Summary

Leona, nicknamed Lion, is the best basketball player among her group of friends, but she is not a team player. Marvin, nicknamed Mouse, is thought to be too small to help Lion’s team of sixth graders win a big game against some older kids. But Marvin has one special shot. Though it takes Marvin a long time to set up his shot, Lion gives him a chance to play. And when the score is tied, Marvin—with some teamwork from Lion and her friends—comes through. When no one is paying attention to him, he scores with his “supersonic majorly magnificent cannonball” shot to win the game.

Character List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stilts</td>
<td>N/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>O/34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leona</td>
<td>P/38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marvin</td>
<td>Q/40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>R/40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Mouth</td>
<td>S/44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jade</td>
<td>S/44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turbo</td>
<td>T/44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator</td>
<td>X/60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Build Background

• Ask students to talk about the game of basketball. Ask them if they like to play basketball, and why. Invite volunteers to talk about how to play and what the rules are.

• Ask students to share what they know about mice and lions. Show pictures of the animals to students. Discuss the size of each type of animal. Ask: Could one ever help the other? How?

Introduce the Script

• Give each student a copy of the script and explain that they are going to read a modernized, “fractured” version of the Aesop’s fable “The Lion and the Mouse.” Ask students to share what they know about fables. Remind them of any fables they may have read.

• Use the Learning About Genre sidebar to help teach characteristics of fractured fables.

• Tell students that in the original story of “The Lion and the Mouse,” the lion grants the mouse a favor, thinking the mouse will never be able to repay him. But one day when the lion is caught in a trap, the mouse is able to free him.

Learning About Genre: Fractured Fables

• Simple stories that are modernized

• Story elements are changed, often humorous

• Characters often represent one quality, such as greed or cleverness

• Include a moral, or lesson about right and wrong

• Explain that in *The Lion and the Mouse Shoot Hoops* the basic storyline is the same, but the story elements have been changed. Tell students that this version has new characters, and the story will be retold in an unexpected way. Encourage students to look at the front cover of the script and predict what other elements might be different from the traditional fable.

• Read the title and the back cover blurb with students. Ask them to predict what Marvin’s one basketball talent might be and how it will help the team win the game.
Introduce Vocabulary

• Introduce the glossary words: magnificent, strutted, and titanic. Read the word magnificent together. Read the definition and the context sentence. Use the word magnificent in a sentence for students. Ask: What are three things you could describe as magnificent? Ask students to use magnificent in a sentence.

• Repeat the process for strutted and titanic. Use the following questions: When have you seen someone or something that strutted? What three things would you describe as titanic?

• Point out examples of figurative expressions and discuss their meanings with students, for example, “trying to lay an egg” and “granny shot” (both page 5). Explain that an author uses figures of speech to make the language lively and to help readers visualize. Invite students to work with a partner to find figures of speech in the script and to share what they find.

ELL See page 8 for English-Language Learner and Striving Reader Support.

Model Fluent Reading
Ask students to listen and follow along with you as you read the script aloud to model fluency and expression.

Background Information

History of Fables
Fables are one of the earliest forms of storytelling. Fables are believed to have originated in India and later were told in Persia and Greece. Now fables can be found in the literature of almost every country around the world. Many well-known fables, such as “The Tortoise and the Hare” or “The Lion and the Mouse,” are attributed to Aesop, a Greek slave who lived from about 620 to 560 B.C.

Fables—Traditional and Fractured
Fables are short stories featuring animals or forces of nature that have human qualities. The main purpose of a fable is to teach a lesson or give advice; this is sometimes called a moral. The characters are usually somewhat formal or remote and are called by names such as “Lion” or “Mouse.” There is always a turning point in a fable when the characters learn a lesson.

