



DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENT  
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

REEF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION

# Grouper Moon Project Curriculum

Year 4



**"Grouper Moon"**  
by  
**Cynthia Shaw**  
*Reader's Theater*

# CREDITS

Reader's Theater of Grouper Moon by Cynthia Shaw– Year 4 Cayman Islands Content written and created by Todd Bohannon and Cynthia Shaw. Special thanks to REEF’s Grouper Moon Project Education and Scientific staff, Cayman Islands Ministry of Education Staff, and Cayman Islands Department of Environment Staff.

## CREATION AND REVISION HISTORY:

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# Reader's Theater

## OVERVIEW REFERENCE SHEET YEAR 4

<b>DURATION:</b> 20 Minutes	<b>METHOD:</b> Group Activity, Classroom
<b>MATERIALS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Grouper Moon" by Cynthia Shaw</li><li>• Handout A: Copy of the script for each student</li><li>• Handout B: Copies of the rubric for each student</li></ul>	<b>SUBJECT(S):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Literature</li></ul>

### EXTENSIONS:

- For a second session, ask the students to work in small groups to create their own script from a "Grouper Moon" section by Cynthia Shaw. Groups should be given time to select a section of the book and practice reading it aloud. Groups will then perform their piece for the class.
- After students have completed their Reader's Theater presentations, ask them to do a self-assessment with the same rubric and conference with them to compare their self-assessment with your own assessment.
- Provide students with several examples of Reader's Theater presentations before they plan and execute their own Reader's Theater. Ask students to evaluate and assess the exemplar presentations using the same rubric.
- Students can do peer evaluations of the Reader's Theater using this rubric. Students can meet with a partner or in small groups to give each other feedback and explain their scoring.

**Source:** <https://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/printouts/readers-theatre-rubric>

# Grouper Moon: Reader's Theater

## Description:

Reader's Theater is a fun, experiential way for learners to engage with a text. Reader's Theater is a research-based strategy that develops learner's reading comprehension and fluency skills. This Reader's Theater script is adapted from Cynthia Shaw's "Grouper Moon" and can be used as an extension activity for a whole class read-aloud or it can be used with small reading groups.

## Learning Objectives:

- Engage with text via multiple learning modalities
- Develop reading comprehension skills
- Develop reading fluency skills
- Deeper student's engagement with the text

## Background Information for Educators:

If the Reader's Theater strategy is new to you or you need a refresher, do not worry. The following is an excerpt from the article "What is Readers Theater?" by Linda Cornwell, published by Scholastic.

"Readers Theater is an integrated approach for involving students in reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities. It involves children in ; .

- sharing literature
- reading aloud
- writing scripts
- performing with a purpose
- working collaboratively

Reader's Theater reads a script adapted from literature, and the audience pictures the action from hearing the script read aloud. It requires no sets, costumes, props, or memorized lines. Instead of acting out literature as in a play, the performer's goal is to read a script aloud effectively, enabling the audience to visualize the action. Performers bring the text alive by using voice, facial expressions, and some gestures."

## **Benefits of Using Reader's Theater in the Classroom or Library?**

Reader's Theater helps to ; .

- Develop fluency through repeated exposure to text
- Increase comprehension
- Integrate reading, writing, speaking, and listening in an authentic context
- Engage students
- Increase reading motivation
- Create confidence and improve the self-image of students
- Provide a real purpose for reading
- Provide opportunities for cooperative learning



## Tips for Implementing Reader's Theater

- Model expressive reading often
- Introduce Reader's Theater using pre-prepared scripts
- Teach the basic performance steps: how to use highlighters to mark the parts, how to interpret the part and read expressively, how to hold the script, and when to assume various stage positions
- Give the students lots of time to prepare. Emphasize practice. Readers should practice their roles in different ways: individually and in small groups, privately and in front of others
- Keep a copy of the marked script at school and send one home for parents to read and practice with their children
- Rehearse with the readers, providing needed direction and support regarding their interpretation, pacing, expression, volume, positions, and motions
- Begin with short presentations
- Perform for an audience as often as possible
- Use props sparingly

