Reader's Theater Exercise 29:
Choral Reading With Shared Scripts

Choral reading is a fantastic way to introduce students to reader’s theater if they are very young, shy, or below grade level with reading skills. However, it can be expensive to purchase a book copy for every student in order for the whole class to be reading the same story at the same time. Instead, it makes more sense for book copies to be shared by up to four students! This allows more story variety for your budget.

This exercise on choral reading invites you to print just one script per three to four students so you can save on paper and printing costs, and inexpensively, put choral reading into practice. Your students will be reading a mini version of the Playbook® story, Doing the Dinosaur Dip.

Teacher Instructions: Allow your students to watch the video of students performing reader’s theater found at this link: http://playbooks.com/ClassroomImplementationVideoForStudents.shtml.

Secretly divide your class into categories of Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3, and Stage 4 readers. Each reading stage will correspond to a different role in the mini story. Use the Recommended Reader Assignment Chart on the next page to assign roles based on reading ability. Then, group sets of three to four students of the same reading level together to share one copy of the script. Print one copy of the script per group.

On the day of the activity, have students stand in their groups of three to four in different corners of the classroom based on the role they will read and pass out the scripts. If space allows, it is fun to have the whole class stand in a circle. Then begin reading the story, with all the students sharing a role speaking together at once! If you have a large class, it is a good idea to have the students practice in smaller groups first before coordinating the read-aloud as an entire class. This would also count towards the goal of four repetitions of the same text to best build reading fluency with Repeated Guided Oral Reading.

Arrange groups in a circle as shown on the left.

Note: These students are not sharing one script as suggested in this exercise.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader No.</th>
<th>Story Character</th>
<th>Group 1 Reader</th>
<th>Group 2 Reader</th>
<th>Group 3 Reader</th>
<th>Group 4 Reader</th>
<th>Group 5 Reader</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Triple T. Triceratops</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stage 1 - Early Reader</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Aria Allosaurus</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stage 2 - Beginning Reader</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Rex T. Rex</strong></td>
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<td>Stage 3 - Transitional Reader</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Narrator 1</strong></td>
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<td>Stage 4 - Intermediate Reader</td>
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</table>
**What is Cue Text?** Cue text tells readers HOW to read their lines. Cue text is shown in both italics and parentheses and appears before a line of dialogue. **Cue text is not read aloud.**

**Example:** (yelling) Look out!

Narrator Rex T. Rex loved to sing. He rapped to the raptors at the river. He sang scales to the scales on his back.

Rex T. Rex *(singing)* La, la, la, la, la.

Narrator He dreamed of one day becoming as famous as his favorite singer, Triple T. Triceratops.

Triple T. I am T. I am hip. I am a star.

Narrator Although Rex T. Rex loved to sing, he didn’t like to practice with the other members of his band.

Rex T. Rex Leave the words to the song with me. I’ll learn it later. You go ahead.

Aria But, Rex, we need to practice.

Rex T. Rex RAAAAR, I told you, I’m not going. Now leave me alone!

Narrator So, Rex T. Rex went home to watch Triple T. Triceratops on TV.

Triple T. Hello, fans. It is me. I am T.

Narrator Aria Allosaurus went off to practice. Back at home, Rex stayed up all night long singing along to his favorite music videos. He forgot about learning the lines to the new song.

Aria Where were you? We go on in five minutes!

Rex T. Rex *(with a rough voice)* I’m fine. I just need to see the words to that new song.

Narrator Rex T. Rex quickly looked over the words. Moments later, it was show time. Aria peeked through the curtains to look out at the audience.

Aria Oh my! Is that T. out there?

Narrator Sitting in the front row, wearing a pair of gigantic sunglasses, was Triple T. Triceratops!

Triple T. I am T. I am a star, a big star!

Narrator As Aria, Rex, and the rest of the band walked on stage, everyone clapped. Rex T. Rex took a bow and then another.

Aria *(whispering to Rex)* I hope he likes us.

Triple T. I hope they are good.

Narrator The band started playing, but when Rex opened his mouth to sing, nothing came out. He had not learned the words to the song. So, he started making them up.

Rex T. Rex *(singing in a rough voice)* I dig you, my Dinosaur Blue. I want to hold your claw. Let me hold your claw.
The audience started to laugh. A few began to boo. Aria and Rex didn’t know what to do. Suddenly, Rex ran off the stage.

**Aria** What do I do?

**Narrator** Aria began singing. She and the band finished the entire concert without Rex T. Rex. When the show was over, the audience jumped to their feet. Even Triple T. Triceratops was clapping.

**Triple T.** That was good, very good!

**Narrator** Aria took a quick bow and ran off the stage to check on Rex. She went to the dressing rooms.

**Aria** (knocking) Rex, are you in there?

**Rex T. Rex** (crying) Go away.

**Aria** Rex, I need to talk to you.

**Rex T. Rex** Don’t say it. I know. I blew it. I really blew it.

**Aria** I wasn’t going to say that.

**Rex T. Rex** I let you both down. I’m sorry.

**Narrator** Suddenly, in walked Triple T. Triceratops. Everyone was shocked.

**Triple T.** You are good. Would you, could you, sing with me?

**Narrator** Triple T. explained how he wanted Aria and the band to be the opening act at his show! For a moment they were speechless. Then Aria screamed.

**Aria** We would love to! But only if Rex T. Rex sings with us.

**Triple T.** I do not think that is a good idea. He ran off.

**Rex** But I will do better next time. I promise!

**Aria** Yes, and where we go, he goes.

**Narrator** Triple T. was quiet for a moment. Then he scratched one of his horns.

**Triple T.** Well, let me think about it.

**Aria** Please.

**Triple T.** OK. He may sing with you. But he has to be good.

**Rex T. Rex** I will be good. You won’t be sorry. Thank you. Thank you all so much. You’ll see. I will be great!

**Narrator** The next day it was time for practice, and this time Rex T. Rex was there before anyone else. As Aria and the rest of the band arrived, Rex T. Rex was preparing to show them the new song he had written, called Doing the Dinosaur Dip. They walked in, and Rex sang….

**Rex T. Rex** (singing) Let’s dip. Let’s do the dinosaur dip. Let’s dip. Let’s do the dinosaur dip.

**Narrator** From that day on, Rex T. Rex was never late for practice again.

The End