



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 8: Module 2A: Unit 2: Lesson 14**

## **Launching the Readers Theater Groups: Allocating Key Quotes and Scenes**



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**Launching The Readers Theater Groups:**  
Allocating Key Quotes and Scenes

**Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)**

I can analyze the development of a theme or central idea throughout the text (including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot). (RL.8.2)  
I can effectively engage in discussions with diverse partners about eighth-grade topics, texts, and issues. (SL.8.1)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- I can describe what Readers Theater is and list criteria of Readers Theater.
- I can work effectively with a group to create group norms to make group discussion and collaborative work productive and enjoyable.
- I can work effectively with a group to allocate a scene to each person in the group.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Exit ticket: My Key Quote and Scene



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Agenda	Teaching Notes
<p>1. Opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Sharing Homework: Scenes That Communicate Key Quotes (6 minutes)</li><li>B. Unpacking Learning Targets (4 minutes)</li></ul> <p>2. Work Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Studying the Prompt (10 minutes)</li><li>B. Launch Readers Theater Groups (10 minutes)</li><li>C. Allocating Key Quotes (10 minutes)</li></ul> <p>3. Closing and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Exit Ticket: My Key Quote and Scene (5 minutes)</li></ul> <p>4. Homework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Read through the scene for which you will be writing a Readers Theater script and use evidence flags to mark the dialogue in that scene.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Although this lesson is in Unit 2, it is actually the kickoff for Unit 3. This is to give you time to look over the draft end of unit assessments before handing them back to students with feedback in Lesson 16.</li><li>• Students may be familiar with Readers Theater already. If so, ask them to help you generate the criteria for Readers Theater. If not, you may need to give them the criteria (in the body of the lesson, during Work Time A).</li><li>• In this lesson, students are put into groups for Readers Theater, and one of the key quotes from Lesson 8 is allocated to each group. Students then work in their groups to give each group member a different scene from the anchor chart for which he or she will write a Readers Theater script. It is important that each individual works on a different scene; otherwise, there will be multiple versions of the same scene in the final Readers Theater, which will be confusing. Groups may need assistance allocating scenes to individuals.</li><li>• In advance: Organize students into groups of three or four and assign each group a key quote. Mixed-ability grouping of students will provide a collaborative and supportive structure.</li><li>• Post: Learning targets and Key Quotes anchor charts (from Lesson 8).</li></ul>



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Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
Readers Theater, effectively, norms, collaborative, productive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Equity sticks</li><li>• Key Quotes anchor charts (from Lesson 8)</li><li>• Performance Task Prompt (one per student and one for display)</li><li>• Model Readers Theater One-Scene Script (one per student and one to display)</li><li>• Readers Theater Criteria Anchor Chart (new; co-created with students during Work Time A; see Supporting Materials)</li><li>• Chart paper (one piece per group)</li><li>• Marker (one per group)</li><li>• Exit ticket: My Key Quote and Scene (one per student)</li></ul>



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Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Sharing Homework: Scenes That Communicate Key Quotes (6 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remind students that for homework they were to choose two scenes from Chapter 27 onward of <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> that communicate each of the key quotes.</li> <li>Consider using equity sticks to select students to share their scene and to explain how that scene communicates the key quote. Record the scenes on the appropriate Key Quotes anchor charts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening with activities linked to homework holds students accountable for completing their homework.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Unpacking Learning Targets (4 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite students to read the learning targets with you:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “I can describe what Readers Theater is and list criteria of Readers Theater.”</li> <li>* “I can work effectively with a group to create group norms to make group discussion and collaborative work productive and enjoyable.”</li> <li>* “I can work effectively with a group to allocate a scene to each person in the group.”</li> </ul> </li> <li>Ask students to Think-Pair-Share:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What is a Readers Theater?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>Cold call students for their responses. Listen for students to explain that Readers Theater is very basic theater. There are many styles of Readers Theater. Students may not know this, so you may have to tell them.</li> <li>Ask:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What does work effectively mean?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>Select volunteers to share responses. Listen for students to explain that to work effectively means to work well together.</li> <li>Ask:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What are norms? Why do we make norms?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>Select volunteers to share their responses. Listen for students to explain that norms are positive behaviors that help groups work well together.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Posting learning targets allows students to reference them throughout the lesson to check their understanding. The learning targets also provide a reminder to students and teachers about the intended learning behind a given lesson or activity.</li> <li>Discussing and clarifying the language of learning targets helps build academic vocabulary.</li> </ul>



