One winter day, an old man and his dog went for a walk in the forest.

On his walk, the man lost a mitten in the snow.
3 A little mouse saw the mitten.

4 “It is so cold. I will warm myself in this mitten,” said the little mouse.

1 So the little mouse scooted inside.

2 And the mitten fit just right.
Soon a frog hopped by.

“It is so icy. May I come in and warm myself?” asked the frog.

“Yes, you may,” said the little mouse.

So he moved over to make room.

Then the frog slipped into the mitten.

And the mitten stretched just a little.
Next a rabbit scampered by.

“It is so chilly. May I come in and warm myself?” asked the rabbit.

“Yes, you may,” said the little mouse and the frog.

So they scooted over to make room.

Then the rabbit squirmed into the mitten.

And the mitten stretched a bit more.
3 Shortly a fox trotted by.

4 “It is quite frosty. May I come in and warm myself?” asked the fox.

1 “Yes, you may,” said the little mouse, the frog, and the rabbit.

2 And they scrunched together to make room.

3 Then the fox wiggled into the mitten.

4 And the mitten stretched this way and that.
After a while, a wolf walked by.

“It is freezing. May I come in and warm myself?” asked the wolf.

“Yes, you may,” said the little mouse, the frog, the rabbit, and the fox.

And they squashed together to make room.

Then the wolf wormed his way into the mitten.

And the mitten stretched yet again.
3 Then a boar strode by.

4 “It is frosty. May I come in and warm myself?” asked the boar.

1 “Yes, you may,” said the little mouse, the frog, the rabbit, the fox, and the wolf.
2 And they squished to make room.
3 Then the boar squeezed into the mitten.
4 And the mitten stretched and strained.
Soon a big bear waddled by.

“It is bitter cold. May I come in and warm myself?” asked the big bear.

“Yes, you may if you can find room,” said the little mouse, the frog, the rabbit, the fox, the wolf, and the boar.
4 So they huddled together tight and held their breath.

1 The big bear wiggled his way into the mitten.

2 And the mitten stretched until it almost popped a seam.
3. The old man was now walking home.

4. His dog ran ahead and saw the mitten.

1. The dog gave a loud bark. “Woof, woof!”

2. The sound surprised and scared the seven animals.

3. They sprang out of the mitten and ran away.
The old man caught up with his dog.

“Oh, you found my mitten. What a good dog,” he said.

Then the old man picked up his mitten.

And he thought to himself...

I wonder how it got so big?
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).