

READERS' THEATER BASED ON  
***I'm My Own Dog***  
Written and illustrated by David Ezra Stein

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Arranged by CYRM Committee members for classroom use only

Characters:

Dog

Man

Man's Friend

*NOTE: The stage directions, which appear here are italicized and are printed in a smaller font. The spoken words are bolded.*

Props: Stick, slippers, leash, dog collar, mirror, 2 chairs, 1 bag of popcorn.

*NOTE: You may choose to pantomime the props, instead of using actual props.*

Dog: **I'm my own dog. Nobody owns me. I own myself.**

*Dog pretends to dig a hole.*

*(Breathing heavily)* **I work like a dog all day.**

**When I get home, I fetch my own slippers.**

*Dog runs to slippers and starts to chew on one.*

**I curl up at my own feet.**

*Dog curls up next to slipper on the floor.*

**Sometimes, if I'm not comfortable, I tell myself to roll over.**

*(In a commanding voice)* **Roll over.**

*Dog rolls over.*

**And I do.**

Man's Friend: **Blat.**

Dog: *(Staring defiantly at Friend)* **If someone told me, "Sit!" I wouldn't do it.**

Friend: (Sweetly) **Blabbity blabbity blub.**

*Offers dog a bone.*

Dog: **Even if they said, "I'll give you a bone!"**

*Dog picks up a stick.*

**Sometimes I throw a stick.**

*Dog throws stick.*

**Then I go get it.**

*Dog retrieves stick, panting and smiling.*

**It's fun.**

*Dog looks at self in a mirror.*

**Every morning when I look in the mirror, I lick my own face because I am so happy to see me.**

*Dog pretends to lick the mirror.*

**I say, "Good dog. I am a good dog."**

**Then I give myself a good scratch.**

*Dog scratches leg with other leg. Then Dog starts scratching self all over body.*

*Dog tries to scratch middle of back.*

**But there's this one spot I can't reach...right in the middle of my back.**

**One time it got so bad, I let someone scratch it.**

*Dog sits in front of Man.*

Man: (In a comforting manner.) **Blah, blah, blabbity, blah.**

*Man scratches Dog's back.*

Dog: *Dog walks across stage with Man following him.*

**The little guy followed me home.**

Man: (Whining sound.) **Mmmm.**

Dog: *Dog looks compassionately at man.*

**I felt sorry for him.**

*Dog puts a leash on his own collar.*

**So I got a leash.**

**How else am I supposed to lead him around?**

*Dog gives Man the end of the leash. Man looks confused.*

**Come on!" I say. "Come on, boy! I'll take you to the park."**

**I like showing him things.**

**"Look. Look. Look! That's a squirrel." I say.**

*Man looks all around, trying to see squirrel.*

*Dog takes off leash and gives stick to man.*

**I taught him the stick game. I have him throw.**

*Man throws stick. Dog retrieves it and hands it to Man.*

*Man stands next to chair, with a blank look on face.*

**I don't know if he understands all my commands yet, but he's learning.**

*(To Man) "Sit. Sit."*

*Man sits.*

**"Good boy."**

*Man's Friend: Friend has a bag of popcorn. Greets man.*

*(To Man) Blub, blub! Blabbity, blab?*

*Friend sits on chair next to Man and lets him take popcorn out of the bag. Man spills a little popcorn on the floor.*

*Man and Friend make a lot of small talk loudly. Ad-lib, e.g., "Blabby, blah, etc."*

*Dog: Dog puts hands over own ears.*

*(Shouting over Man's and Friend's loud talking)*

**Some folks say they're not worth the trouble. You can't keep them from yapping!**

*Man and Extra continue eating popcorn and spilling some on the floor as they eat.*

*Dog: Dog picks up spilled popcorn and pretends to eat it.*

**And you always have to clean up after them.**

*Man and Friend wave goodbye. Friend exits. Man walks over to Dog. Dog snuggles next to Man. Man pets him happily.*

**Dog: But I've grown attached to the little fella.**

*Dog directs speech to audience, in a confidential manner, so Man doesn't hear.*

**Between you and me...**

*Dog glances back at Man, fondly. Dog faces audience again, pointing with thumb at Man.*

**I'm his best friend.**