

### 3. Program Version I: Reader's Theatre

#### Materials: What You'll Need to Get Started

##### **Reader's Theatre: Reading the Play**

- copies of script for each student (and yourself)
- highlighters or coloured pencils (for students to underline their own lines)

##### **Written Activities:**

- one photocopy per student
- a writing utensil per student
- the answer sheet and glossary of terms (for you)

##### **Activity #2:**

- one cue card per group
- a writing utensil

##### **Activity #3:**

- a piece of paper per student
- a writing utensil per student



*Consider putting props, script, and all materials in a box or suitcase, because then you can create excitement by saying, "A whole play is in this box"!*



*Consider using minimal props such as dollar-store microphones for Lawrence and Mandy, and a remote control for Jenny. These props will aid the students in speaking loudly as actors and will help the other students to envision the action of the play.*

## **Description: Getting Started**

### **(For Coordinator or Teacher):**

1. Give an overview of the basic plot of the play, and basic epilepsy knowledge (*Epilepsy Information is provided on page 4*)
2. Assign the parts, either by:
  - i. using the sheet the night before, or
  - ii. using the sheet to look at the boy/girl ratio in the scenes and putting the students in groups on the spot (ie. "Who wants to be Jenny in this scene?" or "I need 2 girls and 1 boy for this scene")  
(*The part assignment sheet is pages 11-12*)
3. Have each student should go through the script and underline or highlight the lines that belong to them, including the lines marked "All".
4. Have the students practice their scenes in groups.  
Narrators practice with their partners (ie. Narrator #1 with Narrator #2, Narrator #3 with Narrator #4, etc.).  
Students may need you to walk around to answer questions about vocabulary words, or the action of certain sections.
5. Call everyone to re-assemble as a group. Explain how the reading of play is going to work.  
**Reminder:** the lines that say "All" are for everyone in the class to shout!
6. Start the reading! Announce the new scene number when it comes up. Otherwise, try not to interrupt unless necessary.
7. Lead discussion and a follow-up activity if desired (*see pages 37-44*).



*When discussing epilepsy with the class, give them a first aid poster for their classroom (you can print the first aid page of this handbook, on page 6)*



*Think of the best way for the play to be read. Are the students going to read from their seats? Take turns going up to the front? This will depend on the classroom and how long the students have been practicing.*



*Give out a certificate to the class for their hard work (located on page 45), and praise the class for being inclusive and supportive of each other and people with epilepsy!*



## Expectations: Grade Five

Subject	Expectations
<p><b>Healthy Living:</b> <i>Growth and Development:</i></p> <p><i>Personal Safety and Injury Prevention:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-identify strategies to deal positively with stress and pressures that result from relationships with family and friends;</li> <li>-identify factors (e.g., trust, honesty, caring) that enhance healthy relationships with friends, family, and peers;</li> <li>-explain how people’s actions (e.g., bullying, excluding others) can affect the feelings and reactions of others;</li> <li>-apply strategies (e.g., anger management, assertiveness, conflict resolution) to deal with personal-safety and injury-prevention situations (e.g., swarming, threatening, harassment)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Drama and Dance:</b> <i>Knowledge of Elements:</i></p> <p><i>Creative Work:</i></p> <p><i>Critical Thinking:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-demonstrate awareness of audience when writing in role, and use the appropriate language, tone of voice, gestures, and body movements when speaking as a character in a drama</li> <li>-rehearse and perform small-group drama and dance presentations drawn from novels, poems, stories, plays, and other source materials</li> <li>-describe, orally and in writing, the differences between their own responses to a situation and the responses of a character they have portrayed</li> <li>-solve problems in drama and dance individually and in groups (e.g., negotiate the “best” ending to an improvisation), and evaluate the solutions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Science:</b> <i>Life Systems: Human Organ Systems, Understanding Basic Concepts</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-describe the basic structure and function of the major organs in the respiratory, circulatory, digestive, excretory, and nervous systems</li> </ul>

## Teacher Role Assignment and Evaluation Sheet

Although the number of lines is given for each character, this is a totally flexible system. A student can play more than one part if you have a small group, and the scenes can be further divided if there is a surplus of students (ie. more than 30).

