Effective professional development for teachers: read-alouds in the middle level

Kelly Ann Behmer

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Effective professional development for teachers: read-alouds in the middle level

Abstract
Teacher read alouds are common practice in the elementary level, but they are rarely seen in the middle level. This paper addresses the importance of read alouds, with evidence from the literature, followed by the development of an effective professional development process for working with teachers at the middle level in developing instruction that includes read alouds. The goal of this professional development plan is to teach teachers of all subject areas in the middle level school how to conduct read alouds so they will know how to incorporate them into their specific subject area to enhance their students’ learning.

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EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS: READ ALOUDS IN THE MIDDLE LEVEL

A Graduate Paper
Submitted to the
Division of Literacy Education
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Education
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

Kelly Ann Behmer
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This Project by Kelly Ann Behmer

Titled: Effective Professional Development for Teachers: Read Alouds in the Middle Level

has been approved as meeting the research requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Education.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Project</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Email to participating members</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: Blog</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C: Read Aloud PowerPoint Presentation</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D: The All American Slurp</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E: The All American Slurp Read Aloud Process</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F: History and Culture</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix G: History and Culture Read Aloud Process</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix H: Interactive Reading PowerPoint Presentation</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I: Life on Earth 150 Million Years Ago</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix J: Life on Earth 150 Million Years Ago Read Aloud Process</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix K: Read Aloud Instructions</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

Teacher read alouds are common practice in the elementary level, but they are rarely seen in the middle level. This paper addresses the importance of read alouds, with evidence from the literature, followed by the development of an effective professional development process for working with teachers at the middle level in developing instruction that includes read alouds. The goal of this professional development plan is to teach teachers of all subject areas in the middle level school how to conduct read alouds so they will know how to incorporate them into their specific subject area to enhance their students' learning.
In today's schools, teacher read alouds are a much more common practice in the elementary grade levels than in the middle grade levels (Ariail & Albright, 2006). There is little evidence of read alouds conducted in the middle level, however, read alouds have proven benefits in the elementary level (Albright, 2002; Albright & Ariail, 2005). The benefits of read alouds include; help students develop a positive attitude about reading (Albright & Ariail, 2005), increase student engagement and motivation (Ariail & Albright, 2006), improve fluency development through modeling fluent reading (Albright & Ariail, 2005; Zehr, 2010), help build content knowledge (Albright, 2002), make texts available to students that cannot read for themselves (Ariail & Albright, 2006), help students make meaningful connections to text (Albright & Ariail, 2005), and are effective in introducing new genres (Lesesne, 2001).

In the content areas, read alouds are beneficial for all the reasons previously listed, in addition to others. They can be used for introducing a topic or exploring information on topics (Beck & McKeown, 2001; Lennox, 2013). Reading aloud to students in the different content areas is a beneficial way for the teacher to integrate vocabulary into the instruction (Beck & McKeown, 2001; Lennox, 2013). It is important for teachers of all content areas to understand, and practice, effective ways to conduct a read aloud and to understand the reasons for doing so in order for read alouds to be an effective and beneficial practice.

Interactive read aloud is a strategy used when reading aloud to students, in any content area. Interactive read aloud involves the teacher talking to the students
about the content as it is being read, therefore, increasing understanding for students (Lennox, 2013). It is an effective strategy to help the students stay engaged and involved in the reading, therefore increasing their comprehension (Lennox, 2013; Beck & McKeown, 2001). During interactive read alouds, students are encouraged and expected to participate in the conversation, ask questions, and reflect on the content (Beck & McKeown, 2001). Offering educators professional development can maximize the impact of interactive read aloud. A professional development for teachers that focuses on read alouds in the content area classrooms should have four elements in order to be effective. Those four elements are; developing a sense of community (Thomas, et. al, 1998), collaborative teacher groups (Stanley, 2011), interactive read alouds in professional development (Kindle, 2006), and weblogs (Campia & Gallagher, 2015). When middle school staff have knowledge of read alouds and understand why they are beneficial and how to effectively conduct them, then they will see a reason to implement them in their own classroom.
Research Questions

This professional development project focuses on read alouds in the middle school content areas. Two questions address the focus of the literature review in developing this project.

