



Repeated Reading Leads to Fluency

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It's our job to create that safe space where kids can learn to use their voices with conviction.

Of course, public speaking is a perennial list topper when it comes to human fears so what are some strategies to take the sting out of oral presentation?

We've never heard a teacher say to their student, "You're too shy to read, you don't need to read today." Or "Writing makes you nervous? You only have to write if you want to." But time after time we give ourselves a pass by telling students they need not share if they prefer not. We're not doing these communicators any favors; we're giving ourselves an out.

Repeated reading leads to fluency, and fluency supports comprehension. So how do we encourage our students to re-read a text? By inviting them to read aloud. If a student knows they will be reading aloud they will be more apt to re-read a passage whether the text is one they've written themselves or by another author.

- **Seat Symphony:** This works especially well with the student's writing or when they are reading different texts from each other. Ask everyone to read aloud – everyone at the same time! The resulting cacophony is fun and time-saving, it gives everyone the chance to develop that muscle memory of how it feels and sounds to speak aloud with strong projection. You can walk amongst the students and listen in to the nearest just to check-in.
- **Reading to the person next to them:** Similar to the seat symphony as all students are participating simultaneously but, now they have a focused audience. This not only helps the student's reading aloud, but it encourages good listening habits.
- **Getting up and reading to another across the classroom:** Standing adds a different dynamic, almost making it a bit more formal. This gets the students up and out of their seats interacting with a wider range of classmates.
- **Sharing in small groups of 3-4:** We begin to increase our audience size incrementally. Drop in on the clusters for a quick listen and move on to the next.
- **Reading a single line aloud:** Whether the students are writing or reading we will walk around the room and ask individuals to read a single line aloud, please. This is a quick hit low-risk way to get the kids using their voices. It only takes a couple of seconds and since the others are engaged in either reading or writing it is low stress for the speaker.
- **Reading aloud to the whole class:** Finally, students are comfortable enough to read aloud in front of the entire class. Even after they have reached this summit though, we revisit the earlier strategies as a regular part of classroom activity.

Michael and **Sara** have been pushing, promoting, and prodding poetry, prose, and oral presentation across the globe for several decades and don't intend on stopping anytime soon. You can find them at www.outspokenlit.com and www.readwritespeakit.com