Also, please note that although a character may seem to have only a few lines, this list does not account for line length.

For best results, assign the best readers the largest parts. There are enough medium-sized parts that no one should feel insulted! Those students who show little or no interest in acting might make wonderful narrators. And remember, the genders are not very important for characters like Dad, Lawrence, and Mandy; you might need to make alterations, such as changing “Dad” to “Mom”.

### **Scene One: Dad tucks Jenny into bed, her dream begins**

<b>Character</b>	<b># Of Lines</b>	<b>Student's Name</b>	<b>Evaluation/Comments</b>
Jenny	9		
Dad	4		
Narrator #1	6		
Narrator #2	6		
Lawrence	7		
Mandy	5		
Narrator #3	5		
Narrator #4	5		

### **Scene Two: Jenny and Andrew work on project (flashback)**

<b>Character</b>	<b># Of Lines</b>	<b>Student's Name</b>	<b>Mark/Comments</b>
Andrew	9		
Jenny	8		
Narrator #3	1		
Narrator #4	1		

### **Scene Three: Jenny's seizure and seizure explanation**

<b>Character</b>	<b># Of Lines</b>	<b>Student's Name</b>	<b>Mark/Comments</b>
Lawrence	3		
Mandy	3		
Jenny	2		
Narrator #5	7		
Narrator #6	7		

### Scene Four: Jenny and Natasha walk home from school (flashback)

Character	# Of Lines	Student's Name	Mark/Comments
Jenny	10		
Natasha	10		
Narrator #7	1		
Narrator #8	1		

### Scene Five: Hosts and Jenny discuss Natasha

Character	# Of Lines	Student's Name	Mark/Comments
Jenny	5		
Lawrence	5		
Mandy	5		
Narrator #7	1		
Narrator #8	1		

### Scene Six: Samantha bullies Jenny

Character	# Of Lines	Student's Name	Mark/Comments
Samantha	6		
Natasha	11		
Jenny	7		
Narrator #7	2		
Narrator #8	2		

### Scene Seven: Jenny takes charge, wakes up

Character	# Of Lines	Student's Name	Mark/Comments
Mandy	3		
Lawrence	4		
Jenny	10		
Dad	4		
Narrator #7	4		
Narrator #8	4		
Narrator #1	1		
Narrator #2	1		
Narrator #3	2		
Narrator #4	2		

Perfection:  
A Reader's Theatre Production

**A Note To The Actors:**

**This is the page where you read about your character.**

**Are you playing someone mean or nice?**

**Young or old?**

**Loud or quiet?**

**Make sure that you know what your character is like so that you can say the lines the way that your character would say them!**

**Jenny:** A smart and friendly girl with epilepsy who is 11 years old.

**Dad:** Jenny's caring and encouraging Father. He is very supportive to his daughter and tries to help her make good decisions.

**Lawrence and Mandy:** Two very fake and exaggerated TV show hosts. They think that they are giving good advice, but they are very pushy and care too much about appearances. They are loud and bossy.

**Andrew:** A funny, helpful boy in Jenny's class. They joke around together while they are working on a school project.

**Natasha:** A very loyal friend. She and Jenny have been friends for a long time, and they know each other very well.

**Samantha:** Another girl in Jenny's class. She is bossy and mean, and she teases other kids. She always wants to get her way.

**Narrators:** These roles are very important. You are not a character in the story, but your job is to tell everyone what is happening. Make sure that you use a loud, clear voice!

## Scene 1:

**Narrator #1:** One night when Jenny was being tucked into bed,

**Narrator #2:** She turned to her father and sadly said:

**Narrator #1:** She wondered if she was perfect enough,

**Narrator #2:** Would she have friends, do well in school, and all that stuff?

**Narrator #1:** Jenny was worried about her epilepsy,

**Narrator #2:** And that is how her crazy dream came to be.

**Narrator #1:** She worried about how she would fit in,

**Narrator #2:** And that's where this story is about to begin!

**Narrator #1:** So this is the story of how Jenny's family and friends

**Narrator #2:** Proved to her that in the end,

**Narrator #1:** Everyone has problems, big or small,

**Narrator #2:** And no one is perfect, after all.

**Jenny:** Dad, do you ever wish I was more perfect?

**Dad:** Never! You know I love you just the way you are. But why are you asking me? Is it because of what happened with Andrew?

