

Creating Opportunities for Students to Read Aloud

1. **Readers' Theater** - students convert their own writing or a scene from a book (or they use a published readers' theater piece) into a 1930's-type radio program. Voice, sound effects, and narration are used to help the "audience" get a feel for the mood, action, conflict, and characters. Students practice reading various parts and then "perform" the piece for the class.

2. **Plays** - have students read the entire play (or smaller sections) silently or the teacher reads it aloud as a shared reading. Once you are confident that they understand the plot, action, and characters, divide the play into sections (usually three scenes) and let kids read it aloud. Switch characters (speaking parts) after each section so all students who want to read get the opportunity.

3. **Buddy Reading/Reading Partners** - students who are either in the same Literature Circle (intermediate grades) or guided reading group (primary grades) can read to a partner or member of their group from the book that they are "studying" in their groups (during silent reading or center time). Again, it is recommended that the passage(s)/chapter(s) they read to their partners be one that they have read previously and are re-reading for enjoyment, clarification, or for discussion later in their groups.

4. **Guided Reading/Literature Groups** - depending on the grade level you teach, this activity will vary. If you are teaching emergent readers, students may read aloud a picture book or pattern book you have read to them several times before as a shared reading activity. In this smaller group, students may read aloud in order to establish "fluency" with the text or to exhibit "basic comprehension". They may or may not yet know the words in the text (in isolation), but the practice with "saying the words," tracking the print, or even just memorizing the words on the page is an important step in the reading process. With older kids, you may have kids read aloud a passage or section of their book that they found interesting, exciting, confusing, or strange while they were reading silently as part of a guided reading or literature group reading.

5. **Independent Reading** - whether you call this time DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), SSR (Sustained Silent Reading), or SQUIRT (Sustain Quiet Uninterrupted Reading Time), independent reading is also a time kids can and should read aloud. As students are reading silently, circulate around the room. Establish a "cue" or signal with your students to let them know that when you stop by their desk, they should begin reading aloud from their text. Of course they should not read too loud as to disturb others around them, but loud enough for you to hear them read. After they have read a page or so, ask them a few questions about their book (What's it about so far? Do you like it? What do you think will happen next? Why do you think the author used _____?). This is an excellent opportunity for you to check fluency and comprehension. If the child is struggling to read the text and is having difficulty answering simple comprehension/prediction questions, chances are the book is not on their independent level.