A fractured fable is created by changing some elements of the original story, for example, the characters, the setting, or the problem and its solution. The unexpected changes often add humor to the story.
**Day Two**

**Build Fluency: Echo-Read**
- Read the script aloud, and ask students to echo-read, or repeat, the lines after you. Stop where necessary to explain unfamiliar words and phrases—for example, “pip-squeaks” and “munchkins” (page 8), and “Nothing but net” (page 15).
- Point out that there are no stage directions in this script. Explain to students that they should read the lines and think about actions the characters can perform. For example, on page 3 Leona says, “Here, kid—catch!” Ask students what they think Leona should do as she says this line. Ask students to locate other places in the script where certain actions would be appropriate. Ask students to practice the actions as they say the lines.
- Guide students to page 2. Ask them to locate the lines with question marks. Explain to students that when reading a question aloud, the reader’s voice usually rises at the end of the sentence. Model for students how to read the questions with the appropriate pitch at the end. Ask students to try reading the lines with no change in inflection, and then try rereading them correctly. Invite volunteers to give feedback on how the readings sounded.
- Ask students to turn to page 4. Point out other punctuation marks in the script, such as dashes, ellipses, and exclamation points.
- Explain that ellipses indicate a pause. Model for students by reading Marvin’s group of lines on page 4, beginning with, “No, but I can do a really cool shot.” Ask students how they think the word “HEAVE” should be read *loudly*.
- Tell students a dash also indicates a pause, but not as long a pause as for an ellipsis. Explain that a dash is used when a character suddenly changes his or her thinking, or wants to explain something. Model how to read the dash in Jade’s line on page 4.
- Ask students how lines with exclamation points should be read. Ask them to read some lines that end with exclamation points to show you the appropriate level of emphasis.

**Build Comprehension**
Ensure students understand the ideas in the story, as well as character development, by involving them in discussion.
- **Who wins the game?** (recall details)
- **How are Marvin and Leona alike? How are they different?** (compare and contrast; analyze character)
- **Which characters seem boastful?** (analyze character)
- **What parts of the story are the same as the original Lion and Mouse fable? What parts are different?** (analyze features of fables; analyze story elements)
- **What is the moral of the story?** (analyze features of fables)
• Why does Marvin think his shot is magnificent? (make inferences)
• When you play basketball, or another game, which character are you like? How are you like that character? (make connections)
• Do the older kids strut off the court at the end of the game? Why or why not? (make predictions)

ELL See page 8 for English-Language Learner and Striving Reader Support.

Build Vocabulary
Make sure students fully understand the glossary terms. The Vocabulary in Action suggestions on the inside back cover of the script provide further ideas for building students’ understanding.

Fluency Assessment Rubric
• The Reader’s Theater Overview contains an assessment rubric you can use to quickly assess each student. Use the rubric at different times during the lesson to assess different skills. For example, you may want to select students to assess their understanding of characterization during the comprehension discussion. Alternatively, you may wish to use their performance to assess how appropriately they develop their characters.
• Discuss the assessment rubric with students so that they know what you expect of them.

Assign Roles
• Use the reading levels provided on the front of this guide to help you assign roles that support or challenge each student appropriately.
• This script contains nine parts, including the role of Narrator. Narrator part could be read by two different students provided that they are reading at the same level.
• If you have more students than roles, one or more students could be a props, sound effects, or stage manager. These students could be in charge of securing props and designing the set.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Tips for Voice and Expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrator</td>
<td>matter-of-fact, storytelling voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>jealous, happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leona</td>
<td>confident, boastful, hardworking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jade</td>
<td>friendly, happy, concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>happy, pleasant, smart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marvin</td>
<td>quiet, small, squeaky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Mouth</td>
<td>confident, boastful, talkative, loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stilts</td>
<td>confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turbo</td>
<td>confident, boastful, angry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Build Fluency Skills: Read with Appropriate Pauses

- **Model:** Tell students that for their reading to make sense to the audience, they must pause in the correct places. Explain that there are several punctuation marks that tell a reader to pause (dash, comma, period, ellipsis, and colon). Use page 4 as an example. **Say:** There are many punctuation marks on this page that tell me when and for how long to pause. Look at the lines and listen as I read the lines, pausing in the appropriate places. I try to read as though the characters are talking to each other. Together, make a list of the punctuation marks and what they tell the reader to do.