**Jenny:** Yeah, I'm kind of embarrassed, I guess. (*frustrated*) If I was normal, it never would have happened. And then more people would like me.

**Dad:** I don't know anyone who doesn't like you. And everyone is different. You know that.

**Jenny:** (*not convinced*) Yeah, I guess. Goodnight, Dad.

**Dad:** Goodnight, Jenny. You'll feel better in the morning.

**Jenny:** I hope so.

*Dad turns off the light.*

**Dad:** Sweet dreams.

**Narrator #3:** When Jenny's Dad turned off the light

**Narrator #4:** Jenny fell asleep without a fight

**Narrator #3:** That night she had an incredible dream

**Narrator #4:** In front of her, she saw the strangest scene.

**Narrator #3:** First she saw a television show's set

**Narrator #4:** And two people that she had never met.

**Narrator #3:** She was a little bit frightened, I think you should know

**Narrator #4:** To be on a reality TV show!

**Lawrence:** Hello, and welcome to the newest reality show, Mr. and Mrs. Perfect! I'm your host, Lawrence – but you can call me “Perfect”. And as always, I'm here with my beautiful co-host, Mandy!

**Mandy:** Wow, Lawrence, it's quite a show we have for today.

**Lawrence:** That's right, Mandy. And just wait until you see the first “project”. She's a girl from <insert name of your school> in *desperate* need of a bit of perfection. Why, I hear she isn't even considered cool at school.

**Mandy:** Oh my goodness, Lawrence. Sounds like we have a lot of work ahead of us today! But don't worry, viewers, we can add perfection to *anyone's* life!

**Lawrence:** We sure can! Now, let's introduce today's project. Jenny, come on out!

**Jenny:** What's going on? Am I dreaming?

**Lawrence:** You sure are! ...*Dreaming* that you could be perfect!

**Mandy:** You poor thing. I can't believe that you have any friends at all.

**Jenny:** Hey, wait a minute, I –

**Lawrence:** Don't you worry, Jenny. We're going to help you become the most perfect person at school.

**Jenny:** But... (*Jenny stops to think*) Well, okay. I guess I probably need some help.

**Mandy:** You sure do!

**Narrator #3:** All of a sudden, something strange was in her hand

**Narrator #4:** And she wondered if it was part of a plan.

**Jenny:** What's this remote control for?

**Lawrence:** Well, this is *your* show! We're here to give you suggestions for becoming perfect. In order to do this, we need to look at some parts of your daily life.

**Mandy:** So, when we say “Roll the tape!”, you press ‘play’ and we'll all watch a scene of something that has happened to you in the past few days. It will be a memory of yours, played out for everyone to see. Got it?

**Jenny:** I think so...

**Lawrence:** Ready, audience? We'll all say “Roll the Tape” on the count of three. One, Two, Three....

**All:** (*shout!*) **ROLL THE TAPE!**

## Scene 2:

**Narrator #3:** All of a sudden, Jenny saw herself joking around with Andrew

**Narrator #4:** While they were working on a project with markers and glue.

**Andrew:** I don't think the colours of our bristol board match.

**Jenny:** Are you kidding? This will be the best display board in the class!

**Andrew:** (*being sarcastic*) Yeah, the best purple and yellow board...

**Jenny:** Exactly!

**Andrew:** Hey, remember at the beginning of the year when you told the class how to help you in case you have a seizure?

**Jenny:** Yeah, of course.

**Andrew:** I thought that was really cool of you. You explained it without being too shy.

**Jenny:** Thanks, Andrew. It's really important, because I still have seizures sometimes. I need everyone to understand so that people can help me and I won't get hurt.

**Andrew:** My brother says that his friend has seizures, too. But when he has them, he just looks like he's staring into space, and then he doesn't remember anything.

**Jenny:** That's an absence seizure. Other people have different seizures, too. Even though I fall on the ground and shake, some people look like they're staring, and some people wander around. Everyone's seizures look different because everyone's brain is different.

