

Choral Reading

This document provides the what, why, and how regarding the use of Choral Reading in secondary classrooms.

What is it?

Choral reading is just what its name implies: reading together as a chorus. This process may be used for reading directions, captions, or short portions of text. Choral reading can be used for longer pieces of text, but only if the reading is broken up by discussion or questions to check comprehension.

Why do it?

Choral reading provides all students with an opportunity to practice reading in a supportive environment. Assuming that students are following along or listening to the reader is often an erroneous assumption, especially for students who find reading difficult. Choral reading ensures that all students are reading (remember “all means all”). By requiring students to keep pace with the teacher, the teacher can control the pace and pause to emphasize information, provide context, or check for understanding.

How to do it

The teacher tells students they will be chorally reading, reminding them to keep their voices in sync with the teacher's and indicating what text they will be reading and how much. If the text being read is on a screen or board, the teacher points to the first word and asks students to focus their eyes on the text. The teacher should wait until all eyes are on the text before beginning to read. When reading from a book or article at their desks, the teacher asks students to point to the first word and monitors to ensure they know where to begin.

Expectations:

1. All students put their eyes on the text when requested and point to the first word in the text when asked.
2. Students read along with the teacher at the teacher's pace and at a voice level that is audible but not distractingly loud.

When to use it

As mentioned previously, choral reading can be used for many different types of text, but is best limited to relatively short portions (up to a paragraph or a page of text). Using choral reading for directions can be quite advantageous as it limits the inevitable “What are we supposed to do?” questions that typically follow when a teacher just reads or draws attention to a set of directions. Because the teacher controls the pace of reading, choral reading is a good option for classrooms with a broad range of reading ability.

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