Source: <https://www.scholastic.com/librarians/programs/whatisrt.htm>

## Getting Started:

The following is an example of procedures you can use with your students to get started on your own Reader's Theater activity:

1. Choose student groups: I like having small groups perform in front of each other. The kids love seeing each other's interpretations of the text!
2. Choose students to read each role or have the groups decide roles on their own.
3. Explain to the students that they do not need to memorize their script; they can read directly from their paper.
4. Pass out the Reader's Theater rubric to each student and review it with the class.
5. Explain that no costumes are necessary; however, simple props or accessories may be utilized.
6. Give students some time to practice reading their script.
7. Have the students stand before the class and read their scripts.

## Assessment:

After each group has performed, have the students evaluate themselves using the rubric provided. I also include a couple of my own questions at the end, such as:

- What was one thing you enjoyed about this activity?
- What was challenging for you about this activity?
- What would you do differently if you did this activity again?

**Characters:**

**Narrators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8**

**Cooper**

**Louie**

**Greg**

**Grouper 1**

**Uncle Epinephalus (ep-ee-NEF-a-lus)**

**Chours**

**Narrator 1:**

Our readers' theatre presentation is from Grouper Moon by Cynthia Shaw. The characters are all Nassau Grouper, a reef fish species of the Caribbean Sea.

**Narrator 2:**

The characters are Cooper, a friendly grouper, read by \_\_\_\_\_; Cooper's old buddy, Louie, read by \_\_\_\_\_; a gregarious grouper named Greg, read by \_\_\_\_\_;

**Narrator 3:**

and Uncle Epinephalus - the biggest, oldest, and wisest grouper in the group, read by \_\_\_\_\_. The rest of the narrators are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and myself, \_\_\_\_\_.

**Narrator 4:**

Cooper is normally a cool and relaxed grouper who is content to hang out by himself in his territory on the coral reef. A loner – but not normally lonely. However, lately he has not been feeling very normal. Instead, he has been feeling...

**Narrator 5:**

...funny!

**Narrator 6:**

...restless!

**Narrator 7:**

...jumpy!

**Narrator 8:**

...cranky.

**Narrator 4:**

...and lonely. And he does not have any idea why!

**Narrator 5:**

A strange, new feeling in his bones has totally overtaken Cooper. As a result, he has left his own territory on the reef. He has started to venture out and follow the reef wall along the island. He has absolutely no idea what is happening, or where he is going.

**Narrator 6:**

Cooper has been swimming all night and all day, just wagging his body and following his bones.

**Chorus:**

*Just following his bones!*

**Narrator 4:**

He is now lost in his own thoughts, swimming mindlessly as he ponders the many questions that are swimming around his mind...

**Narrator 7:**

Suddenly he senses a presence! Alarmed, his fins spring out and he dives for cover behind some sponges. He watches cautiously while a huge shape in the distance moves toward him.

**Narrator 8:**

As the shape gets closer, Cooper realizes it is a school of fish he has never, ever swimming in a school before now...

**Cooper:**

"Whoa. Oh my!"

**Narrator 1:**

It is a group of grouper... A group of Nassau grouper! A huge school of Nassau grouper of many different sizes - from his own size to giant-enormous. And it is passing by Cooper without even noticing him.

**Cooper (shyly):**

"Hey?"

**Chorus:**

*(The whole chorus, including all other characters, turns in unison to stare blankly at Cooper)*

**Louie:**

"Hey group! It's Coop!"

**Cooper:**

"Louie? Is that you?"

**Louie:**

"Yo, Coop, it's me! Hey, get your tail over here! We were wondering where yuh were. We were trying to round yuh up! But we didn't see yuh when we passed by your place. Neither had any of the other guys around your territory. Your huntin' buddy was kind of worried about yuh."

