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The Herbie Jones Reader's Theater

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Kline, Suzy. *The Herbie Jones Reader's Theater*. Putnam Publishing, 1992. ISBN 0399221204. \$10.95. 177 pp.

Reviewer: Morgan Hagey

Reading Level: Primary

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Humorous plays; Plays;

Subject: Children's plays, American; Third grade (Education)--Juvenile drama; Friends--Juvenile drama; Drama--Reviews;

Theme: Friends are the most important thing a kid can have.

Production Requirements: Since this is reader's theater, there simply need to be enough students to read the parts, and enough scripts for everyone.

Acts: N/A

Run Time: Variable, anywhere from 15 minutes to 1.5 hours.

Characters: 3 main, 10-15 secondary characters

Cast: The three main roles of Herbie, Ray, and Annabelle, are their own parts; all the adult roles can be double cast to keep the numbers down.

Time Period: Contemporary

Kline has taken her popular children's novels about Herbie Jones and turned them into a collection of short scenes in a Reader's Theater style. Herbie gets himself into problem after problem. First, he gets a crush on Annabelle, his least favorite person. Then he stops liking her and can't get rid of her. Then he and Ray spend all the money their class collected for a class gift for the teacher on hamburgers. He has to deal with being bad at baseball, when his uncle is the coach. Herbie gets himself into many problems, but somehow always manages to get out with a little help from his best friend Ray, and sometimes his parents.

This book of plays is a lot of fun. Even adults can enjoy reading this. It is simple to produce because it is reader's theater. Kids can have a great time reading these out loud. The only problem is that there aren't too many venues for children's reader's theater. However, this would be perfect for an elementary school class project. There are lots of parts so everyone can be involved. The words are simple, so an eight year-old would have no problem comprehending the language. Since it is written for children to watch and perform, it is at a perfect reading and comprehension level for elementary aged students.