- **Guide:** Ask students to look at page 9. Model how to read the lines with the dash, ellipsis, and commas. Guide students to read the lines silently and then aloud.

- **Apply:** Invite students to take turns reading page 9 aloud to a partner. The partners should follow along and listen for pauses appropriate to the punctuation in the script. Students may discuss adjustments if they feel they are necessary.

Choral-Read for Fluency

Involve students in a choral-reading of the script to reinforce the fluency skill of reading with appropriate pauses. Remind them to use dramatic expression to bring each character’s mood or personality to life.

Repeated Reading: Rehearse the Script

- **Discuss the expectations you have for student behavior during the rehearsal. Use the suggestions provided here and in the Reader’s Theater Overview.**

- **Use small-group time for students to rehearse their script. Monitor students as they rehearse, and tell them you will be listening to how they develop the characters through their reading.**

- **Offer suggestions for expression, voice, and characterization as you monitor students’ work. See the chart on page 5 for tips on voice and expression. Use specific comments, rather than general ones, directed at the character, not the student. For example: Big Mouth, use a little more confidence in your voice as you read.**

- **Use this time to observe particular students and assess for behavior. Remind students of the assessment rubric and let them know you will be assessing them as you monitor the rehearsal.**

See page 8 for English-Language Learner and Striving Reader Support.

**Expectations for Rehearsing**

When working in a group, students should:

- follow along as the script is being read;
- remain quiet while others are reading their parts;
- wait and watch for their turn to read;
- ask for help when needed;
- read clearly, using expression and fluency.
Repeated Reading: Rehearse the Script

- Use small-group time for student rehearsal. Do not interrupt this second rehearsal, but simply observe students as they read.
- Use the assessment rubric to monitor students’ rehearsal behaviors and reading fluency.

Staging and Performance Suggestions

Decide on a stage area, how students will be positioned, and whether props or movements will be added. See staging tips in the Reader’s Theater Overview. Here are some other ideas:

PLACEMENT/MOVEMENT

- Characters should stand as if they are playing basketball.
- Students’ movements will be determined by the actions of the characters.
- Characters who are ninth graders enter on page 7. Those characters should joke and laugh loudly among themselves as they strut onstage.

PROPS/COSTUMES

- Basketball (a small, soft, spongy ball)
- T-shirts and shorts
- Garbage cans or two small hoops

MUSIC/SOUND EFFECTS

- Sound of basketball bouncing and shoes squeaking during the game
- Music or city noises in the background

Perform the Script

Invite students to present the script to an audience. The audience might be members of their class, students from other classes, school staff members, and/or parents.

Assess Students’ Fluency

- Use the assessment rubric to complete your assessment of students’ fluency.
- Take time to briefly conference with each student to provide feedback on his or her reading and behavior.
Support for English Language

Build Background and Make Connections (Day One)

- Invite students to review and share what they know about the game of basketball. Show pictures from books or the Internet of basketballs and indoor and outdoor basketball courts. Discuss the setting of the story. Ask if students have ever played basketball at school or on a court like the one in the story. Ask them to share how they pick teams for basketball or other games.
- Review the fable “The Lion and the Mouse.” Discuss how the mouse helped the lion in the story. Ask students if they have ever had to help someone who was bigger and stronger than they were. Ask students to predict who might be the lion and the mouse in the story about basketball.
- Point out that the script takes place in the present. Ask students to look at the cover and the title. Discuss how you came to this conclusion.