- Cooper:** “Whoa, I’ve been worried, too! Feeling so funny and restless. And lonely! It’s odd – I’m a grouper and I’m not supposed to feel lonely—or jumpy, or even cranky, for that matter. It’s just not like me at all. I don’t know what’s going on. All I know is that my bones are telling me to go somewhere. So I’m going. But I have no idea where! I don’t understand it one bit. And now I run into a group of grouper. Groupers don’t do groups! What is this all about!?”
- Chorus:** *(looking at Cooper, incredulously) “You don’t know?”*
- Louie:** “Well, what do yuh all expect? Don’t you remember your first time?”
- Grouper 1:** “I remember mine. My first one took me totally by surprise. But after a couple of these journeys, you start to recognize the signs—like feeling restless and lonely, and totally out of control of yourself. Then you know it’s time to go again.”
- Cooper:** “But time to go where?”
- Chorus:** *“To the end of our island—the end of our world! It’s Grouper Moon!”*
- Cooper:** “Grouper what?”
- Uncle Epinephalus:** *(waving his pectoral fins politely) “Hello—Coop?—I’m Uncle Epinephelus.”*
- Cooper:** “Epi—who?”
- Uncle Epinephalus:** “Ep – ee – NEF – uh – luss. It’s our family name. I get to use it because I am an elder.”
- Cooper:** “A what?”
- Uncle Epinephalus:** “An elder. A great, wise grouper. The eldest of our aggregation. The greatest and wisest grouper in this group. I’ve been through this journey many times. Let me explain:  
“It happens one time every year, so we’re told—when the water feels right—not too warm, not too cold. “And the moon’s waxing full—not too new, not too old. The great gathering of Nassaus—a sight to behold!”
- Greg:** “I’m Greg, and well known for my great cere—bra—tion. This party—this bash—it’s a great celebration!  
We Nassaus are loners, with just one convo—ca—tion each year—when we gather as one great grouper nation!”



**Cooper:** "Whoa. Just to party?"

**Uncle Epinephalus:** "There's more to it than that..."

**Narrator 2:** "Epinephelus said..."

**Uncle Epinephalus:**

"We Nassaus are loners, but genes must be spread. In this great aggregation, our gametes are shed. If it weren't for our party, our kind would be dead. So Nature's arranged for our dance. Once a year, Nassaus from all over the island appear—at a prearranged place, not too far from here. But the moon must be full, and the sky must be clear. The full moon at sunset is when we must dance. So we all must be there, or we'll forfeit our chance. Now, let's hurry along, or we won't get to prance. We'll miss the whole party, and will have no romance."

**Chorus:** *(All turn away from Cooper)*

**Narrator 3:** With that, the group all turned away from Cooper, and started moving again along the reef wall. So Cooper joined the big group of his own kind, known to islanders as a corrída—a school of Nassau grouper on its way to their spawning grounds.

**Narrator 4:** For the first time since he had started feeling out of sorts, Cooper felt as if things were actually starting to make sense. He wasn't all cleaned up for nothing. There really was a place to go. It was time to spawn. And with this knowledge, Cooper felt more grown-up. He held his head a little higher.

**Cooper and Chorus:** *(All walk off stage.)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Readers Theater Rubric

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Scores	4–Excellent	3–Good	2–Fair	1–Needs Improvement
<b>Delivery</b>	Student read the script with confidence and expression, made gestures and good eye contact, and used props to add to the performance	Student read the script with some expression, gestures, eye contact, and use of props	Student read the script but had little expression, few gestures, little eye contact, or did not use props appropriately	Student had difficulty reading the script and consistently did not use expression, eye contact, or props appropriately
<b>Cooperation with group</b>	Student worked cooperatively with the group in all aspects of the project and shared all responsibilities and ideas well	Student worked cooperatively with group in most aspects of the project and shared most responsibilities and ideas	Student worked cooperatively with group in some aspects of the project but sometimes could not agree on what to do and wasted time	Student did not work cooperatively together with group and could not agree on what to do. Student did not share responsibilities or ideas and wasted time
<b>Comments</b>				

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Scores	4–Excellent	3–Good	2–Fair	1–Needs Improvement
<b>On-task participation</b>	High level of active, on-task participation from all group members	Majority of group members on-task and actively participating	Moderate level of on-task work or few of the group members actively participating	Low level of active participation from majority of group members
<b>Comments</b>				