

READER'S THEATER

MY FRIEND IS SAD

By Mo Willems

The words in the story have been adapted to a script for two beginning readers. Gerald and Piggie are characters created by Mo Willems in a series of books for children.

Reader's theater is an effective tool to promote reading with fluency and expression. Often, this format is motivating for reluctant readers who have difficulties comprehending written words. Reader's theater brings the words to life and makes the student an integral part of the story.

Although reader's theater is meant to be performed with scripts in hands and the focus is on reading, a few teacher notes appear at the end for those who like to add a little something extra to the performance.

Have fun!

LISA & JIM MORRISON

**My Friend is Sad
by Mo Willems
A Gerald and Piggie Story**

Gerald (looking sad): Ohhh...

Piggie: My friend is sad. I will make him *happy*!

Gerald: Wha?

Piggie (pretending to be a cowboy): Yee-haw! Yippie-kay-yay!
Get along, little doagies...

Gerald: A cowboy! (pauses)
Ohhhhhhhhhhh.... (looks sad again)

Piggie: Gerald *loves* cowboys. But he is still sad.
(pretends to be clown) Ladies and gentlemen!!!

Gerald: Huh?

Gerald: A clown!
Ohhhhhhhhhhh....(looks sad again)

Piggie: Clowns are *funny*, but he is *still* sad.
(pretends to be robot) Take me to your leader....

Gerald: A robot!
Ohhhhhhhhhhh.....(looks sad again)

Piggie: How can *anyone* be sad around a *robot*?
Look, Gerald...

Gerald: Piggie! (looks happy) Piggie! Piggie!

Piggie: I am sorry.

I wanted to make you happy, but you are still sad.

Gerald: I am not sad now. I... am... *happy!* (he smiles very big)

Piggie: You are *happy*?

Gerald: I am happy because you are here!

But I was so sad, Piggie, so very very sad.

I saw a cowboy! (pretends to be a cowboy)

Yee-haw! Yippie-kay-yay! Get along, little doagies...

Piggie: But you love cowboys.

Gerald: I do love cowboys.

BUT YOU WERE NOT THERE TO SEE HIM!

Piggie: Well, in fact, I....

Gerald (interrupting): THERE WAS MORE!

Then I saw a clown, a funny, funny clown

(starts to cry)

BOO! HOO! HOOO!

BUT YOU WERE NOT THERE TO SEE HIM!

Piggie: But...

Gerald (interrupting again): THERE WAS MORE!

I saw a robot, a cool, cool robot!

And my best friend was not there to
see it with me.

(starts crying again)

Piggie: But.... I'm..... You see... I am here NOW!

Gerald: You are! You are here now!

My best friend is here now! (does happy dance)

(They hug)

Gerald: *I* need my friends.

Piggie: You need new glasses.

TEACHER NOTES

***Acting in general is about showing emotion through facial expression, body language and words. Remind students to keep all of this in mind as they are telling the story.**

***When acting the story, another student could be turning the pages of the book by Mo Willems to further the concept that the story can be found in literature. Sometimes the audience enjoys seeing the pictures too. I often let this student read the title and author to the audience before the story begins.**

***A note about the characters...Gerald is a pessimistic elephant who wears glasses. Piggie is more optimistic and tries to get Gerald to look on the bright side of things. Adding some elephant ears and glasses for Gerald, and some pig ears for Piggie could be fun. While it would be fun to add noses, use caution as they may get in the way of the child's ability to speak clearly.**

***The focus of reader's theater is not on sets, props and costumes, so keep these simple. Students can indicate a cowboy, clown or robot by using body language. If you choose to use props, maybe a hat for each of the pretend characters would be enough.**