**Andrew:** Yeah. I bet mine's really squishy and gross and makes noises when I move around like this! *Andrew makes gross squishing noises and Jenny laughs.*

**Jenny:** Ew, Andrew, that's sick!

**Andrew:** Seriously though, I think both our brains have had some trouble coming up with matching colours. Are you *sure* purple and yellow will look good?

**Jenny:** Well maybe, as long as you let me do all the letters. You suck at bubble letters. Besides, *you* picked these colours!

**Andrew:** (*laughing*) Yeah, I guess. But *you* are terrible at gluing. *Everything* is sticky! I can't touch anything without getting stuck to it!

**Jenny:** Oh, come on. Can you pass me the blue marker?

**Andrew:** Sure, if I can unstick it from the floor! (*Looking for the marker*) Do you want the light blue or dark blue? Jenny? Jenny, are you alright?

### **Scene 3:**

**Narrator #5:** All of a sudden, Jenny fell to the floor

**Narrator #6:** Her whole body shook, he'd never seen that before.

**Narrator #5:** Jenny was having a seizure, but it wasn't scary for Andrew.

**Narrator #6:** He was prepared and knew just what to do.

**Narrator #5:** He called out for her Dad, he was the adult around

**Narrator #6:** He stayed calm the whole time, and moved the sharp objects that he found.

**Narrator #5:** He put something soft under her head, what a friend!

**Narrator #6:** And waited until the seizure reached its end.

**Narrator #5:** Andrew was brave and Jenny's dad helped as a guide.

**Narrator #6:** When the seizure had finished they rolled her onto her side.

**Narrator #5:** They stayed with her and knew just what to say.

**Narrator #6:** She was a bit confused, but they told her "everything's okay".

**Narrator #5:** Then that scene faded and she was back on the TV show set

**Narrator #6:** She knew her reality show dream wasn't over just yet....

**Lawrence:** What was that all about, Jenny? That was not perfection. That was not even normal.

**Mandy:** And that outfit! What were you thinking? Do you really think Andrew will want to go out with you when you dress and act like that?!?

**Lawrence:** The only solution is for you to *never* act that way again. Does that sound like a plan or what, Mandy?

**Mandy:** That is the perfect first step to perfection!

**Jenny:** But wait, I... I can't help it. I have epilepsy.

**Lawrence:** Epilepsy?

**Jenny:** It's a disorder in my brain. It's not my fault. Everyone's brain sends signals to their body, and sometimes the signals in mine get mixed up. And then I have a seizure like that. I don't have them often anymore, but sometimes I do. And anyway, I don't want Andrew to date me, he's just my friend.

**Mandy:** (*being sarcastic*) Yeah...sure, Jenny. Whatever you say. Isn't she funny, audience?!? Don't worry, she's a challenge, but I still think we can help her! Let's look at another clip! Ready, everyone? One, two, three...

**All:** ROLL THE TAPE!

## **Scene 4:**

**Narrator #7:** Jenny saw herself with Natasha, her best friend

**Narrator #8:** Walking down the street after school had come to an end.

**Jenny:** What are you doing in a bit? Do you have any plans?

**Natasha:** I don't think so.

**Jenny:** Do you want to walk to the corner and get slushies?

**Natasha:** Um, sure! But I'll have to call my mom from your house, okay?

**Jenny:** Okay.

**Natasha:** Are you sure that you're feeling well enough? I heard about your seizure yesterday.

**Jenny:** Yeah, I'm fine now. You know me, I'm tired for a little while, but then I'm back to my normal self!

**Natasha:** That's true. I just wanted to make sure that you didn't hurt yourself during your seizure.

**Jenny:** No way. Andrew was really great.

**Natasha:** Did he remember everything he was supposed to do?

**Jenny:** Yeah, he moved all the sharp things out of the way and called for help. He knew not to put anything in my mouth, and just to put something soft under my head. Other than that, he just let me have the seizure, just like I told everyone to do.

**Natasha:** Did he roll you over like we learned?

**Jenny:** Yup, he even remembered to roll me on my side after my seizure. But by then my Dad had come downstairs anyway. He was really brave.

**Natasha:** He looked proud about doing such a good job. I'm really glad he remembered what to do; I know how important it is to stay calm just so you can remember how to help.