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Opening (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “What is collaborative work?”</li></ul></li><li>• Cold call students for their responses. Listen for students to explain that collaborative work is working with others.</li><li>• Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “What does productive mean?”</li></ul></li><li>• Listen for students to explain that productive means to do a lot of good work in a short span of time.</li></ul>	



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Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Studying the Prompt (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell students that while you are looking over their draft essays to provide feedback, they are going to begin working on Unit 3. Display and distribute the Performance Task Prompt.</li> <li>• Invite students to read along silently in their heads as you read it aloud.</li> <li>• Ask them to Think-Pair-Share:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “So what are you going to be doing for your performance task?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Listen for students to explain that they are going to write a Readers Theater script for a scene of the book that best represents that quote. They are then going to combine their script with the scripts of the other people in their group who have worked on scenes for the same quote, write a conclusion for their group Readers Theater, and then perform it. Explain that students will combine their individual scripts in chronological order, just as the scenes occur in the book.</li> <li>• Display and distribute the Model Readers Theater One-Scene Script and invite students to spend a couple of minutes reading through it so they can get an idea of what a Readers Theater script looks like.</li> <li>• Tell students that Readers Theater was developed as an easy and good way to present literature in dramatic form. Most scripts are adapted from literature.</li> <li>• Ask students to Think-Pair-Share:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What are some criteria for Readers Theater performances?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Record student suggestions in the second column, Performance, of the new Readers Theater Criteria anchor chart. Make sure the following are included:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a narrator to help frame the dramatic presentation.</li> <li>• No full stage sets. If used at all, sets are simple.</li> <li>• No full costumes. If used at all, costumes just suggest the feel of the characters. Or the costumes are really basic or all the same.</li> <li>• No full memorization. Scripts are used openly in performance. “How will you use the novel and informational texts?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hearing a complex text read slowly, fluently, and without interruption or explanation promotes fluency for students: They are hearing a strong reader read the text aloud with accuracy and expression and are simultaneously looking at and thinking about the words on the printed page. Be sure to set clear expectations that students read along silently in their heads as you read the text aloud.</li> <li>• Anchor charts serve as Note-catchers when the class is co-constructing ideas.</li> </ul>



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Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>B. Launch Readers Theater Groups (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Post the Readers Theater groups and read through them so all students know which group they are in. Invite students to get into those groups.</li><li>• Remind students that when they start working in a new group, it is a good idea to create some group norms to make sure that group discussion and collaborative work is productive and enjoyable for everyone.</li><li>• Hand out a piece of chart paper and a marker to each group.</li><li>• Circulate to help groups think of norms. Ask guiding questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “How can you make sure you have productive group discussions? What do you each need to do? Why?”</li><li>* “How can you make sure everyone gets a chance to share his or her ideas and be heard?”</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Asking groups to write group norms makes them think about criteria for successful teamwork and provides a guide to refer to when they find teamwork challenging and need support.</li></ul>