Develop Vocabulary and Language (Day One)

- Write the name of each character on a large index card. Read the names one at a time and discuss nicknames. Explain that sometimes people have a popular name that is not really their name—this is called a nickname. The nickname might describe how a person acts or looks. Describe what stilts are and discuss what a person with the nickname Stilts might look like. Invite a student to draw a picture to go with the nickname Stilts. Continue discussing the characters’ names and nicknames and drawing pictures to match them.
- Write the word exhausted on the board. Point out Leona’s lines on page 12. Read them aloud. Discuss the meaning of the word exhausted and how the context clues can help students know what the word means. Act out how Leona might have looked after she had played so hard. Ask students to use the word exhausted orally in sentences.
- Guide students to page 2, and the phrase in Narrator’s lines, “hogged the ball.” Explain that this is called an idiom, or a phrase that only makes sense in a given language. The phrase means that Leona keeps the ball and does not let her teammates shoot it. Point out the context clue in the next line in which Ricardo says, “Lion, why don’t you let me have the ball once in a while?” Explain that idioms are common in conversational English.
• Write the phrase “take a hike” (page 7) on the board. Explain that it could mean *walk in the woods*, but when the character uses it in this story it means *go away*. Ask students to use this phrase orally in sentences. Review other idiomatic expressions from the story, for example, “she was up against” (page 9), “Lion fought hard” (page 10), and “faking me out” (page 11).

• Write the phrase “stick to your player like glue” (page 9) on the board. Read the phrase aloud and ask students what they picture in their minds when they hear this phrase. Explain that writers use figures of speech to make their writing more colorful. Review other figures of speech from the story, making sure students understand their meanings. Possible examples include many phrases from Big Mouth’s lines, beginning on page 7.

**Build Comprehension (Day Two)**

Engage students in discussion about the script, starting with simple literal questions and progressing to more difficult ones. As students discuss the questions, ask them to point to places in the script that best answer the questions. Suggested questions:

• *Who are the main characters in this story?* (analyze character)

• *Why does Leona’s team play the ninth graders?* (recall details)

• *Does Leona think Marvin can help the team? Why or why not?* (draw conclusions; recall details)

• *How does Marvin help Leona and the team?* (recall details)

• *Are you more like Marvin or Leona? Tell why.* (analyze character; make connections)

• *What is the problem in the story? How do the characters solve it?* (identify main idea and supporting details)

• *Does the story end happily? Why or why not?* (draw conclusions)

• *What is the moral of the story?* (make inferences; analyze features of fables)

**Read and Perform (Days Two–Three)**

• Provide extra practice reading the script as a group before students read their individual parts to ensure they are familiar and comfortable with the language and vocabulary.

• You may want to assign two students to a role so they can read the part together. This will help support their reading.

• Be sure to use the reading levels provided on the cover of this Teacher’s Guide to help you assign the roles.
Word Study

ANALYZE ALLITERATION

• Explain to students that alliteration is when words in a sentence or phrase begin with the same sound. Point out that the words do not always begin with the same letter, just the same sound. Explain that authors use alliteration because it sounds pleasing when it is read.

• Ask students to look at the phrases “the Duke of Dunk,” “the King of the Court,” and “the Lord of Layups” on page 7. Explain that Big Mouth describes himself using these phrases. Read each phrase aloud, emphasizing the sounds that are the same. Discuss the meaning of each phrase. Explain that Big Mouth is saying he is the ruler of the basketball game. Invite students to share what kind of person they think Big Mouth is.

• Ask students to find and list the other examples of alliteration in the story. Encourage them to identify the sounds that are the same in each phrase. Ask students to create alliterative phrases to describe each other.

ROLE-PLAY WORDS/CREATE SENTENCES

• Write the three glossary words on index cards: magnificent, strutted, and titanic. Review the words with students and discuss their meanings.

• Mix up the cards and ask a volunteer to take a card. Ask the student to either act out the word or draw a picture on the board of something that conveys the meaning of the word. Allow other students to guess the word.

• Ask students to come up with oral sentences for the vocabulary words. Students should say “blank” in place of the vocabulary word. Ask other students to supply the missing vocabulary words.

