I'M AN ANT!
A Story Poem for 7 or 8 Performers

Written and Formatted for Readers Theater
By Lois Walker

Reading script pages: 5
Approximate reading time: 4-5 min.

CAST:

READER 1
READER 2
READER 3
READER 4
READER 5
READER 6
READER 7
SOUND EFFECT (optional)

PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS

This Teacher Script version of "I'M AN ANT" includes performance suggestions that may be used if preparing readers for an audience. These suggestions appear <u>only</u> in the Teacher Script. Please disregard them if you have chosen a simpler readers approach.

This story poem is meant to be read aloud and has been simply staged as a Readers Theater piece, not as a traditional theater piece.

Use of simple costume pieces such as antennae headwear and/or written signs (WORKER ANT #1, WORKER ANT #2, WORKER ANT #3, etc.) around reader's necks or pinned to shirts/blouses, might enhance the performance. If adding the optional character, the sign might simply say SOUND EFFECT.

To find the proper rhythm, first read-aloud and clap through the piece as you go. Each underlined word or word-part falls directly on a beat. As you read, clap on each underlined word, keeping the rhythm steady. Be careful not to read too fast! This is a rehearsal technique and readers will not clap throughout the entire piece during performance.

NOTE: There are a few times during the performance when readers may clap or a sound effect may be used. These are clearly marked in the text. Example: (ding, ding) or (clap, clap).

SOUND EFFECTS

You may include sound effects as indicated below in parenthesis. A triangle (ding, ding) or even a drum (boom, boom) will work fine. However, if you don't want to bother with sound effects, simply ask your readers to clap instead.

ENTRANCE

All readers enter and position themselves on chairs or behind music stands. They face the audience.

*If clapping instead of using sound effects, scripts must rest on music stands so readers' hands are free to clap as indicated below.

*If you are including the SOUND EFFECT character, ask the readers to enter first. Once they are in place, all readers (in unison) thrust out an arm to indicate another performer is about to make a grand entrance. At this time, SOUND EFFECT enters as the readers applaud and continue applauding until SOUND EFFECT sits.   SOUND EFFECT sits on the floor directly in front of the readers, holding the sound instrument, and facing the audience. At this point, the reading begins.

FOCUS AND FOLDERS

Ask your readers to speak directly to the audience, not to each other. This is called "storyteller focus." Readers will focus upon the audience just as a storyteller focuses upon the listeners. (It is sometimes helpful for readers to focus eyes slightly above heads of audience members.)

Place cast scripts in colorful folders. (Ring binders allow for smooth and easy page turning.) Place folders on chairs or music stands before reading begins. If music stands are not being used, ask readers to hold folders at chest level and away from their bodies so listeners can see facial expressions and hear clearly.

READER ONE: I'm an <u>ant</u> – (ding, <u>ding</u>) or (clap, <u>clap</u>)

READER TWO: Fresh from the <u>nest</u>. (ding, <u>ding</u>) or (clap, <u>clap</u>)

READER THREE: No time for "<u>could</u>"

READER FOUR: No time for "<u>should</u>"

READER ONE: I rarely <u>rest</u>. (ding, ding) or (clap, <u>clap</u>)

                       There are <u>thous</u>ands of <u>siblings</u>

                       In my <u>old</u> nest <u>hole</u>

                       Working <u>hard</u> for <u>mother</u>,

READER FIVE: A <u>true</u> survivor's <u>goal</u>!

READER SIX: Some <u>dig</u>, find <u>food</u>,

READER SEVEN: Fight <u>foe</u>, tend <u>eggs</u>.

READER ONE: If we're <u>run</u> off our <u>feet</u>

                       We're truly <u>run</u> off our <u>legs</u>!

                       (SEE TEACHER NOTE 1)

READER TWO: (no pause) I'm an <u>ant</u> – (ding, <u>ding</u>)

READER THREE: Who can't say "<u>can't</u>". (ding, <u>ding</u>)

READER FOUR: No time to <u>rave</u>,

READER FIVE: No time to <u>rant</u>,

READER SIX: No time to <u>pant</u>. (ding, <u>ding</u>)

READER TWO: I <u>may</u> be <u>small</u>

                       But I'm <u>strong</u> and <u>tough</u>,

READER TWO: Carry <u>five</u> times my <u>weight</u>

                       When the <u>going</u> gets <u>rough</u>.

                       And I <u>carry</u> home <u>sweets</u>,

                       In<u>sects</u>, and <u>seeds</u>

READER SEVEN: They're <u>just</u> the <u>ticket</u>

READER ONE: For a <u>little</u> ant's <u>needs</u>!

                       (SEE TEACHER NOTE 2)

READER THREE: (no pause) I'm an <u>ant</u> – (ding, <u>ding</u>)

READER TWO: One of the <u>mob</u>. (ding, <u>ding</u>)

READER FOUR: No time to <u>sigh</u>,

READER FIVE: No time to <u>sob</u>,

READER THREE: I'm on the <u>job</u>. (ding, <u>ding</u>)

READER SIX: And when the <u>job's</u> too <u>big</u>,

                       Calls for <u>drastic</u> <u>measures</u>,

READER THREE: When I <u>find</u> a candy <u>cane</u>,

READER SEVEN: One of <u>life's</u> large <u>treasures</u>.

READER THREE: I <u>always</u> <u>know</u> how

                       The <u>story</u> <u>ends</u>.

                       I <u>mark</u> my <u>trail</u>

                       And get <u>help</u> from my <u>friends</u>.

                       (SEE TEACHER NOTE 3)