**Jenny:** I guess you've learned something from being friends with me for so long!

**Natasha:** Yup, now I'm a pro! I'll see you at your house in 10 minutes?

**Jenny:** Sure.

**Natasha:** Okay, perfect! I'll see you soon.

## **Scene 5:**

**Narrator #7:** Then all of a sudden the flashback was gone

**Narrator #8:** The reality show was going to go on....

**Mandy:** Wasn't that pathetic, folks? Poor Jenny, you really do need our help! We got here just in time!

**Lawrence:** That's for sure.

**Jenny:** I don't get it. What was pathetic?

**Lawrence:** Oh Honey, you're so imperfect that you can't even tell! First of all, just look at that friend! That awful hair, that messy look...can't she buy better clothes than those hand-me-downs? And what do you think you are doing hanging out with someone who has to (*using a baby voice to make fun of her*) call their Mommy?

**Mandy:** That *is* pretty lame...And talking about that seizure? You really should never speak about something weird like that. You'll just draw attention to it.

**Jenny:** But Natasha is my best friend, and I don't care how she is dressed. I know her family can't always afford fancy clothes. I like her because she's nice, and funny, and if she has her own way of dressing, why should that bother me?

**Lawrence:** Because it's not cool! Hanging out with *imperfect* people like that will not help you be perfect. Or even a little bit cool, for that matter.

**Jenny:** I'm starting to think that might not be what I want...

**Mandy:** Of course it's what you want. So, our current list of tips is... get nicer clothes, find a cooler and prettier best friend, stop having seizures - and if you have them, for goodness sake, don't talk about them!

**Jenny:** But my doctor told me that it's good to talk about them. There are lots of different types of seizures, and if I hadn't told my class at school how to help me when I have mine, then Andrew wouldn't have known what to do. I could have really hurt myself!

**Mandy:** But right now, you're hurting your chance for perfection.

**Jenny:** I guess....

**Lawrence:** You guess?!? Of course we're right. That's what perfection *is*, my dear.

**Mandy:** Let's look at one more clip and we'll see if we can add more to our list of perfect suggestions! One, two, three...

**All: ROLL THE TAPE!**

## **Scene 6:**

**Narrator #7:** This flashback took place at recess a few days before

**Narrator #8:** Jenny and Natasha bounced a ball back and forth.

**Narrator #7:** Jenny bounced the ball a bit too high over Natasha's head,

**Narrator #8:** So the ball was caught by Samantha instead!

**Samantha:** Here you go, Natasha.

**Natasha:** Thanks.

**Samantha:** Hey, Nat, I'm setting up a game of foursquare. Do you want to play?

**Natasha:** Yeah, sure! With me and Jenny, you'll only need one more person. And we can use our ball.

**Samantha:** Actually, I just meant you. I said, "Do YOU want to play?"

**Natasha:** (*confused*) Well, I'm already playing with Jenny.

**Samantha:** Oh yeah? Well, I'm organizing the game, so I get to choose. And I don't want to play with Jenny.

**Jenny:** Why can't I play?

**Natasha:** Don't listen to her, Jenny. Let's just forget it. Ignore her and we'll play just the two of us.

**Samantha:** You know, I WAS thinking of inviting Alex to play...

**Natasha:** ...Alex?

**Jenny:** Nat, I know you like Alex. You can go play with them.

**Natasha:** No way! It doesn't matter. I would never ditch you like that.

**Samantha:** Alright, that's your problem. I'll just see if Alex wants to play with *me*.

*Samantha exits.*

**Jenny:** Nat, you didn't have to do that. You don't have to stay with me. You've liked Alex for so long!

**Natasha:** Yeah, but I *don't* like Samantha. She's so bossy, and she thinks she's so cool.

**Jenny:** Yeah. But she asked you to play. That was pretty nice. I wonder why she didn't ask me.

**Natasha:** Well...She's not really a great friend. She's been saying mean things about you since your seizure the other day. She's always saying you're crazy, and she told some of our class that you're contagious and they could catch it.

**Jenny:** But that's so silly! I'm not crazy; I just have seizures. And you can't catch epilepsy. That's like saying you could catch someone's blue eyes, or their height.

