



## Readers Theater



### Tree Hole Homes: Daytime Dens and Nighttime Nooks

by Melissa Stewart  
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#### ABOUT THE BOOK

Take a peek into the hidden world inside a tree in this charming nonfiction exploration of creatures that depend on trees for shelter, by day and by night. Whether tree holes are big or small, built by birds or created by wind or lightning, they house an astonishing assortment of wildlife, from black bears and tree frogs to crabs and bobcats. This inviting introduction to a woodland wonder is sure to delight curious kids.

#### GETTING STARTED

Many readers theater scripts have just ten or twelve parts, but this script has twice as many roles! It includes 22 animal parts and a narrator. The animal parts vary in difficulty to accommodate children at a variety of reading levels. The narrator text is the most challenging. It can be read by an adult or by an advanced young reader.

The script also includes three choruses—lines read by one-third of the children—as well as a final line read by everyone. These recurring parts help the children stay focused after they've read their animal line.

If you're working with a small group of children, some students can perform two roles. If you have a large group, some children can share a role or you can divide the narrator role into multiple parts.

After you've matched students with parts, ask the class to read through the script a few times. As the children practice, provide as much support and advice as needed.

## Readers Theater for *Tree Hole Homes*

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### PLANNING THE PERFORMANCE

When the children feel confident about their roles, you may want to set out a variety of art supplies and encourage students to make animal badges, hats, or even simple costumes to wear during the performance. Children acting as narrators may want to wear something special too.

During the final reading, the students can perform for another class or even a group of parents.

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

narrator	frog	bobcat kit 2
mama owl	bluebird	crab
mouse	chickadee 1	iguana
fisher	chickadee 2	duckling 1
mama raccoon	squirrel	duckling 2
raccoon cub 1	bat 1	bear
raccoon cub 2	bat 2	sugar glider
raccoon cub 3	bobcat kit 1	

### SCRIPT

**Chorus A:** A tree hole home can be big or small.

Narrator: A large tree hole is the perfect place for a mama barred owl to raise a family.

Mama owl: We've got plenty of room to move around.

Narrator: A deer mouse prefers a safe, snug spot.

Mouse: A small hole is just right for me.

**Chorus B:** A tree hole home can be calm and quiet, or bursting with life.

Narrator: *Shh!* The fisher is sleeping.

Fisher: [Snoring sound]

Narrator: It looks for a warm, cozy home where it can sleep in peace.

Fisher: [Snoring sound]

## Readers Theater for *Tree Hole Homes*

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Narrator: But a raccoon's home couldn't be more different.

Mama racoon: This high hole is best for my busy bunch.

Raccoon cub 1: We eat and grow,

Raccoon cub 2: wrestle and play

Raccoon cub 3: without a worry.

**Chorus C: A tree hole home can be deep in the woods or at the edge of a field.**

Narrator: A female tree frog looks for the perfect puddle inside a rainforest tree. Then she lays her eggs.

Tree frog: When my tiny tadpoles hatch, they'll fall into a safe, watery world.

Narrator: Madam Bluebird, tell us about your nifty nest.

Bluebird: It's made of grass and pine needles and a few of my feathers—all tucked inside a tree, so enemies can't reach it.

**Chorus A: A tree hole home can be built by a bird or created by nature.**

Narrator: Good work, chickadees! I see you've hollowed out your home.

Chickadee 1: We find a dead tree . . .

Chickadee 2: . . . and then peck-peck-peck.

Narrator: But a mama western gray squirrel is a bit more sneaky.

Squirrel: I move in after a woodpecker moves out. No pecking for me.

Narrator: Meanwhile, bats and bobcats take advantage of stormy weather.

Bat 1: We slip inside a thin crevice created by a lightning strike.

Bat 2: Then sleep the day away.

Bobcat kit 1: Look at the thick lip around the opening our deep bobcat den!

## Readers Theater for *Tree Hole Homes*

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- Bobcat kit 2: That's how you know the hole formed when wind snapped a branch off the tree.
- Chorus B:** **A tree hole home can be a daytime den or a nighttime nook.**
- Narrator: During the day, a Liberian tree hole crab rests inside a wet hollow.
- Crab: It makes a perfect home.
- Narrator: At night, a black spiny-tailed iguana uses its spiky tail to block the opening of its hole.
- Iguana: That's how I stay safe from hungry boa constrictors.
- Everyone:** **Wow! What a cool trick.**
- Iguana: You can say that again!
- Everyone:** **Wow! What a cool trick.**
- Narrator: Okay, Friends, let's finish up.
- Chorus C:** **A tree hole home can be a springtime refuge or an autumn invitation.**
- Narrator: Each spring, a mama wood duck lays her eggs in a tree hole overlooking the water.
- Duckling 1: And a day after we hatch . . . Look out below!
- Duckling 2: We jump into the air and land with a splash.
- Narrator: When autumn arrives, an American black bear squeezes into a snug tree hollow.
- Bear: It's a cozy spot to spend winter.
- Chorus A:** **A tree hole home can even be a year-round haven.**
- Narrator: Each morning, sugar gliders return to their favorite tree.
- Sugar glider: Sleeping in a huddled heap keeps us safe and warm all year long.

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**Chorus B:** A tree hole home is the perfect place for nesting . . .

**Chorus C:** and resting.

**Everyone:** It's a safe cozy spot to escape from the outside world!

THE END

