

**Assembly Ideas for
The Lemonade War (2007)
By Jacqueline Davies**

1. **Dueling Lemonade Stands** – One of the most popular assemblies in Read to Them history. In this assembly, you will set up two dueling lemonade stands on stage. Students will get to watch as two competing partnerships vie for the attention (and money!) of one single customer. Typically, schools will let teachers ham it up pitching the merits of two different lemonade stands while letting a befuddled student play the kid appraising the two stands and their offerings.

Set the scene so that it is clear that there are two moneymaking lemonade stands on stage: tables, chairs, pitchers, cups, ice, a cash box, and a makeshift sign of some sort (remember that it should look like children made it). Here is an example of how it starts:

The scene opens with both sets of partners standing behind their stands, busying themselves with getting set up and preparing for business.

Stand 1 (A): *(wipes forehead with t-shirt)* Whew! It's a scorcher today!

Stand 1 (B): *(nodding)* No kidding. But it will be good for business. *(holds up lemonade pitcher)* Who doesn't love an icy cold cup of lemonade on a boiling hot day like this?

Stand 1 (A): *(looks over shoulder at the other stand and points)* Why do they always have to set up their lemonade stand right across from us? I mean, I know this is a popular spot. But can't they find another street corner somewhere in this town?

Stand 1 (B): *(laughs)* Don't sweat it. *(throws partner a rag)* Literally. Don't sweat it. This new batch of lemonade is so delicious that there's no way they can compete with us.

The Kid appears on stage, pushing a bicycle. They don't say anything. They just stop and wipe their brow, taking in the lemonade stands on either side of them.

Stand 1 (A): *(pokes partner)* Hey, our first customer! *(calls out)* Hey kid! Would you like to buy some lemonade? We've got it fresh and cold.

See *Assembly Scripts* on the **Book Resource Page** for *The Lemonade War* for a full script of this idea.

2. **Fruit Fly Fun** – This assembly will be told from the point of view of the smallest characters in *The Lemonade War*...the fruit flies! While the fruit flies are not, of course, actual characters in the book, they do show up more than once. Viewing the Treski kitchen from their perspective can provide a different – and very fun! – angle into the world of *The Lemonade War* (without giving away much of the actual plot).

Have a handful of people on stage dressed as fruit flies! It would be fun to incorporate some students into this since only two of the fruit flies will have lines and the others just fly around during the assembly. You'll also need two students to read Evan and Jessie's lines offstage and an adult to introduce the book at the end.

The assembly takes place in the Treski's kitchen around the fruit bowl. Fashion an oversized fruit bowl out of a large box or a table turned on its side. Fill the bowl with fake fruit. You can use large balloons clustered together to be grapes, and then make some 2-D fruits out of poster board or bulletin board paper. You are trying to give the illusion of fruit that would be to scale for fruit flies the size of people, so the bigger the better. Here is a sample of the script:

The scene opens with only a spotlight and all the fruit flies flying around the basket. As soon as the stage is lit, they all hunker down around the fruit.

Fly 1: Wow! What a feast!

Fly 2: You're telling me! Summertime is a great time to be a fruit fly in the Treski house.

Fly 1: No doubt. With Evan and Jessie home from school, their mom buys a lot more fruit.

Fly 2: *(picks up a piece of red fruit from the container)* I mean, just look at this apple! So smooth, so juicy... *(rubs face against fruit)* It's the perfect snack for a fruit fly to indulge in.

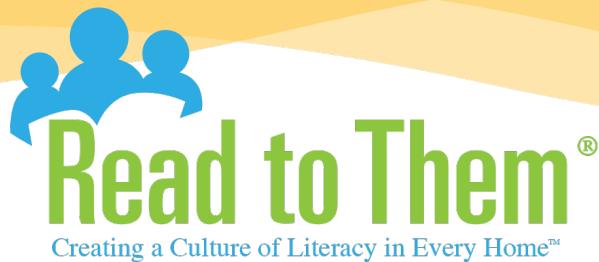
Both flies look out at the audience.

Fly 1 & 2: More fruit means more food and more fun!

