



Reader's Theater Exercise 23: Paired Reading for the Early Stages of Literacy

This exercise will help even your **youngest, most struggling, and near non-readers** to experience the benefits of Reader's Theater with paired reading. This technique is also useful with **English language learners**.

Because children generally have a higher "listening comprehension" than "reading comprehension," students benefit tremendously from reading in multi-leveled groups. With Playbooks®, teachers are able to privately group lower level readers with higher level readers together to read the same story, which provides a "safe" environment for students to discover language and learn from one another.

Some teachers or afterschool program educators fear that this teaching model will not help their Kindergarten aged students or those barely able to read. **The solution to help these students in the very early stages of literacy achievement is to pair them with a more able reader to share a Reader's Theater role.**

Instead of having just one student take each part, have two students read the same character role in unison. **The less fluent reader may not be able to read the whole part aloud, but instead may follow along and contribute just the words he or she recognizes.** At the same time, he or she will receive automatic guidance from the more fluent reader in decoding and committing words to memory.

Teacher Instructions: For this activity, print enough copies of the free Playbook® story excerpt (from *There's No One Like You*) on the following page, use a free mini Playbook® from our website, or use Playbooks® you already own. Mini Playbooks® free for your classroom can be downloaded at the following link: <http://playbooks.com/free.shtml>

The sample from *There's No One Like You* contains five roles at Reading Stages 1-3, intended for students in Kindergarten through second grade. **Plan to break the class into groups of ten to read the script, so that each group member has a part to share with one other student.**

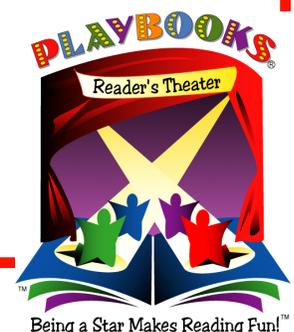
Fill out the **Recommended Reader Assignment** chart for each group with two student names instead of just one, as you would normally. **Pair a more advanced reader with a lower level reader for each part, so the lower level reader will be able to follow along** rather than have to read the whole part themselves. This enables you to assign less fluent readers a higher level part than they would otherwise be able to read, expanding their abilities and preparing them to move on to the next step! Be sure not to let students know who has been given higher and lower level parts.

Included in the following pages is a Recommended Reader Assignment chart for the excerpt from *There's No One Like You*, modified to apply to this paired reading activity.

Then, have your students read their scripts aloud in their groups. In order to employ "**Repeated Guided Oral Reading**," the best proven method of building reading fluency, have your students repeat the script three separate times, or alternatively, have them work in pairs with the text **before** reading the script as a group. **Here are several things you can instruct the paired students to do while practicing their lines together:**

- If one student does not know a word or makes an error, the other student can point to the word in question and say it correctly.
- When the lower level reader recognizes the words ahead and feels comfortable enough to read them alone, he or she can give a signal to the other reader. When the readers wish to continue reading in unison, they can make a different signal to indicate this to each other.
- When they are finished, the students should praise each other for what they did well, such as reading expression, rate, or word recognition.

Remember, you can utilize this method anytime and with any script ... not **all** readers have to be paired; you can simply pair the students who need extra help. **However you use this method, always remind your students to read with expression and appropriate enthusiasm for the best fluency-building experience!**



Paired Reading Exercise

(with excerpt from *There's No One Like You*)

Henry Hippo

Ellie the elephant was not happy. Her eyes looked sad. Others teased her because her trunk was big. She went to her friends for help.

Ellie Elephant

I do not like my trunk. It is too big. Other animals always make fun of me.

Geri Giraffe

You are lucky.

Pete Porcupine

There is no one like you.

Geri Giraffe

You can use your trunk to take a shower.

Henry Hippo

Your trunk is very strong. You can carry heavy logs with your trunk.

Geri Giraffe

I wish I had a trunk like yours.

Max Monkey

You can get food with your trunk.

Pete Porcupine

Your big trunk is pretty!

Henry Hippo

Now Ellie the elephant is proud of her trunk. No other animal has a trunk like hers.

Ellie Elephant

I love my trunk!

Geri Giraffe

There's no one like you!

Henry Hippo

Geri the giraffe was not happy. Her eyes looked sad. Others teased her because her neck was long. She went to her friends for help.

Geri Giraffe

I do not like my neck. It is too long. Other animals always make fun of me.

Ellie Elephant

You are lucky.

Max Monkey

There is no one like you.

Ellie Elephant

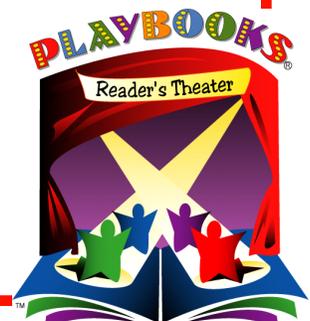
You can reach tall trees. You can eat leaves from the trees.

Pete Porcupine

You can see the other animals in the zoo!

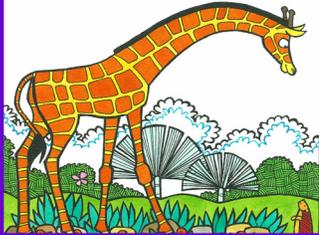
Max Monkey

Your long neck is nifty!



Recommended Reader Assignment

FOR TEACHER'S USE ONLY - NOT FOR STUDENT USE



THERE'S NO ONE LIKE YOU!

An Original Playbook®

Presented in....

Playbook® Advantage⁺ Format



Reader No.	Story Character	Group 1 Readers	Group 2 Readers	Group 3 Readers	Group 4 Readers	Group 5 Readers
1	Pete Porcupine Stage 1 Early Reader					
2	Max Monkey Stage 1 Early Reader					
3	Ellie Elephant Stage 2 Beginning Reader					
4	Geri Giraffe Stage 2 Beginning Reader					
5	Henry Hippo Stage 3 Transitional Reader					

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