A girl and her mother lived in a house near the woods.

Her mother worked hard, but they were very poor.

They did not have much money for food.

To help, the girl gathered firewood.
One day, the girl was in the woods.

She came upon an old woman.

“Hello,” she said. “How are you?”

“I am cold,” said the old woman.

“Would you like some firewood?” asked the girl.
2. The old woman made a fire.

3. She used all the firewood the girl had gathered.
Soon the old woman began to feel warm.

“Thank you,” smiled the old woman.

“Here is a present because you are so kind,” she said.

“It is a magic pot,” said the old woman.
Then the old woman sang, “Little pot, cook.”

And the little pot started to fill with sweet porridge.

“Little pot, stop,” sang the old woman.

And the little pot stopped cooking.

“Thank you!” cried the girl. And she ran home with the magic pot.
1. The girl showed her mother the magic pot.
2. “Little pot, cook,” sang the girl.
3. And the little pot started to fill with sweet porridge.
4. The girl ate one bowl and then another.
5. Her mother ate one bowl and then another.
The girl and her mother were very full.

So the girl sang, “Little pot, stop.”

And the little pot stopped cooking.

From then on, the girl would sing for the little pot to cook their meals.
One day the girl was gone, and her mother was hungry.

“I will ask the pot to make some porridge,” she thought.

“Little pot, cook,” sang her mother.

And the little pot started to fill with sweet porridge.

Her mother ate one bowl and then another.

“I am full,” smiled her mother.
“Little pot, quit,” sang her mother.

But the little pot cooked and cooked.

Porridge began to spill over the side.

“Pot, be done!” cried her mother.

“End, pot!” she tried.

“Please, finish, pot!” begged her mother.
2. Her mother did not know the magic words.
3. So the little pot cooked and cooked.
4. Porridge filled the kitchen.
1. Porridge filled the house.
2. Porridge poured out the front door.
3. Porridge flowed down the street and into the town.
4 The girl was coming home and saw porridge everywhere.

1 She knew what had happened.

2 So she sang, “Little pot, stop!”

3 And the little pot stopped cooking.
4 Then everyone had to eat their way back to their houses.
A Note to the Teacher

Primary Concepts Readers’ Theater scripts are a powerful way to help children develop fluent reading skills as they become acquainted with children’s literature classics. Readers’ Theater scripts provide the following benefits:

- Develop skill in pacing, articulation, phrasing, and expression in oral reading.
- Encourage children to monitor their own reading for fluency.
- Build cooperative skills in a small group.
- Acquaint young readers with time-honored favorites from children’s literature.

Readers’ theater is the performance of literature that is read aloud expressively rather than acted. Because the goal is to perform the selections in front of a group, readers’ theater gives children an incentive for reading familiar text over and over, thus improving their fluency.

Using the Scripts
Students work in groups of four. They either choose or are assigned a part (1, 2, 3, or 4) to practice.

Practice Makes Perfect
Each child should be given his or her own script book. The group reads and rereads the text, perfecting their fluency, pacing, phrasing, expression, and the flow from one reader to the next. The group can listen to the audio model of the script, or you may wish to model the reading yourself.

Students typically listen critically to their own readings and try to improve with each reading. Members of the group should be encouraged to listen attentively and give each other feedback. Remind students how to give positive feedback by first telling what is working and then describing what might be improved and how.
As the groups become proficient in their readings, encourage them to experiment with special ways to read the text:

■ Use expressive voices.
■ Say some words or phrases loudly and others softly.
■ Slow down or speed up text.
■ Shorten or lengthen pauses.

**Performance Time**

After the children have practiced to near perfection, have them read selections in front of an audience, for example, their classmates, another classroom, or their parents. Consider inviting parents for a Readers’ Theater Tea. Students will enjoy making the invitations. The formal tea will make all their hard work pay off with the applause of pleased parents.

No costumes or props are required for these performances. The main focus is on the celebration of reading.

**Other Resources**

*Readers’ Theater* script books and audio are available in several genres. For these and other resources for teachers, please consult a Primary Concepts catalog or visit our website at [www.primaryconcepts.com](http://www.primaryconcepts.com).