1. What are the benefits of read alouds in the middle level?
2. How can teachers of all content areas be taught how to conduct effective read alouds during professional development?

Each of these questions were used to focus the literature review search. The following methodology section describes how that literature review search was conducted.
Methodology

The data were collected in two phases. First, the literature about read alouds in the middle level was researched. Since there was not very much available, read alouds in general were researched. Through this initial research, the benefits of read alouds that are stated in the literature review were found. There were many benefits of read alouds discussed in the research articles. The benefits that were discussed in more than one article were looked into further. Those benefits are; help students develop a positive attitude about reading, increase student engagement and motivation, improve fluency development through modeling fluent reading, help build content knowledge, make texts available to students that cannot read for themselves, and are effective in introducing new genres.

Then, the professional development project was developed. The researcher used the data to determine what aspects of read alouds were most important to share with teachers of all content areas across three grade levels. The areas that were most important were; why read alouds are important in all content areas, how to effectively conduct read alouds, interactive read alouds, and vocabulary.

As the project was being developed using the information gleaned from the literature review, certain project components emerged that needed to be included in the project but were missing from the original literature review. These missing literature review pieces included collaborative learning groups, developing community among groups of teachers to enable them to effectively
work together, and interactive read alouds in professional development.

Additional literature searches were conducted to find appropriate literature to address these components of the project.
According to Araial and Albright (2006), “read alouds refer to the teacher reading aloud texts such as fictional and nonfictional literature, poetry, magazines, newspapers, etc. to students” Read alouds are almost non-existent in the middle level (Ariail & Albright, 2006), even though there are many evidence-based reasons to conduct them, along with proven benefits (Albright, 2002; Albright & Ariail, 2005). There are three crucial reasons why teachers should read aloud to students: to increase understanding of content and build knowledge (Albright, 2002), to help students make meaningful connections (Albright & Ariail, 2005), and to model fluent reading (Ariail & Albright, 2006 & Zehr, 2010).

Whether read alouds are present in the classroom for enjoyment or are used for learning about content, there are many benefits (Albright & Ariail, 2005). Read alouds help students develop a positive attitude about reading (Ariail & Albright, 2006), they increase student engagement and motivation (Ariail & Albright, 2006), improve fluency development through modeling fluent reading (Ariail & Albright, 2006; Welsch, 2006; Zehr, 2010), help build content knowledge (Albright, 2002), make texts available to students that cannot read for themselves (Ariail & Albright, 2006), and are effective in introducing new genres (Lesesne, 2001).

Read alouds are an effective way to help students' develop a positive attitude about reading. “Listening to teachers read is a pleasurable activity for students and leads to more positive attitudes toward reading. In a survey of
over 1700 students best reading experiences, Ivey and Broaddus (2001) found that 62% indicated a preference for teacher read-alouds" (Ariail & Albright, 2006, p. 70). Students view read alouds as scaffolds to understanding content that they may not understand when they read it on their own. In addition to the teacher making the content more clear through the use of read alouds, students enjoy read alouds because they might be introduced to genres that they would not read on their own.

Teacher read alouds have a positive impact on students' motivation and engagement in class. "Teachers may also be delighted to discover that reading aloud a variety of materials can increase not only their students' understanding of the content but also their engagement and inquiry into the ideas they encounter" (Albright & Ariail, 2005, p.582). Middle school students can be unmotivated when it comes to completing reading assignments on their own, especially students that are not at a high achievement level (McGeown, Norgate & Warhurst, 2012; Retelsdorf, Koller & Moller, 2011), so read alouds are a great way to increase their motivation, interest, and engagement. "Research indicates that motivation, interest, and engagement are often enhanced when teachers read aloud to middle school students" (Albright & Ariail, 2005, p. 582). In a survey of 1,700 middle school students, one of the most important factors identified to motivate them to read was teacher read alouds (Ariail & Albright, 2006). Read alouds are a way to get students involved and excited about the curriculum. "In Beer's (1990) study of alliterate seventh graders (students who could read but chose not to), students selected having a teacher read aloud in
an exciting voice as one of the few activities they found to be motivating” (Albright & Ariail, 2005, p. 582). In addition to students finding read alouds motivating, students just enjoy listening to stories. Based on current studies that have been conducted on teacher read alouds, middle school students just plain enjoy listening to stories being read to them. In 2001, Ivey and Broaddus conducted a survey of 1,700 sixth graders to determine what reading activities they prefer most at school. Eighty-two percent of the students stated that they prefer to listen to the teacher read aloud.