IDENTIFY ONOMATOPOEIA

• Point out the word “Oof” at the bottom of page 3. Explain that oof is an example of onomatopoeia, or a word that imitates a noise or an action. Point out two more examples of onomatopoeia on page 3: “squeaky” and “squished.” Challenge students to look through the script to find other examples of onomatopoeia, for example, “HEAVE” and “Whoa” on page 4, “Woo-hoo” on page 10, and “Swish” on page 15.

Reader Response

Ask students to reflect on their reader’s theater experience by writing or drawing in their journals. Students could:

• reflect on their fluency and reading with appropriate pauses during their performance and how it could be improved;

• reflect on times they have played games and tried hard to win;

• compare and contrast this version of “The Lion and the Mouse” with the traditional version;

• reflect on the characters’ nicknames and compare them to the nicknames of their friends;

• reflect on the ways that the children in the story showed respect and disrespect for each other.
Writing
• Students should write a how-to paragraph related to the story. A how-to paragraph is a description of the steps needed to complete something. For example, students might want to explain how to play the game of basketball, how to shoot a free throw, how to shoot a granny shot, or how to guard someone.

Read Across Texts
• Ask students to name other fables they have read and tell the morals of the stories. If students have not read other fables, share some with them, such as those from Aesop’s Fables or Fables by Arnold Lobel.

• Collect and read some fractured fables and match them up with the traditional fables. Discuss the main characters, settings, problems, solutions, and morals in the stories. Decide which story elements are the same and which are different in each pair of stories.

• Demonstrate how to complete a Venn diagram using the traditional fable “The Lion and the Mouse” and the fractured fable The Lion and the Mouse Shoot Hoops. Then tell students to each complete a Venn diagram comparing one of the other pairs of fables they have read.

The Lion and the Mouse Shoot Hoops
• characters are human
• set in a big city
• Lion can’t win alone
• Mouse helps win the game

Both
• Lion thinks Mouse can’t help
• moral: little friends may be great friends

The Lion and the Mouse
• characters are animals
• set in a forest
• Lion caught in a trap
• Mouse helps Lion get free
Fairness

• Explain to students that people who demonstrate fairness play by the rules, take turns, and share. People who are fair don’t take advantage of or blame others carelessly. Explain that fair people are open-minded—that is, they listen to others and think about what others have to say.

• Guide students to page 2 and ask them to reread Leona’s lines. Ask: Is Leona demonstrating fairness here? Why or why not? Point out that people who take turns and share demonstrate fairness. Explain that it is not always easy to be fair when you want to win a game.

• Ask students to think about a time when they played by the rules, took turns, and shared with others. Ask: When isn’t it easy to be fair? Why?

Respect

• Point out that respect means treating others as you would like to be treated. People that demonstrate respect are tolerant of those who are different and are considerate of the feelings of others. They also demonstrate peaceful ways of dealing with anger, insults, and disagreements.

• Ask: How do the characters in the story show respect for each other? How do they show disrespect?

• Ask students why it is important to show respect for others. Ask: How can showing respect help you in your day-to-day life?

Demonstrate Fairness/Respect

• Discuss why it is important to show fairness and respect when playing games. Ask students to share examples from their own experiences that demonstrate the value of showing fairness and respect during sports or games.

• Divide the class into groups of four. Invite one group at a time to play a game in the middle of the room, as if in a fishbowl, while the rest of the class watches and takes notes. After each group plays, discuss how the players showed fairness and respect. If students have difficulty making comments, prompt them with questions, such as: I noticed that Mark asked Ben to please pass him a card. Does that show respect? How? Make sure each group has a chance to play in the “fishbowl.”

• Follow up the activity with discussion questions, such as:
  1. Are people always fair when they play games? Why or why not?
  2. What is the best way to respond when someone is unfair?
  3. What can help us be fair and respectful when we play games and sports with others?