Directions: We will be studying several poems about the relationship between father and son to help us connect to *The Kite Runner*. To help visualize and consider these poems, we will be doing reader’s theatre.

What is reader’s theatre?

Reader’s theatre is an activity where a group of students narrate and present a piece of literature—in this case, a poem. You will get into groups and be assigned one of the poems from this packet. One person will be the narrator and they will read the entire poem aloud. The other students are the actors, and they will act out the actions in the poem but can’t talk or use props.

Rules and Expectations:

1. **You need one narrator to read the entire poem.**
2. **The narrator needs to include pauses and will help direct the actors by stopping, slowing down, etc. as they read to give the actors time to act.**
3. **The actors CAN NOT TALK.**
4. **The actors CAN NOT USE PROPS.**
5. **The actors need to be energetic and exaggerated their hand gestures to create the action for the audience to see.**
6. **You will present this to your classmates after some time to prepare and practice.**

*\*\*\*If possible, we will see about using the hallway in front of the auditorium as a more open space to practice and perform*

Sample: *Watch my video and sample for the following poem and record some observations…*

**What I noticed in the video:**

**This Is Just to Say**

***By William Carlos Williams***

I have eaten   
the plums   
that were in   
the icebox   
  
and which   
you were probably   
saving   
for breakfast   
  
Forgive me   
they were delicious   
so sweet   
and so cold

*Robert Phillips* (1938-)

Running on Empty 1981

Roles: (3-4)

*Narrator (s)*

*Boy*

*Father*

As a teenager I would drive Father's   
Chevrolet cross-country, given me  
  
reluctantly: "Always keep the tank   
half full, boy, half full, ya hear?"  
  
The fuel gauge dipping, dipping 5  
toward Empty, hitting Empty, then  
  
--thrilling!--'way below Empty,  
myself driving cross-country  
  
mile after mile, faster and faster,   
all night long, this crazy kid driving 10  
  
the earth's rolling surface,  
against all laws, defying chemistry,  
  
rules, and time, riding on nothing  
but fumes, pushing luck harder  
  
than anyone pushed before, the wind 15  
screaming past like the Furies . . .  
  
I stranded myself only once, a white  
night with no gas station open, ninety miles  
  
from nowhere.  Panicked for a while,  
at standstill, myself stalled.  
  
At dawn the car and I both refilled.  But, 20  
Father, I am running on empty still.

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| **Those Winter Sundays**  Roles: (3-4)  *Narrator (s)*  *Boy*  *Father* |  |
| by [Robert Hayden](http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/196) | |
|  | |
| Sundays too my father got up early  and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,  then with cracked hands that ached  from labor in the weekday weather made  banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.  I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.  When the rooms were warm, he'd call,  and slowly I would rise and dress,  fearing the chronic angers of that house,  Speaking indifferently to him,  who had driven out the cold  and polished my good shoes as well.  What did I know, what did I know  of love's austere and lonely offices? |  |

“My Father’s Song” by Simon Ortiz

Roles: (3-4)

*Narrator (s)*

*Boy*

*Father*

*Corn Planter (?)*

Wanting to say things,

I miss my father tonight.

His voice, the slight catch,

the depth from his thin chest,

the tremble of emotion

in something he has just said

to his son, his [song](http://drchick.wikispaces.com/MatthewJansen#anchortwo).

We planted corn one Spring at Acu-

we planted several times

but this one particular time

I remember the soft damp [sand](http://drchick.wikispaces.com/MatthewJansen#anchorthree)

in my hand.

My father had stopped at one point

to show me an overturned [furrow](http://drchick.wikispaces.com/MatthewJansen#anchorone);

the plowshare had unearthed

the burrow nest of a mouse

in the soft moist [sand](http://drchick.wikispaces.com/MatthewJansen#anchorthree).

Very gently, he scooped tiny pink animals

into the palm of his hand

and told me to touch them.

We took them to the edge

of the field and put them in the shade

of a [sand](http://drchick.wikispaces.com/MatthewJansen#anchorthree) moist clod.

I remember the very softness

of cool and warm sand and tiny alive mice

and my father saying things.

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| **Danse Russe** |  |
| by [William Carlos Williams](http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/119)  Roles: (4-5)  *Narrator (s)*  *Father*  *Sleeping Wife*  *Sleeping Baby*  *Sleeping Kathleen* | |
|  | |
| If when my wife is sleeping  and the baby and Kathleen  are sleeping  and the sun is a flame-white disc  in silken mists  above shining trees,-  if I in my north room  dance naked, grotesquely  before my mirror  waving my shirt round my head  and singing softly to myself:  "I am lonely, lonely,  I was born to be lonely,  I am best so!"  If I admire my arms, my face,  my shoulders, flanks, buttocks  against the yellow drawn shades,-  Who shall say I am not  the happy genius of my household? |  |

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| **My Father's Hat *by Mark Irwin*** |  |
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| Sunday mornings I would reach  high into his dark closet while standing  on a chair and tiptoeing reach  Roles: (2-3)  *Narrator (s)*  *Boy in Closet*  higher, touching, sometimes fumbling  the soft crowns and imagine  I was in a forest, wind hymning  through pines, where the musky scent  of rain clinging to damp earth was  his scent I loved, lingering on  bands, leather, and on the inner silk  crowns where I would smell his  hair and almost think I was being  held, or climbing a tree, touching  the yellow fruit, leaves whose scent  was that of a clove in the godsome  air, as now, thinking of his fabulous  sleep, I stand on this canyon floor  and watch light slowly close  on water I'm not sure is there. |  |

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| **The Portrait**  **By Stanley Kunitz**  My mother never forgave my father  for killing himself,  Roles: (4-5)  *Narrator (s)*  *Father*  *Mother*  *Child*  especially at such an awkward time  and in a public park,  that spring  when I was waiting to be born.  She locked his name  in her deepest cabinet  and would not let him out,  though I could hear him thumping.  When I came down from the attic  with the pastel portrait in my hand  of a long-lipped stranger  with a brave moustache  and deep brown level eyes,  she ripped it into shreds  without a single word  and slapped me hard.  In my sixty-fourth year  I can feel my cheek  still burning. |  |