Modeling fluent reading through teacher read alouds is an effective strategy to help students improve their fluency (Welsch, 2006). When students listen to fluent reading, they learn how a reader’s voice can help make written text make sense, especially if the text is above the students’ independent reading level. They are also able to hear what the text should sound like. “By reading effortlessly and with expression, the teacher is modeling for the students how a fluent reader sounds during reading” (Welsch, 2006, p. 182).

When books about specific content areas are used, read alouds are beneficial with building content knowledge (Albright, 2002). Picture books come in a variety of different genres (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and more) and are a great resource to use in any content area classrooms, either to introduce a new topic or to learn more about a topic, because they are short and can be in-depth about the specific topic. Since they are short, yet in-depth, students are able to respond to their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and reflect about the content (Maloch & Bomer, 2013). As a result of this responding and reflecting, their
understanding will increase. They also help with increasing students' understanding because their appealing illustrations draw the attention of the students. "Moreover, children's talk about text related to content areas has been shown to result in deeper understanding of content, higher level thinking, and improved communication skills" (Albright, 2002, p. 419). Teacher read alouds are effective with helping students increase understanding of content and build knowledge.

Read alouds help make texts available to students that cannot read them for themselves (Albright & Ariail, 2006). There are students in all grade levels that do not understand the material that they are expected to read. Through the use of read alouds, students that will not admit that they either cannot read the material or do not understand and are given the opportunity to hear the information from the teacher and are more likely to understand it. In a study of more than 1,700 middle school students, Ivey and Broaddus (2001) found that students saw read alouds as scaffolds to understanding because the teacher helped to make the text more comprehensible or more interesting to them.

Through read alouds, students are introduced to new genres. "Not only do read alouds motivate students who might be less than motivated readers, they can also introduce avid readers to a world of books they might not otherwise find on their own" (Lesesne, 2001, p. 68). Teachers choose a variety of genres to read aloud and students may realize that they enjoy one of the genres that they never would have thought they would, whether the students are struggling readers or not.
Teacher read alouds give students the opportunity to make connections while listening to reading. For example, “Reading and listening to literature can allow students to make personal, meaningful connections to their own lives and to virtually experience other ways of being” (Albright & Ariail, 2005, p. 587). When students are listening to the text, their engagement and understanding of content can increase, resulting in the students being able to make personal connections based on their learning.

*Interactive read alouds*

According to Lennox (2013), interactive read alouds are described as, “Before, during, and after reading, adults may use opportunities to incorporate dialogic strategies. These are strategies that actively engage children in reciprocal, conversational exchanges with participants sharing ideas with each other and listening to alternative perspectives” (pg. 382). Continually interacting with students during a read aloud is an effective way to keep students engaged and interested in the text. Interactive read alouds also support students’ academic achievement, in addition to their reading and writing skills (Lennox, 2013). When teachers are conducting interactive read alouds, they may model and scaffold comprehension strategies, point out text features, and promote students’ language use. The students’ are encouraged to be active participants in discussing the text by answering questions, asking questions, making comments, and listening. According to Beck & McKeown (2001), interactive read alouds are most effective when students are given opportunities to think about the text by being asked open-ended, reflective questions, rather than
being asked questions that have a specific answer. Students learn the most when the teacher is aware of their current level of understanding so they can adjust their support, while still providing a challenge. Read alouds can also support instruction targeting vocabulary development and comprehension.

**Vocabulary and Comprehension Development through Read Alouds**

Read alouds have been used often as a successful instructional approach to support the development of vocabulary knowledge (Justice, Meier, & Walpole, 2005; Senechal, 1997; Wasik & Blewitt, 2006) and to increase comprehension (Biemiller & Boote, 2006; Dickinson & Smith, 1994; Green Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Justice, 2002; Santoro, Chard, Howard, & Baker, 2008; Walsh & Blewitt, 2006). Santoro et al. (2008) used read alouds in research with first graders with a focus “to improve comprehension skills and strategies, enhance vocabulary knowledge, and introduce content that addresses standards in science and social studies” (p. 396). Their research found that using read alouds with repeated readings and teacher guided queries on specific vocabulary helped first graders improve both vocabulary knowledge and comprehension of text.

