



Sample Reader's Theater Lesson Plan for World Read Aloud Day

Text: I Love My Hair! by Anastasia Tarpley

Script: By C. Grimes and her students

Discussion: Focus on how we should all be proud of who we are and what we look like- we all have special things about us. Sometimes we just need to look a little closer and with different lenses on our glasses to see how special we all are. Our heritages tell us about who we are, where we come from, and in this case, we learn some about African heritage.

A note about the characters: You can combine characters such as one narrator, one grandmother and one grandfather instead of two.

Text:

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Characters:

Keyana
Mama
Narrators (2)
Grandmothers (2)
Grandfathers (2)
Girls on the street
Keyana's teacher

Narrator 1: Every night before Keyana goes to bed her mother brushes her hair. No matter how gentle Mama pulls, it still hurts!

Mama: Keyana come sit between my knees and I'll brush your hair.

Keyana: Mama, do I have to? We do this every night and it always hurts me. Please not tonight.

Mama: Keyana, I'll be gentle and besides, you have beautiful hair. You should feel very proud of your hair. You can wear it anyway you wish.

Narrator 1: Keyana rests her elbows between Mama's thighs, like pillows. Mama rubs coconut oil along Keyana's scalp and slowly pulls the comb through her hair.

Narrator 2: Keyana tries her best not to cry, sucking on her breath and pressing her hands together until they're red. She doesn't want to hurt Mama's feelings. A few tears manage to squeeze out when she can't stand the comb tugging any longer.

Keyana: Mama, stop!

Mama: Oh, honey child, come let me give you a hug. I have a secret to tell you.

Narrator 2: Holding her close, Mama whispers in Keyana's ear.

Mama: Do you know why you're so lucky to have such a wonderful head of hair?

Narrator 1: Keyana shakes her head no.

Mama: Because it's beautiful and you can wear it in any style you choose.

Narrator 2: Mama starts describing how she can fix Keyana's hair in special ways. Mama tells Keyana about her ancestors and their way of life through these styles. Keyana listens carefully, smiling.

Mama: I can spin your hair into fine, soft yarn just like our grandmothers did at their spinning wheels. I can weave your hair into a puffy little bun.

Narrator 1: Keyana closes her eyes to imagine the spinning wheel and what her grandmothers would be saying to her.

Grandmothers: *(Read together as one voice)* Keyana, honey child, don't fret. Feel your hair. It's as smooth as silk that is spun from the silkworms in China. It's as smooth as the ice that covers the North and South Poles. It's as smooth as coconut oil that we rub into the palms of our hands and then into our hair. So, you see child, your hair is just like ours.

Mama: Keyana, I can part your hair into straight lines and plant rows of braids along your scalp. This is the way we plant seeds in our garden, the way your grandfathers planted seeds in their fields.

Narrator 2: Keyana closes her eyes to imagine the fields and what her grandfathers would be saying to her.

Grandfathers: *(Read together as one voice)* Keyana, Honey child, don't fret. Think about how we groomed the fields, turning up the soil, making long straight lines to plant our seeds. We had patience and waited for the seeds to grow just like you should have patience and wait for the many braids to be braided.

Narrator 1: When Mama finishes braiding and beading Keyana's hair she goes to sleep and awakes the next morning. They walk to the store.

Keyana: I love the way the beads click when I walk.

Mama: That's called rhythm. Your beads are keeping time with the rhythm of your walk.

Keyana: Click-click, click, clickety-clickety clack, tip-tip-tippety-tippety tap, click-clack...

Narrator 2: Sings Keyana

Girls on the street: *(Read together as one voice)* Look at that girl; she's dancing to the music of her hair. Isn't she lucky? Let's clap keeping time with her music. Tap-tap-clickety-click, clack...

Narrator 1: Keyana waves and smiles at the girls thinking that she is lucky.

Keyena: Some days I can just let my hair be free to do whatever it wants; to go any which-way it pleases. My hair surrounds my head like a globe. This is my Afro style. Some kids at school teased me about my Afro and I felt sad until my teacher talked with me.

Keyana's Teacher: Keyana, honey child, when I was growing up, folks counted their hair as a blessing. Wearing an Afro was a way for them to stand up for what they believed. They wanted to let the world know that they were proud of who they were and where they came from. Keyana, you should feel proud of where you are from, of your grandmothers and grandfathers and their mothers and fathers. We all have a past that tells us a story. In your case, your hair is telling your story right now.

Keyana: I love my hair! I love my hair because it is thick as a forest, soft as cotton candy, and curly as a vine winding up, reaching the sky.

Today I'm wearing it in my favorite style of all: two ponytails that stuck out on either side of my head and flap in the air like a pair of wings.

One of these days I might just take off and fly!

All characters and narrators: *(Look at Keyana)* Honey child, we love your hair! Fly, fly, fly!