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Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>C. Allocating Key Quotes (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus students on the Performance Task Prompt, specifically the list of Key Quotes spoken by Atticus. Remind them of the Key Quotes anchor charts they created in Lesson 8 about these four quotes. Assign each group one of the four key quotes and tell them that they are going to be writing their Readers Theater for scenes that convey that quote.</li> <li>• Ask students to discuss in their Readers Theater groups:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What is the main idea of your quote?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Invite students to spend 5 minutes reading through the scenes (already recorded on their key quote anchor chart from Lesson 8) and then reading those scenes in context in the novel.</li> <li>• Ask students to discuss in their Readers Theater groups:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “How does each scene communicate the main idea of your key quote?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tell students that to make their group Readers Theater performance a strong representation of that quote, within their group they need to: 1) identify the scenes from the list that best communicate that quote, and 2) each select a different scene to work on and then combine those scenes into one with a conclusion. Emphasize that if two students within the group choose the same scene to work on, the final Readers Theater piece could be quite confusing and boring to watch. Remind students that in later lessons they will combine their scripts in chronological order, just as the scenes occur in the book.</li> <li>• Ask groups to discuss:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “Which of the scenes recorded on the key quote chart are the most successful at communicating the key quote? Why?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Remind groups of their norms chart; circulate to assist groups that are struggling to identify the most successful scenes.</li> <li>• Give groups 5 minutes to decide who is going to work on which of the scenes that they have identified as the most successful at communicating the key quote. Remind groups of their norms chart and circulate to remind groups that each student needs to work on a different scene.</li> <li>• If a group begins to argue over which scenes students are going to work on, allocate a scene to each student in that group.</li> </ul>	



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Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Exit Ticket: My Key Quote and Scene (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute the exit ticket: <b>My Key Quote and Scene</b>. Tell students to record on the exit ticket their key quote and the scene they are going to be working on.</li> <li>• Collect the exit tickets and check that each student in a group is working on a different scene for his or her key quote.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using exit tickets allows you to get a quick check for understanding of the learning target so that instruction can be adjusted or tailored to students' needs during the lesson or before the next lesson.</li> </ul>
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Read through the scene for which you will be writing a Readers Theater script and use evidence flags to mark the dialogue in that scene.</p>	



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## Supporting Materials



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### Performance Task Prompt:

After reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, analyze key quotes that reflect the overarching themes studied in Units 1 and 2. In a small group, you will develop a Readers Theater script based on your group’s quote. Your group will develop the script by selecting critical scenes from the novel that develop the theme expressed in the quote. On your own, you will also write two pieces: a justification (Mid-Unit 3 Assessment) to explain how the scenes your group selected help develop the main idea of the quote, and a commentary (End of Unit 3 Assessment) to explain how your group’s script is a response to *To Kill a Mockingbird* and how it connects to and diverges from the novel.

### **Key Quotes** **(Each quote was spoken by Atticus)**

- A. “Mockingbirds don’t do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don’t eat up people’s gardens, don’t nest in corncribs, they don’t do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That’s why it’s a sin To Kill a Mockingbird.” (90)
- B. “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view—until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.” (30)
- C. “I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It’s when you know you’re licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do.” (112)
- D. “Before I can live with other folks I’ve got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn’t abide by majority rule is a person’s conscience.” (105)

### **Part 1: Individual Scripting**

Each member will write an individual narrative “passage script” from the novel relating to the key quote provided to your group. On your own, you will choose a scene from the novel that develops the main idea of your key quote. Along with that, you will write narration that introduces that passage and a short commentary that explains how the passage develops the main idea of the key quote.

### **Part 2: Group Scripting**

You will collaborate with your small group to produce one longer script that connects each person’s passage in chronological order, as it happens in the book. When you work as a group, you will focus on making sure the passages flow together: You will refine each person’s narration, add transitions, and work as a group to write a conclusion to the group’s script. You also will choose props and plan blocking for your performance and rehearse as a group. Your group will perform your final high-quality narrative script for the class and/or school or community members.



Model Readers Theater One-Scene Script:

**Key Quote**

“As I made my way home, I thought Jem and I would get grown but there wasn’t much else left for us to learn, except possibly algebra.”

**Theme**

Growing up is about more than just getting older—it is about understanding people and their actions and recognizing that the world doesn’t always work as you want it to or think it should.

