

Read Aloud Activities and Strategies

Sometimes it's fun to simply read aloud for enjoyment, but often teachers use their read aloud time as a basis for mini lessons or other reading instruction.



1. **Create a Character Word Cloud** - Have students create a [Character Word Cloud](#) based on an important character in the read aloud. This activity requires an internet connection and the use of a website for creating "word clouds." See example at right. You can try www.wordle.net, www.taxgedo.com, or www.abcya.com. Students will choose character traits for a given character and will create word clouds in which larger words represent the character traits that best represent the character. Complete directions are included on the [Character Word Cloud file for teachers](#), but you need to try this activity yourself before using it with students. Decide which website you want to use and practice because each website operates a little differently. If you want to be able to type directly on the PDF file, you can download a [variation](#) of the above activity that includes PDF form fields. **Note:** For a complete character trait lesson, take a look at my [Analyzing Character Traits Mini Pack](#). You'll find 21 pages of ready-to-use lesson plans and printables.

Need More Info? Heres a slidecast presentation I created with step-by-step directions for how to create a Character Word Cloud. If the images are too small, you can open it full screen for better viewing.

2. **Character Voices** - If appropriate, let student volunteers read aloud the character parts. For this strategy, you'll need multiple copies of the same read-aloud book. Choose one student for each main character and tell them which pages you plan to read. Allow them a few minutes to review their parts, and then read the selection aloud to the class. You will read all the narration, but when it's time for a character to speak, he or she will stand up and do so with expression.
3. **Multiple Readings of the Same Book** - Consider using the same short book several times for different mini-lessons. Read the book aloud one time for enjoyment. The next time you read it, use it for a mini-lesson such as character development. Then read the book later in the year and use it for a different skill or strategy. Because students are familiar with the book, they can focus on how the skill or strategy applies to the story.
4. **Doodling and Drawing** - Many students like to doodle or draw while they are listening and it actually keeps them from getting restless. However, some students become so involved with their drawings that they stop listening! My

rule is that if I'm reading aloud and you are drawing, you need to be able to answer questions when I call on you. If you can't respond because you don't know what's going on, you have just lost your drawing privileges.

5. **Read Aloud Snapshots** - Do you sometimes wonder if your students are listening or just daydreaming? A strategy that works well for accountability is to have students draw a "snapshot" of the main idea for each day's read-aloud session. On Monday, give each student a piece of paper to fold into sixths or use the [Read Aloud Snapshot printable](#). In the first block, have them write the title of the book and their name. Each day after you read aloud, give them time to illustrate the main event or a key point from the reading. Students who don't like to draw can write a snapshot (summary) instead. At the end of the week, all of the blocks will have been filled if you read every day. This makes a quick and easy assessment!

Source: <http://www.lauracandler.com/strategies/readingaloud.php>