



Now presenting...

The Chocolate Touch

Reader's Theater

*A boy who is crazy about candy
learns to put others first*

Characters

- John Midas..... _____
- Mr. Midas..... _____
- Mrs. Midas..... _____
- Dr. Cranium..... _____
- Candy storekeeper... _____
- Mary Midas..... _____
- Miss Plimsole..... _____
- Mrs. Quaver..... _____
- Narrator 1..... _____
- Narrator 2..... _____
- Narrator 3..... _____



Narrator 1: Usually John Midas was a well-behaved boy. He had a comfortable home and parents who loved him. He should have been a nice boy all the time. But he wasn't.

Narrator 2: John had one bad fault: he was a pig about candy. Boiled candy, cotton candy, licorice all-sorts, old fashioned toffee, crackerjack, lollipops, and, above all, chocolates—he devoured them all. John spent all his money on candy and never shared.

Narrator 3: One Saturday at lunch Mr. Midas noticed something unusual.

Mr. Midas: Look, John has spots on his nose.

Mrs. Midas: It may be measles! I don't think he has a temperature, though.

Mr. Midas: I suspect that John has been eating too much candy. Have you been eating candy this morning, John? Tell the truth.

John: Well, I had a few Cream Delights and a little Toffee Crunch.

Narrator 1: John's ears grew red as he recited a long list of candy.

Mr. Midas: No wonder you have spots. I think we need to see Dr. Cranium.

Narrator 2: Dr. Cranium was a tall, thin man with a bald head and a gray mustache. He shone his light into John's ears, nose, and mouth.

Dr. Cranium: Much too much candy! Gracious me—he seems to be full of candy!

Mrs. Midas: What should we do, doctor?

Dr. Cranium: I would recommend less candy. An upset stomach can lead to all sorts of complications.

Narrator 3: The next day John walked along the sidewalk to his friend's house when he spotted something gleaming right in his path. John snatched up the coin and examined it.

Narrator 1: On one side of the coin there was a picture of a fat boy, and on the other side were the letters J.M., which was funny, because those letters were John's initials.

Narrator 2: John continued on his way but instead of turning right to Susan's he turned left. Soon John came upon a store he'd never seen. The front window was filled with candy, and the man behind the counter beckoned John inside.

Candy storekeeper: Don't just stand there in the doorway, John. Come on in! There's a special sale today.

John: But you see the trouble is...I don't have any money.

Candy storekeeper: What's that you have there?

John: It's a coin I found for my coin collection.

Candy storekeeper: Are you sure you wouldn't rather have a box of chocolate? That's the only kind of money I take.

John: Really! A whole box? Yes!

Narrator 3: With that, John handed the storekeeper his money and dashed toward home with the candy box.

Narrator 1: That night John rushed to get ready for bed, so he could try his new candy. When he was finally alone, John opened the box to reveal a single piece of plain chocolate. John ate it, and it was the most chocolaty chocolate he had ever encountered.

Narrator 2: John woke up late the next morning and hurried to get ready for school with his sister, Mary. When John brushed his teeth, however, something strange happened.

John: Why does the toothpaste taste like chocolate?

Mary: Silly! Course it isn't chocolate!

John: (John squeezes the tube of toothpaste into his mouth.) Yummy!

Mary: (Looking horrified) Mother, John's eating all the toothpaste!

Narrator 3: That morning John's toothpaste and entire breakfast tasted like chocolate. His mother and sister did not believe him, but it was true. John thought about these strange changes as he entered his classroom.

Miss Plimsole: Children, we will be having a very important arithmetic test this morning. I will write four problems on the board and you will have only a short time to complete them.

John: (Raising his hand) May I get a drink of water?

Miss Plimsole: Quickly, we will begin in just a moment.

Narrator 1: John gratefully headed to the water fountain. His mouth was dry and had a strong chocolate taste. The only problem was that the water turned to chocolate as soon as it touched John's lips. John tried all the water fountains, but his problem continued.

Miss Plimsole: 5 minutes remaining!

Narrator 2: John hurried to sit down and complete his arithmetic test. He thought hard and nibbled on the end of his pencil. With horror, John watched his entire pencil turn to chocolate.

Miss Plimsole: One minute!

John: But Miss Plimsole, my pencil's turned to chocolate!

Miss Plimsole: Hush, John! I'll talk to you after class.

Narrator 3: Sadly, John was unable to finish his test and Miss Plimsole did not believe his explanation. His chocolate touch was certainly getting him into lots of trouble.

Narrator 1: At lunch, John tried to drop the food straight down his throat without touching his lips. It didn't help. Everything he ate turned to chocolate, and John was getting a stomach ache. John's troubles seemed to be worsening because his glass and utensils all turned to solid chocolate.

Narrator 2: After such an awful morning, John trudged slowly to orchestra practice.

Mrs. Quaver: Ah, John, I'm glad you're not absent. We're having our first joint rehearsal of "A Boy's Song." Do you remember when your little solo begins?

John: Right after the end of the second verse. After the line, "That's the way for Billy and me."

Narrator 3: John knew every note perfectly. He had practiced his part every evening for the last two weeks.

Mrs. Quaver: Good. Remember this is a happy song, so I want you to play light and lively. Let's begin.

Narrator 1: Mrs. Quaver moved her baton and the cymbals clashed. The violinists and cellists made their wheeing and whumping sounds. All were in perfect unison. After the second verse, John wet his lips and began to play his solo.