Suddenly, the overhead light comes on. Both the flies look at each other.

Fly 1 & 2: Time to take cover!

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3. **Lemonade Taste Test** – Stage a blind taste test of various lemonade recipes and have a panel of judges – teachers and students – pick a winner in the style of a Food Network show. To begin the assembly, each contestant will describe their lemonade. Something like this:

Maker 1: I used my great-great-grandmother’s recipe that has been handed down through the generations. She sold it for 2¢ a cup during the Great Depression to save her family’s farm! The secret ingredient is a tiny pinch of salt, originally from tears...it was such a sad time.

Maker 2: I used only the finest organic Meyer lemons that I grew myself in my greenhouse. I hand pollinate each tree to ensure a bountiful harvest. Then I carefully grate the zest to add a little extra zing to my lemonade!

Maker 3: Every year, my family travels to the Italian island of Capri and brings back a crate of the best Sorrento lemons. I hand squeeze them and add freshly pressed juice from the best Brazilian sugar cane. A true gourmet treat!

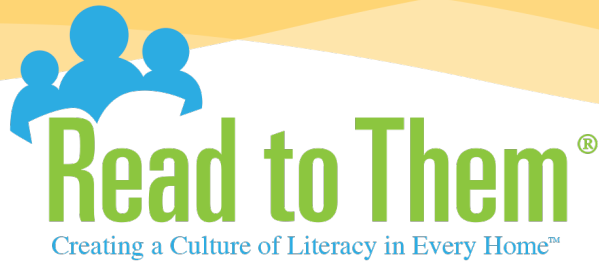
Maker 4: Well, this is embarrassing. I just used frozen concentrate from Walmart and some water...

Maker 5: Don’t worry – you’re ahead of me. I used that powdery stuff that never actually dissolves and tastes like plastic.

Emcee: Now let’s introduce our judges and see what they think in a *blind taste test!*

Usher in a panel of teachers or community members to be the judges. They can give their honest assessment of each one. (For the judging, maybe use one batch of homemade, two different bottled ones, one from concentrate, and one from a powdered mix.) The panel of judges can then crown the winner and you can introduce your book.

4. **Jessie’s Point of View** – Throughout the novel, Jessie has difficulty picking up social cues from other people. You could turn this plot point into a fun little skit to introduce the book. Have several actors come on stage and each pantomime a different emotion (i.e., excited, proud, lonely, frustrated, and confused). You could have a team of students with large cards, each with the name of an emotion on it. The students would have to watch the pantomime and then match the right card to the right actor. They can re-arrange the cards until they are happy with their answers. Then each actor can reveal their emotion and describe how they were trying to portray it. You can close the assembly by saying, “We are all going to read about a kid who has a hard time identifying emotions in others, which poses a challenge as she tries to outsmart her brother and win *The Lemonade War*.”



- 5. Backyard Lemon Blast!** – In this assembly, you’ll get the enthusiasm high by hosting a backyard-type set of games that are all based around lemons!

Invite teachers, staff, bus drivers, and maybe even some community members to come on stage to play some outside games, except in these games, lemons are used instead of bean bags or balls! Some fun game ideas would be: lemon corn hole, lemon badminton, lemon (egg) toss, three-legged race (with lemons tied around ankles), lemon volleyball, maybe even lemon putt-putt golf? Get as creative and silly as your imagination and space allows! While you could script out this assembly, it would be much more fun to have all these games going on at once, with music playing and everyone racing from one event to the next. Choose one person to serve as the Commentator, keeping up some entertaining banter while all the games go on. At the end, have the Commentator announce that everyone is a winner and award a lemon-shaped medal and a copy of *The Lemonade War* to all participants. You could even give all contestants (and audience members) a glass of lemonade to quench their thirst at the end!

- 6. Read the First Chapter** – The first chapter of *The Lemonade War* gives just enough information to intrigue your students without giving away too much of the plot. You could have your principal, librarian, a teacher, or a community member read it to the assembly. Or you could recast the dialog as a reader’s theater script and have two actors perform it. Either way, your students will be ready to dive right in.