**Roles**

Narrator  
Jem  
Atticus  
Miss Maudie

**Script**

**Narrator:** Jem has realized that Atticus had a reason for not bragging about his talent. Jem wants to be like his father, and so you can see he is beginning to grow up. By the time he turns 12, he is difficult to live with, inconsistent, and moody. But his loss of innocence has barely begun when he, Scout, and Dill sneak into Tom Robinson’s trial and listen intently as the witnesses give their testimony. After the jury leaves to deliberate, Jem is confident.

**Jem:** Don’t fret; we’ve won it. Don’t see how any jury could convict on what we heard.

**Narrator:** Jem truly believes that people will do the right thing and find Tom innocent. Until the jury found him guilty.

**Jem:** Atticus—

**Atticus:** (Moving closer to Jem and putting his hand on Jem’s shoulder) What, son?

**Jem:** How could they do it? How could they?

**Atticus:** I don’t know, but they did it. They’ve done it before and they did it tonight and they’ll do it again, and when they do it—seems that only children weep. Good night.

*Atticus walks away.*

**Narrator:** The next day, Miss Maudie invites Jem, Scout, and Dill over for some cake.

**Miss Maudie:** Don’t fret, Jem. Things are never as bad as they seem.

Model Readers Theater One-Scene Script:

**Jem:** It's like bein' a caterpillar in a cocoon, that's what it is. Like somethin' asleep wrapped up in a warm place. I always thought Maycomb folks were the best folks in the world—least that's what they seemed like.

**Miss Maudie:** We're the safest folks in the world. We're so rarely called on to be Christians, but when we are, we've got men like Atticus to go for us.

**Jem:** (grinning ruefully) Wish the rest of the county thought that.

**Miss Maudie:** You'd be surprised how many of us do.

**Jem:** (starting to sound angry) Who? Who in this town did one thing to help Tom Robinson, just who?

**Miss Maudie:** His colored friends, for one thing. And people like us. People like Judge Taylor. People like Mr. Heck Tate. Stop eating and start thinking, Jem. Did it ever strike you that Judge Taylor naming Atticus to defend that boy was no accident? That Judge Taylor might have had his reasons for naming him?

**Narrator:** This was a thought. Court-appointed defenses were usually given to Maxwell Green, Maycomb's latest addition to the bar, who needed the experience. Maxwell Green should have had Tom Robinson's case.

**Miss Maudie:** You think about that. It was no accident. I was sittin' there on the porch last night, waiting. I waited and waited to see you all come down the sidewalk, and as I waited I thought, Atticus Finch won't win, he can't win, but he's the only man in these parts who can keep a jury out so long in a case like that. And I thought to myself, well, we're making a step—it's just a baby step, but it's a step.



**Readers Theater Criteria Anchor Chart:**  
(for Teacher Reference)

Script	Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opens with a narrator setting the scene by providing background information on what has already happened in the story</li><li>• Character dialogue</li><li>• Character actions in italics and parentheses before the dialogue, or on their own line after the dialogue, to warn the person playing the character of what s/he needs to do</li><li>• Quotes from the book incorporated into the script</li><li>• Clearly communicates the main ideas in the key quote</li><li>• Accurately retells the story of scenes from the novel through dialogue</li><li>• Name of each character before the line s/he has to speak</li><li>• Line break between speech of different characters</li><li>• Dialogue in style and tone of the speech in the book</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a narrator to help frame the dramatic presentation.</li><li>• No full stage sets. If used at all, sets are simple.</li><li>• No full costumes. If used at all, costumes just suggest the feel of the characters. Or the costumes are really basic or all the same.</li><li>• No full memorization. Scripts are used openly in performance.</li></ul>



**Exit Ticket:**  
My Key Quote and Scene

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

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

What is the key quote that has been allocated to your group?

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What is the key scene that has been allocated to your group?

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