

The End
The U.S. Department of Education has declared that “reading aloud is the single most important activity that parents can do with their children to ensure their future success … and that reading aloud should continue throughout the grades.”

Playbooks® are designed to be read aloud, like a play, and are a fun, entertaining, and memorable activity that allows parents and their children to read aloud together at the same time. In a Playbook®, the text for each of the story’s characters is presented in a different color. This makes it easy to read like a play. Each of your readers chooses the character in the story they wish to play and the fun begins!

Edited by credentialed teachers, the unique Playbook® Multi-Leveled format provides dialogue for the story’s characters at a variety of reading levels. Children are at an advantage when they can read at their own level with confidence and enthusiasm while still being exposed to richer vocabulary and sentence structure read by you or other readers in your family. Reading in an interactive and multi-leveled manner allows all your children to read with self assurance and enthusiasm, which can translate into higher confidence and self-esteem in the classroom.

Reading a Playbook® story doesn’t require preparation nor does it take a lot of time. Discover how a Playbook® Reader’s Theater story makes reading enjoyable for the whole family. Reading with your children encourages a passion for reading and teaches them that reading is valuable. Children of all ages and reading abilities, from Kindergarten to High School, benefit from reading aloud. As a child’s reading skills grow, his or her performance in many other school subject areas
CASTING THE CHARACTER ROLES

Using “typical” age ranges and grade levels for most children, the various character parts in a Playbook® story accommodate three to four different reading levels. Some stories can include up to six levels. The “Story Character Assignments” chart on the next page shows all the characters in your story, along with information as to the size and reading level of each role. To determine which reader should take each character role, use the Reading Level Chart on the bottom of the next page as a starting point for selecting the character parts. Your child’s reading ability may be higher or lower than his or her age or grade in school. You can also determine the best level by having your child take the Playbook® Reading Test available on our website, www.playbooks.com/schools/readtest.htm.

Another method for assigning character roles is to have everyone read the Character Summary section at the front of the Playbook® story, either silently or aloud. Based on each person's own reading comfort level, he or she picks one or more character parts, or a parent can simply cast all the parts based on what he or she believes is the best role and reading level for each reader.

BRINGING THE STORY TO LIFE

No memorization is necessary for reading a Playbook® Reader's Theater story. As family members read their parts aloud, each from their own copy of the story, they act like their characters using gestures and expressions to bring the characters' personalities to life. They discover the story as it happens and can be as creative as they want. A Playbook® story makes reading a fun and engaging family activity rather than a task, and your family members will want to read it aloud over and over. As readers become more familiar and confident with reading their roles aloud, they may want to change the personality of their character or switch to a higher level role. This helps children grow in their reading ability.

READING PERFORMANCE TIPS

Reading aloud is an enjoyable and interactive experience that helps children develop fluency and confidence in their reading abilities. At first a reader may feel uncomfortable reading his or her part aloud. In this case, you may want to read the part aloud as a group or you can model the part and have the reader repeat after you. If a reader makes a mistake, encourage him or her to correct the mistake and keep going. Your supportive coaching will motivate the readers to reread and improve upon their previous efforts.

Here are some other suggestions that can help readers enhance their reading performance. You may want to read these aloud to your group.

- Get to know your character. Ask yourself questions and imagine how the character would answer them. Your responses will help you portray your character in the story.
- Use the (cues) in the story text to help you with your vocal expression. Be animated with your facial expressions, body gestures, and vary how you use your voice. Try different voices or accents.
- Use the punctuation marks in the sentences to guide you with vocal changes, pauses and reading pace.
- Hold the book so your face can be seen and your voice can be heard.
- Speak the character dialogue slowly and clearly so you can be understood.
- Be a good listener while others are reading their parts.
- Keep up and be ready to read when it’s your turn.
- When others are reading their parts, be quiet and stand or sit still to minimize distractions.
- Consider simple costumes to help you get into character such as wearing a pair of glasses or hat.
- If you have an audience, involve them by looking up from the book and making eye contact.
- Take your time, breathe deeply, relax and have fun!
### Story Character Assignments

**Mini, the Super Watermelon**

**An Original Playbook**

Presented in…

**Playbook® Advantage Format**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story Character</th>
<th>Assign your readers, and write them here.</th>
<th>(Readers can take more than one role.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Young Woman</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mini</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% of Story</td>
<td>18% of Story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2 - Beginning Reader</td>
<td>Stage 3 - Transitional Reader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wendy/ Woman</strong></td>
<td><strong>Farmer</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% of Story</td>
<td>5% of Story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3 - Transitional Reader</td>
<td>Stage 4 - Intermediate Reader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mini</strong></td>
<td><strong>Webster/ Man</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18% of Story</td>
<td>9% of Story</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3 - Transitional Reader</td>
<td>Stage 4 - Intermediate Reader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farmer</strong></td>
<td><strong>All Reader Chorus</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% of Story</td>
<td>10% of Story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4 - Intermediate Reader</td>
<td>Stage 2 - Beginning Reader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Webster/ Man</strong></td>
<td><strong>All Reader Chorus</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% of Story</td>
<td><strong>Narrator</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4 - Intermediate Reader</td>
<td>Stage 5 - Advanced Reader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| All Readers              | **Narrator**                             |                                        |
| 10% of Story             | 44% of Story                             |                                        |
| Stage 2 - Beginning Reader | Stage 5 - Advanced Reader                |                                        |

### Playbook® Reading Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1 - Early Reader</th>
<th>Kindergarten/1st Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 2 - Beginning Reader</strong></td>
<td>Grades 1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 3 - Transitional Reader</strong></td>
<td>Grades 2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 4 - Intermediate Reader</strong></td>
<td>Grades 3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 5 - Advanced Reader</strong></td>
<td>Grades 5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 6 - Expert Reader</strong></td>
<td>Teen/Adult Reader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Typically Ages:
- 4-6
- 5-8
- 6-9
- 8-10
- 10-13

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ENCOURAGING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

Reading aloud and performing as a character is so much fun that it’s easy for some children to get too excited and may distract other readers. Before you start, ask the readers what they think are acceptable and not acceptable types of behavior while reading the story. When children help to develop the guidelines, they feel ownership and will more likely follow their own rules and everyone receives the maximum benefit from this family activity. Some ideas for redirecting attention might include using “Movie Director Language” such as, “cut,” “action,” or “quiet on the set.” Make sure all the readers know what the signals mean and how they are supposed to respond before you start reading.

REWARDING PERFORMANCE

It’s always best to focus on what children do well instead of where they stumble. Acknowledge each reader’s strengths which can range from good voice inflexion to great acting skills. Try using statements that begin with the phrases, “I like the way you...” or “I see how you…,” or “I notice….” You may want to incorporate a reading award system that tracks each reader’s progress, such as expression, articulation, good manners, and being ready to read. By reinforcing the positive, children are more likely to continue to improve and stay motivated to read more often, especially when it gains them positive attention from the adults in their lives whom they respect and love.

READING ROLE MODELS AND BUILDING READING FLUENCY

Modeling is a key component to building fluency. Reading fluency is the ability to read a text accurately, quickly, smoothly, and with the right intonation and expression. Fluency is important, because it helps children understand what they read. Children learn reading fluency best when they listen to someone read more advanced text than what they can read on their own. This is because children have a “higher listening comprehension” than “reading comprehension.” Reading a Multi-Leveled Playbook® helps parents and older siblings become the reading role models for younger children. Playbooks® provide a reading dynamic that creates lifetime readers.