

# Partner Reading

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Based on Delquadri, J., Greenwood, C. R., Whorton, D., Carta, J. J., & Hall, R. V. (1986). Classwide peer tutoring. *Exceptional Children*, 52, 535–542; Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., Mathes, P. G., & Simmons, D. C. (1997). Peer-assisted learning strategies: Making classrooms more responsive to diversity. *American Educational Research Journal*, 34, 174–206; Greenwood, C. R., Delquadri, J. C., & Hall, R. V. (1989). Longitudinal effects of classwide peer tutoring. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 81, 371–383; Mathes, P. G., Torgesen, J. K., Allen, S. H., & Allor, J. H., (2001). *PALS: Peer-assisted literacy strategies*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West; and Topping, K. (1987). Paired reading: A powerful technique for parent use. *The Reading Teacher*, 40, 608–614.

## ASSIGN PARTNERS

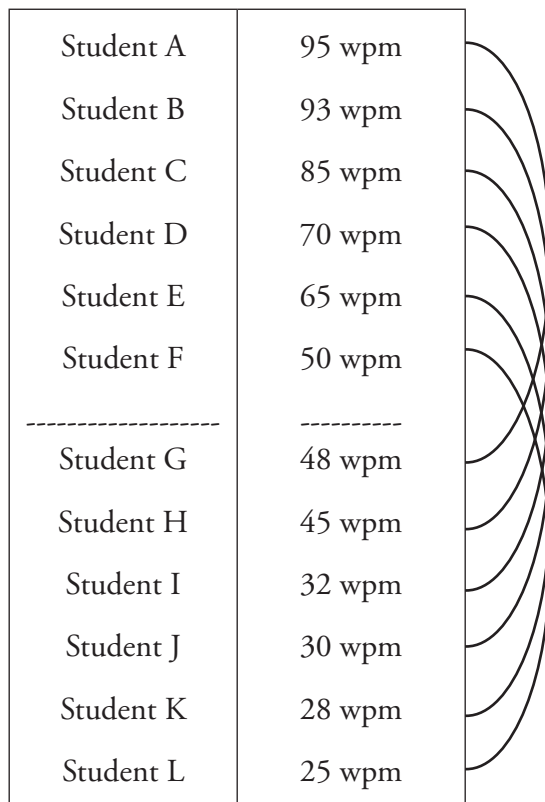
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In partner reading, students read and reread text with partners. One way to assign partners is to make a list of all students in the class, with the highest-level reader at the top and the lowest-level reader at the bottom. Next, divide the list in half. The highest-level reader will be partnered with the top student on the bottom half of the list. The next student on the top half will be partnered with the next student on the bottom half and so on. See Figure 99 for an example. This is one way to assign partners. For some older readers, rotating pairs frequently has been shown to be an effective way to keep students motivated (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Kazdan, 1999). There is more than one way to assign partners. Knowing your students' personalities and reading levels is the key to having a productive partner reading time. It is fine to rotate partners when needed.

Things to consider when rotating partner assignments:

- Assign a higher-level reader with a somewhat lower-level reader. The higher-level reader will model fluent reading.
- Consider the personality of your students.
- Choose text that is on the instructional level of the lower-level student.

FIGURE 99. POSSIBLE METHOD FOR ASSIGNING READING PARTNERS.



## TEACH THE PROCEDURE

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It is very important to model and teach the partner reading procedure. You can model the procedure with a student or another adult, or you can show a videotape of two students working together. It is essential that students see the procedure in action and are allowed to practice the steps before they are expected to work together independently. When they are proficient, you will be able to focus on working with individual pairs, giving corrective feedback and progress monitoring. Use the steps of effective instruction to teach the partner reading routine. First model what you want students to do. Then provide guided and independent practice. When students fail to follow the routine appropriately, rather than reprimanding them, simply reteach the procedure—model, provide guided practice, and provide independent practice.

## PARTNER READING ROUTINE

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1. Partner 1, usually the higher-level reader, reads first paragraph. Partner follows along.
2. Partner 2, usually the lower-level reader, reads the same paragraph.
3. Students briefly discuss what they just read by retelling what happened or by identifying the main idea of the paragraph. They can identify the main idea by asking each other: “Who or what was the paragraph mainly about?” and “What was the most important thing about the ‘who’ or the ‘what?’”
4. Repeat steps 1–3 until passage is complete.

*(Klingner et al., 2001)*

## CORRECTION PROCEDURES

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- If a student reads a word incorrectly, skips a word, or does not know a word, his/her partner will point to the word and say, “What is this word?”
- If the student reads the word correctly, the partner says, “Yes, that word is \_\_\_\_\_. What word? Please reread the sentence.”
- If the student does not know the word, the partner says, “That word is \_\_\_\_\_. What word? Please reread the sentence.”
- The student repeats the word and is asked to reread the sentence.

*(Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, & Tarver, 2004; Mathes et al., 2001)*

Your students will also need several opportunities to practice the correction procedure with you and with each other. If you, as a teacher, use this exact procedure for correcting during whole-class instruction, your students will pick up the procedure quickly.

The following sample lesson teaches the partner reading routine. It is essential to teach and reteach this routine until the procedure becomes habit. Once the partner reading routine is established, students are able to follow the procedure independently. Thus, transition time is reduced, lessons move at a quick pace, and students feel a sense of security by knowing exactly what is expected of them. You may want to provide students with cards to cue them to follow the partner reading routine.