The role of the teacher as the mediator is critical for helping students make sense of the text and the vocabulary addressed (Justice, 2002); in other words, how “books are shared with children matters” (McGee & Schickedanz, 2007, p. 742).

A critical component of using read alouds to address vocabulary development is the selection of words upon which to focus during instruction with read alouds (Kindle, 2015). Word selection is a thoughtful process (Vukelich &
Christie, 2009) and an integral part of effective vocabulary instruction (Nagy & Hiebert, 2011) which reflects an important aspect of planning for read aloud instruction in the classroom. Graves (2006) provides four specific queries that help teachers guide their thinking about word selection from texts when developing lessons for vocabulary instruction:

- Is understanding the word important to understanding the selection in which it appears?
- Are students able to use context or structural analysis skills to discover the word’s meaning?
- Can working with this word be useful in furthering students’ context, structural-analysis, or dictionary skills?
- How useful is this word outside the reading selection currently being taught? (p. 68).

Effective Professional Development

Student learning and achievement are greatly impacted by the quality of teachers. Since high quality teachers are vital to education, effective professional development is necessary. Professional development sessions should have the following components to be considered effective; match existing teacher needs, match existing school needs, teacher involvement in the design and planning of professional development activities, opportunities for active participation, long-term engagement, and high-quality, prepared instructors (Bayar, 2014).
Professional development must match existing teacher needs in order to be effective (Bayar, 2014). School staff members are busy with daily demands and are taking time out of their schedule to attend professional development sessions. In order for school staff to see value in professional development sessions, they must be relevant to their teaching practice, rather than a useless way to spend time. When the practices are relevant to the curriculum and the school staff needs, the professional development sessions will be effective because the staff will be engaged and interested.

Starkey et al. (2009) also found that if professional development activities are related to the school setting, these programs become much more effective. The priority of schools is student achievement. Participating teachers will find more value in the professional development when they can see links between the content they are learning and the needs in their own classroom.

When teachers have involvement in the planning of the professional development sessions, they are going to feel connected to the subject matter, will find the topics helpful and relevant, and will feel a sense of ownership. Allowing teachers to have a voice in planning the content of the professional development sessions will increase the likelihood of exploring relevant content connected to teacher needs.

Requiring school staff to sit for a long period of time and listen is not an effective way of learning. Starkey et al. (2009) emphasized the importance of providing opportunities for practicing the new skill or topic. If teachers have time for practice, then the new activities may become more effective than any
professional development activities that are not practiced. People, teachers included, learn better when they are being active. When instructors just talk, people lose interest in the content and do not learn as much as they could.

Professional development sessions that are not relevant to the teacher and school needs are not going to be effective. The expert leading the professional development is responsible for looking at both of those needs before adapting the sessions. Teachers must have a voice in the professional development. When the teachers' voices are heard, then the expert leading the professional development is able to make it interesting and relevant to the teachers' needs. This makes the professional development more applicable and realistic for the teachers to implement in their own classrooms.

There are two different models of professional development; the traditional model and the non-traditional model. In the traditional model, the professional development activities consist of short workshops and conferences. This model is designed to take a short period of time. In the non-traditional model, the professional development activities consist of mentoring, coaching, peer observation, and etc. (Bayar, 2014). Though the non-traditional model takes more time, it requires the participating members to be more active, resulting in a more effective professional development. When teachers are asked to continually practice, discuss, learn, and reflect on a particular topic, they are more likely to change their instructional practices than if they had just learned about it for a short period of time.
There are four key elements in effective nontraditional professional development. These elements include: developing a sense of community (Thomas, et. al, 1998), collaborative teacher study groups (Stanley, 2011), interactive strategy engagement (Kindle, 2006), and weblogs (Campia & Gallagher, 2015). Through the use of those four strategies, teachers were able to more effectively learn the content but also why and how to incorporate content into their teaching. In the case of using read alouds at the middle level, these four strategies would enable teacher to apply read alouds into their content area curriculum and reflect on their learning and the learning of others.

