

My name is:

## Collaborative Comprehension and Rehearsal Tips for Four Actor/Reader Buddies

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### **The Man, the Boy and the Donkey** - A *Let's do it again!* scripted reading play by Ellie Hallett

readingworks.com.au

This version of the very famous Aesop's fable is written as a comedy for four actors. (A whole class can work in simultaneously in groups of two, three or four to read this play and other plays in this series, or work on their worksheets.)

The four characters in *The Man, the Boy and the Donkey* are:

- i. Dad
- ii. The Boy
- iii. & iv. Two travellers; two merchants; two ladies; landowner and horse.

The characters iii. and iv. are performed by the same two readers who quickly remove and then add small costume details in-between their entrances to look like the different characters they represent.

The horse, for example, could wear a long wig to represent a tail, and walk with head held down low to look exhausted. It can suddenly become animated, shake its tail vigorously and loudly say to the audience, 'I call it cruelty to animals!' before looking tired and dejected again.

Extras from the audience/teachers: Town Crier; hard-of-hearing person; person who pushes Oscar; impatient person; photographer; 'Yippee' person; Donkey (Hee Haw! Hee Haw!) Pete; Sandy; others. Additional *ad lib* comments can come from the audience.

The Postscript should be announced by Dad and The Boy in their normal voices, stepping out of character.

Practise this story until is very fluent, highly polished, expressive and more or less memorised before performing. Use props and costume changes.

Making the audience laugh while keeping a straight face is big part of being a good actor. Wait for the laughter, but continue speaking just as the laughter is subsiding rather than waiting for it to completely finish.

#### **Activities**

1. Draw a scene or characters of your choice on the facing page. Take your time as if you are a famous artist with a reputation for top quality. Date and sign.
2. Each group performs their well-rehearsed play for the class in turn. The teacher formally awards an Oscar trophy to the most professional group.

**Partners' initials:**

**Teacher's initials:**