



Martin Luther King Day Activity

Reader's Theater (Grades 2-5)

How Reader's Theater works: Reader's theater is an opportunity for students to act out a short play. Students will volunteer or be assigned roles. Allow students to take 5-10 minutes to read through their parts and collaborate with friends on how to perform their role. Students may use imaginary props. This is an opportunity for students to be creative! Students do not need to memorize their lines. Students who do not have roles can help by reading along or making simple props.

Teacher Big Tail's Volunteers

The setting: A classroom of squirrels is preparing to volunteer at the local Oak Tree Retirement Home. The retirement home is excited to have so many young squirrels come and help clean and play games with the retired gray-haired squirrels.

Cast

Narrator
Principal Fuzzy
Teacher Big Tail
Grandma Gray
Mr. Acorn
Mrs. Chestnut

Students:

Rolland
Terrance
Zach
Cassie
Lauren
Jenna
Emily
Jessica
Joshua





ACT I: Elwood Elementary

Narrator: On a bright and sunny January morning a classroom of young squirrels at Elwood Elementary school began to prepare for a day of volunteering at the Oak Tree Retirement Home. Teacher Big Tail was very excited for the day's big project. Principal Fuzzy decided to go with the class on their trip.

Teacher Big Tail: Good morning students! I hope you are excited to volunteer at the Oak Tree Retirement Home! Your work will be very helpful. Older squirrels need a little extra help sometimes. Raise your hand if you like to volunteer.

Lauren: I don't like to volunteer. I would rather play video games and watch television. Volunteering takes too much time and energy.

Principal Fuzzy: Lauren, I will assign you to cleaning the maple leaves if you don't behave yourself.

Lauren: (sigh) okay.

Teacher Big Tail: Who has volunteered before?

Zach and Cassie: I have!

Rolland: One time I helped out at a shelter passing out walnuts squirrels. They were very thankful for our help.

Teacher Big Tail: That is good to hear. Who has *never* volunteered before?

Lauren: I have never volunteered. I spend my time watching television instead. It is much more entertaining.

Jenna: I thought about volunteering once, but I never got around to it.

Principal Fuzzy: (*looks at watch*) Look at the time! We better get to the retirement home. We don't want to be late!

ACT II: Oak Tree Retirement Home

Narrator: All of the young squirrels walked across the park to the retirement home. When all the young squirrel students arrived, a retirement home employee named Mr. Acorn approached the class to talk to them about the work they would do.

Mr. Acorn: Hi, my name is Mr. Acorn and I work here at the retirement home. We are very happy that you have come here today. Your work will be very helpful.

Emily: What kind of work are we going to do? I won't scrub any toilets!



Mr. Acorn: No one will scrub toilets, I promise. Today some of you will volunteer outside with me and the rest of you will play games with our retired squirrels. Shoveling the snow will make it easier for squirrels to get in and out of the building and playing games with our retired squirrels will brighten their day. They like to have young visitors.

Joshua: (*raises hand*) I like to shovel snow. I help my uncle shovel snow at home.

Terrance: (*jumps in front of Joshua*) I'm the best at shoveling snow. I'll do the best job.

Jessica: Well I like to play games. Tic-Tac-Toe is my favorite.

Mr. Acorn: Great! Everyone will have a good time volunteering today.

Narrator: Mr. Acorn gave everyone a job to do, even Principal Fuzzy and Teacher Big Tail. As the day went on, many students began to enjoy the volunteering they were doing. Two retired squirrels named Mrs. Chestnut and Grandma Gray enjoyed playing games with young squirrels while Mr. Acorn worked with Joshua, Terrance, Cassie, and Zach outside shoveling snow and putting up a bird feeder. After volunteering for three hours, all of the young squirrels came together to talk about the work they had accomplished. Grandma Gray and Mrs. Chestnut joined, too.

Grandma Gray: I love it when you young squirrels come here. It brightens my day!

Mrs. Chestnut: If you young squirrels did not come today, I would be very bored. Thank you for coming!

Lauren: You're welcome. I actually had a fun time volunteering today. Who knew this could be better than television?

Mr. Acorn: We got a lot of work finished in the yard. Without your help our yard would still be messy. Your hard work has made this place look brand new.

Grandma Gray: I'm going to love looking out my window to watch the birds at the new birdfeeder.

Principal Fuzzy: Who knew all you young squirrels could do such a good job? I am impressed!

Jessica: I think I'd like to keep volunteering. I like to help others.

Emily: Can we come back this weekend to play games with the retired squirrels again?

Mr. Acorn: Of course! You are always welcome to volunteer! Donating your spare time to helping others is always needed.



Mrs. Chestnut: I hope Emily comes back soon so we can finish our crossword puzzle.

Principal Fuzzy: It's nice to know that our hard work made such a difference.

Teacher Big Tail: Ok class. Can you think of any other service projects you might like to volunteer for next? Every year I like to get ideas from my students on where they would like to volunteer. Your ideas are very important.

Cassie: I would like to clean up the local park. There is a lot of trash that needs to be picked up.

Principal Fuzzy: Good idea.

Zach: I would like to plant flowers around the school. Everyone likes flowers.

Emily: I think it would be a good idea to paint the art room at school. The paint is pretty old and peeling off the walls. Maybe we can paint a mural, too.

Rolland: We can make cards for firefighters and police officers thanking them for their hard work.

Teacher Big Tail: These are all very good ideas. In the next few months will make a big difference in our neighborhood. Our volunteering will help a lot of people. Without volunteers, our neighborhood would not be as nice as it is today.

Principal Fuzzy: *(looks at watch)* Oh, look at the time! We need to get back to school!

Mr. Acorn: Good job everyone! Thank you for your hard work. Come back soon!

All Students: You're welcome!

The End

