**Reader's Theatre**

Reader's theatre is a valuable way for children to work in a group to perform the text. Children can begin marking or highlighting parts of the text, indicating the phrases or sections to be read by individuals or by several members of the group. This enables them to bring out the meanings, pattern and characterisation.

There are two different ways to use reader’s theatre with your children:

- Have children rehearse, read and perform a previously prepared reader’s theatre script in class. Discuss the story and invite children to give each other constructive criticism on their acting. You might use this as a kick-off to other literacy activities.

- Use a story or text and then adapt it into a reader’s theatre script. Children will then rehearse, read and perform their script in class. You can do this as a shared writing activity to demonstrate the process. Feedback will be given not only on children’ performances, and, if children prepare the script independently, on the creativity that went into their script adaptation.

While the first option is certainly the easiest to execute in your classroom, the second allows the children to really become involved in the literature, which is what reader’s theatre is all about. The children will, unconsciously perhaps, be involved in analysing the structure, characterization, and description used in the literature. They will be stimulated to creatively adapt their piece and will really “own” their presentation.

**Reader’s Theatre – How to adapt a script**

1. Choose a story or section of a book that is between 3-5 minutes long and photocopy it.

2. Decide what characters and narrators are needed and assign a marker colour to each.

3. Highlight all dialogue with the appropriate marker.

4. The text that is left is narration. Assign narration creatively by determining which character it pertains to and splitting it between the character and the character’s narrator.

5. Add creative touches wherever possible.

6. You are now ready to assign parts and rehearse.