

# LILLIAN'S FAMILY TREE



## Characters

Lillian  
Mom  
Jesse

Dad  
Grandma  
Grandpa

## Setting

This reader's theater takes place in New York City and in Oklahoma during the Great Depression Era.



Lillian



Grandma



Grandpa

## Act 1

**Lillian:** Mom, have you heard the news?

**Mom:** Lillian, slow down. You're almost out of breath. What's wrong?

**Lillian:** Audrey's dad lost his job. Her family might have to move so that her dad can find work elsewhere.

**Mom:** Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. The stock market crash has been scary for many of us. We can be thankful that your father still has his job.

**Jesse:** What are you two talking about? Are you still worried about the stock market crash, Lillian? Worry, worry, and worry! What good does that do?

## Act 2

**Dad:** I want everyone to sit down. I have some bad news.

**Lillian:** Did you lose your job, Dad?

**Dad:** Yes, I did. People cannot afford to buy new furniture these days. The owner of the furniture factory had to fire some of his employees.

**Jesse:** I can't believe it! I never thought this would happen to us.

**Lillian:** But we'll be okay, won't we? I mean, we do have money in the bank. Right, Dad?



# Heritage Lesson Plan

## Objectives

- **Fluency:** Students will deliver oral presentations and read passages fluently, focusing on the use of voice and tone while reading.
- **Content Area:** Students will learn the role that heritage and family play in the life of an individual and his or her future.

## Summary

*Lillian's Family Tree* is the story of a family that is struggling to make ends meet during the Great Depression. Lillian learns the importance of hard work and sacrifice as she confronts the effects of the Great Depression after her father loses his job. Through their resolute behavior and positive attitude, Grandpa and Grandma Jensen exemplify Lillian's strong family heritage as she learns who she is and that she comes from a long line of outstanding ancestors.



## Materials

- *Lillian's Family Tree* script booklets
- *Heritage Character Masks* copied on cardstock

## Introduce the Literature

Ask students to create a family tree, going as far back in time as they can. Students can do research to discover interesting facts about where their families originated, what types of work family members did, or other background information. Allow students to share their thoughts about their families. Ask questions such as, What characteristics make your family unique? What lessons have you learned from your family? Why is your family important to you? Allow students to read *A Year Down Yonder* by Richard Peck. Ask them to compare their families to the characters in the book. Discuss why it is important to learn from the past.



## ELL Support

Encourage ELL students to share stories about their families. What experiences have family members endured? How have these experiences made them stronger? Discuss the challenges that a family must face when leaving one culture and tradition behind to start over in a new culture.

## Involving All Students

This script has only six roles, but students can participate in reader's theater in a variety of ways. For this reader's theater, divide the class into groups of six. Each member of the group is responsible for reading a part in the script, so all students have an opportunity to read and participate in the reader's theater. If any group has fewer than six students, assign a student to play more than one role. On the day of the performance, each group should perform a specified portion of the script. Break the reader's theater into acts, so that each act spotlights a different group.