**Natasha:** I know, and I told everyone not to listen to her. But she's so mean. I think she's just scared because she doesn't understand it. You know, I found out that her mom and dad are getting divorced.

**Jenny:** Really? That's sad. Maybe she's afraid people will make fun of her. I guess everyone has something that they are dealing with.

**Natasha:** Yup. But that's no excuse for her to be mean to you! I'm just sorry she didn't want to play with both of us.

**Jenny:** I don't really care. I'm just happy to have a friend like you who will stand up for me and not ditch me for anything.....even Alex.

**Natasha:** Don't worry. I know that if people were making fun of me, you'd stand up for me, too!

## Scene 7:

**Narrator #7:** The flashbacks are over, the last clip is through.

**Narrator #8:** Now we'll find out what Jenny will do....

**Mandy:** Well, that little film clip makes me feel even stronger that you need to get rid of Natasha.

**Lawrence:** I agree. If you didn't hang out with her, you could try to become Samantha's best friend. Then everyone would listen to you like they listen to her.

**Jenny:** What are you talking about? That clip just proves how nice and loyal Natasha is. It shows she's a good friend. Didn't you see how she stuck up for me when Samantha was mean?

**Mandy:** I don't know about that. I really liked that Samantha girl. She's a model of everything you should try to be: she is smart, she takes charge, she's pretty, boys like her, and I bet she has tons of friends.

**Jenny:** Yeah, maybe, but she's also mean and talks behind people's backs. And she has problems, too, she just hides them. I'd rather have only a few good friends if it means I don't have to hide things from them.

**Lawrence:** Look, Jenny –

**Jenny:** / think that film clip shows that *no one* is perfect, and everyone is dealing with something. But it's how you deal with your problems and how you treat other people that counts.

**Lawrence:** Isn't she funny, audience? Now listen, Jenny. If there were no such thing as perfect people, then how could we be here?

**Jenny:** I bet you have problems and just hide them by being mean and judging people like me – you're just like Samantha! And you're *not* really here – you're just a dream. You're *my* dream.

**Narrator #7:** Jenny remembered her special tool

**Narrator #8:** The remote control – now she wouldn't be fooled!

**Narrator #7:** She picked it up and thought about pressing 'power'

**Narrator #8:** That would cancel their show and this made them sour.

**Mandy:** Now Jenny, don't cancel our show! Just think: how will you become perfect? How will we help other unfortunate people become perfect?

**Jenny:** All this is making me realize that no one needs to be perfect. Everyone just needs to be the best they can be. And for me, that means being nice to my friends, and dealing with my epilepsy in the best way possible: by teaching other people about it and trying to understand their problems, too.

**Lawrence:** Mandy, this project is getting out of control!

**Jenny:** You bet it is. Because now, / am in control...And I say this dream is over!

**Narrator #7:** She pressed the button, the dream was broken,

**Narrator #8:** and before she knew it, she was being woken.

**Dad:** Jenny? Jenny? Jenny, wake up! You've slept in – my goodness, you're sleeping so heavily. Do you feel better?

**Jenny:** Yeah, I think so.

**Dad:** I'm so glad to hear that, Honey. Natasha is waiting for you downstairs; she says you made plans to go to the park this morning. Maybe you two would like to have some breakfast first? I don't think she's eaten yet, so I told her to wait for you.

**Jenny:** Okay, thanks!

**Dad:** I'm so glad you're back to your normal self. You know, Jenny, I was really worried about you last night. I felt like you were trying to fit someone else's definition of perfection...I don't know where you got that idea from.

**Jenny:** Yeah, I guess I was.

**Dad:** You know, sweetheart, I was thinking...there *isn't* really a definition of perfection. So it's more important to meet your own goals and be the best person you can.

**Jenny:** I know, Dad. I think I finally figured out that perfection is just a dream.

**Narrator #1:** So that was the end of Jenny's crazy dreams

**Narrator #2:** Where she learned that perfection is not what it seems.

**Narrator #3:** She has new ideas now about who she wants to be

**Narrator #4:** She's not embarrassed about her epilepsy

**Narrator #3:** Because she knows everyone has problems, big or small

**Narrator #4:** And no one is perfect, after all.