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# Alternatives to Round Robin Reading

## Improving Instruction

### What is round robin reading? Why should I stop it?



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/65359853@N00/24582650961/in/photostream/>

Round robin reading or, popcorn reading, is a traditional reading routine in which individual students are called on to read a small portion of a text aloud to the class, and then a new reader is called. This routine is inefficient, and often only a few students read. The teacher is doing all of the work: stopping, clarifying, summarizing, asking questions, and so on.

Students also feel uncomfortable or singled out if they struggle with reading. This 'cold' reading in front of the whole group can be embarrassing.

## What are some alternatives?

### 1

#### Read portions of the text aloud to students.



Sometimes there is a particularly difficult part of a textbook, novel, or story that we want to dig into deeper. Instead of asking for a student volunteer to read, why not read it aloud to them?

This should be a few paragraphs at most. Stop and think aloud - what are you as the teacher thinking as you read? Show, tell, and model.

### 2

#### Have students read with a partner.



Partner reading can mean students taking turns by paragraph or page. In between turns, students should talk, ask questions, clarify, and/or summarize.

Students are applying their strategies and skills in a safe place.

With all students engaged, you can move among the partnerships to coach, instruct, or reteach.

### 3

#### Have students read independently.



Use the "ERT" strategy: Everyone Read To... (e.g., Everyone Read To find out what the setting is; ERT find out what is meant by "praise no one before he speaks" (Sirach 27:7); ERT find the definition of osmosis). This strategy works best in small groups.

With all students engaged, you can move among the students to coach, instruct, or reteach.

When students finish reading, pose that same ERT question. Students can first respond in a Turn & Talk or Think, Pair, Share. A brief classroom discussion can follow. Then pose a new ERT.

### Remember the 100% rule

## 100%

Don't do anything 100% of the time. Variety is the spice of life - and the spice of instruction. Use the methods above together: start with a short read aloud, then have students read with a partner so they can talk and ask questions, and finally have students read independently. Mix it up!

While you plan, ask yourself, "Who's doing the work?" When you have students do the bulk of the work, you are freed up to sit with small groups or individuals to differentiate and provide more individualized instruction.

