

4. Have students practice reading their parts orally, alone or with others, in school and at home.
5. Ask each student to develop two questions about his or her part: a literal, fact-based question, and an inferential question that requires students to use information from the text and their background knowledge to arrive at an answer.

The Day of Radio Reading

1. Remind students about the need to read with expression and meaning.
2. Provide props such as a microphone or radio to lend authenticity to the experience.
3. Have students read their assigned parts orally in the proper order.
4. If students encounter problems in their reading, provide help or allow them to call on you for help. Deal with the difficulty quickly to minimize disruption. (Remind students not to call out words that another student is having difficulty with. You will provide that assistance.)
5. After all the readings are complete, have students discuss the entire passage using the questions they prepared the day before.
6. At the end of the discussion, have students summarize the story, critique their reading, and make suggestions for the next radio reading.

Say It Like the Character

Oral reading fluency means more than reading accurately and quickly. It also involves reading with expression as a way to get at the text's meaning. In *Say It Like the Character* (Opitz & Rasinski, 2008), students get "inside" characters from books by reading monologues and dialogues orally. Listeners must make inferences about the characters



Students practice passages to improve their read them with expression and meaning.

through the way the passage was read. For this to happen, readers need to do two things: practice reading the assigned text (fluency), and think about the feelings and disposition of the character (comprehension).

To try Say It Like the Character, find passages that contain monologues or dialogues. They can be as short as a sentence or as long as a full page. Look in books that students are reading on their own or that you are reading to them. Make copies of the passages. If the story from which the passage comes is unfamiliar, give students some background so that they understand the events and emotions leading up to the passage. Have the students practice reading the passage silently as well as orally. Then read aloud a portion of it in several tones of voice (e.g., angry, delighted, confused, surprised) and talk about the feelings that can be inferred. A list of emotions by category is provided below. I know many teachers who have made a chart of selected emotions, posted it in their classrooms, and then made reference to the chart when asking students to choose an emotion to portray in their reading.

List of Emotions

Fear, Anxiety, Apprehensiveness, Worry
Anger, Displeasure, Hostility
Pride (an exaggerated positive evaluation of oneself)
Love (strong affection for another)
Happy, Optimistic (well-being, content)
Enthusiasm, Vitality (strong excitement)
Grief (intense sorrow, especially caused by someone's death)
Sad, Unhappy, Depressed, Sorrowful
Astonishment, Surprise (filled with sudden wonder or amazement)

Once students get the idea, have them try Say It Like the Character on their own with a new passage. You can assign them a feeling or an emotion to embed in their reading or let them choose their own. Have students practice the reading and then perform it, one at a time, in small groups. The students listening must guess the emotion that the reader is feeling. Following the reading, have students discuss what the reader did to convey the intended emotion (increased or decreased volume or pitch of voice, changed reading

rate, paused dramatically, emphasized a particular word), as well as the markers in the text itself (italics, bold print, illustrations) that gave clues to what the character was feeling.

Poetry works well for Say It Like the Character, too. I often give two or more students the same poem to read aloud, along with an emotional context from which to develop their reading, such as "You just won the lottery" or "You just found out that your best friend is moving away." Students practice their reading at home and, the next day, present it. This becomes a dramatic example of how meaning is carried not only by words, but is also conveyed by the way that the words are presented by the reader.

Mary Person (1990) describes a variation on Say It Like the Character. She prints words for specific feelings on cards, such as fear, rage, sadness, excitement, and joy. She also prints a variety of sentences on sentence strips (e.g., "The children ran screaming down the hallway." "We were surprised to hear the knock on the door. Who could it be?") Each student chooses or is assigned one feeling card and one sentence strip, then reads the sentence in a way that captures the emotion on the card.

Mumble Reading

Mumble reading allows many students to do repeated readings simultaneously, without disturbing other students. It was originally described by Hoffman (1987) as part of his Oral Recitation Lesson, which is described in Chapter 6. Students select a passage of 50 to 100 words from their guided reading material. Then, in a soft and low voice, they spend five minutes practicing their passage. After the practice period, students read their passage aloud to the teacher, another student, or to the entire reading group.

Cooperative Repeated Reading

Cooperative repeated reading has been shown to improve students' reading fluency and general reading (Koskinen & Blum, 1984, 1986). In a 10- to 15-minute period during guided reading or independent reading, students work with a classmate or two on a short passage. Passages usually come from the basal text or trade book that is being used in guided reading. To do cooperative repeated reading, follow these steps:

The
Fluent
READER

Oral & Silent Reading Strategies for Building
Fluency, Word Recognition & Comprehension

Timothy V. Rasinski

Credits:

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