John: (Playing trumpet) Tah-tuh, too-tuh, ter-t-t, t-t-t.

Narrator 2: Mrs. Quaver was speechless. John fled from the room in embarrassment. It was impossible to play a chocolate trumpet well.

Narrator 3: As John was rushing home, he ran into his father.

Mr. Midas: You're home early today. What happened?

Narrator 1: John burst into tears. He told his father about his terrible day.

Mr. Midas: You mean to tell me they really all turned to chocolate? You're sure you didn't imagine some of this?

John: Oh no. It's true.

Mr. Midas: Well, we're only a couple of blocks from that candy store of yours—not that I've ever noticed one there. Suppose we stroll over and ask this man a few questions about his chocolates.

Narrator 2: But when they arrived at the place where the candy store was, there was only an empty lot with a sign that said, "For Sale."

Mr. Midas: Hmm...I think we'd better pay a visit to Dr. Cranium before we go home.

Narrator 3: Dr. Cranium tried to give John some medicine but the medicine and spoon turned to chocolate. Dr. Cranium diagnosed John with chokolatitis. At home, his mother was very concerned by the news from the doctor.

Mr. Midas: The doctor said it was chokolatitis. Everything he puts in his mouth turns to chocolate.

Mrs. Midas: (Crying) My poor boy. What are we going to do?

John: It's all right, Mother.

Narrator 1: John knew that really nothing was all right, but he hated to see his mother so upset. He leaned over to give her a reassuring kiss on the cheek. John suddenly opened his eyes when his lips felt sticky. His mother was a chocolate statue! John ran from the house and headed directly for the candy store.

Candy storekeeper: I was just thinking of you.

John: (Without taking a breath) Remember-the-old-coin-I-found-and-gave-you? I-ate-the-chocolate-and-it-made-everything-that-touches-my-mouth-turn-to-chocolate-and-I-kissed-my-mother-and-now-she's-chocolate-and-I've-got-to-change-her-back!

Candy storekeeper: Easy now.

John: I can't calm down! It's all your fault! If my mother isn't made better again, I'll fight you till you're dead!

Candy storekeeper: My goodness! I'm glad to hear you are thinking of your mother, but I must have complete honesty.

Narrator 2: John's ears reddened. It was becoming unmistakably evident to him that he had only himself to blame for all his unhappiness.

John: I'll do anything. I'll work for you all my life for nothing, if you'll turn my mother back.

Candy storekeeper: You were right when you guessed that I had something to do with your chocolate touch. But you yourself earned the coin that bought it. Only greedy people can even see that kind of money. You did have a sort of chocolatitis, but it was just an outward sign of selfishness.

John: My mother! She's turned to chocolate! Oh, please do something about it!

Candy storekeeper: Well, John, if you had to choose between getting rid of your chocolate touch and restoring your mother to life, which would it be?

Narrator 3: John couldn't help imagining a future of all-chocolate meals. But then he thought of his mother, a motionless statue.

John: Help my mother.

Candy storekeeper: John, I am going to give you another chance. All the items that had turned to chocolate will return to normal again. No one will remember what happened.

John: What about my mother?

Candy storekeeper: Why don't you run along home and find out?

Narrator 1: And that's just what John did. He rushed into his house and found his mother preparing supper in the kitchen. John flung his arms around her waist.

Mrs. Midas: John you look so flushed. Why don't you have a glass of cold milk?

Narrator 2: John took a tentative sip of milk, and it flowed down his throat—nothing but fresh, clean milk.

John: May I go out for a minute, Mother? I'll be right back.

Narrator 3: John rushed back to the candy store to thank the storekeeper. But the lot was empty. A pile of trash surrounded a sign that said, "Sold."

The End

A Note to Teachers...

What is Reader's Theater?

In case you are not familiar with Reader's Theater, here is a simple explanation. Reader's Theater is not a fully staged production with costumes, sets, and memorized lines. For Reader's Theater, students are sitting or standing in front of the classroom and read their lines from their scripts. In this way, students receive the educational benefits of a dramatic reading in a short period of time.

Differentiated Instruction

Struggling readers may find it helpful to be partnered with a stronger reader. On the other hand, if a struggling reader wants to perform independently, assign the student a part with fewer lines.

Advanced readers may enjoy the challenge of directing the group rehearsals. These students may add simple props or costumes to the Reader's Theater.

Increasing the Benefits

Clarify your expectations before beginning the Reader's Theater. After assigning the roles, allow the students to silently read their lines and highlight them. Give the students a checklist to complete before they can perform in front of the class.

Students will improve their reading fluency by rereading their lines and reading with expression. Ask the students to read their lines for homework and practice as a group a few times before performing. Students will be more likely to complete these assignments because they are motivated by their authentic audience.

Name: _____

Reader's Theater Checklist

Your group must answer "Yes" to all of these questions before performing your Reader's Theater.

1. Did you highlight all your lines in the script?
Yes No
2. Did you read your lines silently the first time through and ask about any words you did not know?
Yes No
3. Did you listen to or participate in the first reading of the script aloud?
Yes No
4. Did you practice reading with expression?
Yes No
5. Do you have all the props or costumes you need?
Yes No
6. Have you rehearsed with your group multiple times and gotten feedback from other students?
Yes No