Developing a Sense of Community

According to Thomas, et. al (1998) teachers cannot develop community of learners in their own classroom if they are unable to develop a community with their fellow co-workers. Many teachers view their own community in their school as the teachers that teach the same content area (Thomas, et, al, 1998). There might be teachers next door or across the hall that teach a different content area. Since they do not teach the same content area, they view each other as being outside of their community of learners and therefore may not go to each other for help and support. However, no matter the subject area people teach, when addressing what is best for students, teachers often have common beliefs and a common goal. According to Thomas, et. al (1998, p. 23), “We all had something to learn, we all had something to share with the rest of the group and we all wanted what was best for students.” Ideally, teachers work in a school because they want to help students and want students to achieve to their
highest potential. This is more likely to happen when there is a sense of community within the school (Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen, & Grissom, 2015). When a community is built among teachers, they change their “I” viewpoint to a “we” viewpoint. Each teacher brings with them different areas of expertise, whether that be pedagogy, subject matter, or knowledge about students. When teachers communicate and work together, they form collaborative teacher study groups.

**Collaborative Teacher Study Groups**

Collaborative teacher study groups are groups of teachers that are put into a group for the purpose of working and reflecting together. Communication and collective wisdom is beneficial for teachers to learn about teaching practices and strategies together. The teachers within the group can also learn from each other. Collaborative teacher study groups can be created in two ways. Teachers can arrange them by themselves for their own purposes, or they can be arranged by a person outside if the group, usually an administrator.

Collaborative teacher groups can consist of teachers that teach the same content area, or teachers that teach different content areas. According to Stanley (2011), collaborative teacher groups can be successful. Teachers can utilize each other to share knowledge, improve teaching practices, and learn together. While collaborative teacher groups can be very beneficial, they can also be unsuccessful. “On the other hand, community members may foster an environment that is intolerant of conflict, explicitly or subtly control who is allowed to join, or demand obedience to norms established by only a few
members (Stanley, 2011, p. 73). Since some groups of people can be unproductive when working together, it is helpful to mix collaborative learning groups up occasionally. Stanley states that the key is that the group members are aware of the productiveness of their group behavior and make the effort to make a change if it is not working.

Collaborative teacher study groups are an effective way to group teachers when they are learning and practicing interactive read alouds during professional development. Since interactive read alouds require more than one person (teacher and students), practicing with other staff members is a great way of learning how to incorporate them into the classroom with students.

*Interactive Strategy Engagement - Read Alouds in Professional Development*

According to Kindle (2006), there is a difference between training and educating teachers in professional development. When teachers are trained, they are adopting practices. When they are educated, they are changing their teaching practices through gaining an understanding of specific concepts and the reason to carry those out. Interactive read alouds are an effective strategy when the process is understood by the teacher, so it is important to educate teachers about how and why they are used in the classroom. If teachers are simply just trained, interactive read alouds might be a strategy that will not remain a constant.

Professional development can have positive effects on teachers' ability to facilitate interactive readings (Kindle, 2006). Through instruction and practice, their questioning strategies, skills instruction, attitudes, beliefs, and practice can
improve. When it comes to effective professional development associated with interactive read alouds, the factors that make it effective are: length, support, reflection, dialogue, choice, and collaboration.

**Weblogs**

According to Campia & Gallagher (2015, p. 883), Weblogs (abbreviated to blogs) are described as "...electronic journals used for timely recording of thoughts, allowing an individual to accumulate a repository of information. Blogs can also display pictures, texts, audio and video files and store word processed or other files." Blogs are an effective tool for collaborative learning, reflection, and critical thinking. They are a place for people to share, give and receive feedback, and for support. "Researchers have agreed that blogging also supports collaborative learning by enhancing learning performance in both individual knowledge development and group knowledge sharing" (Campia & Gallagher, 2015, p. 885).

Blogs are an effective tool to increase learning. People can use them to reflect on their learning and to learn from others. "Through a teaching and learning lens, blogs have the capability to make learning transparent and become a space where a greater understanding of meaning making can be gained" (Campia & Gallagher, 2015, p. 885). When people are communicating on a topic through the use of a blog, they are able to read the processing, learning, and reflecting of others, increasing their own understanding.
The Project

Purpose

The purpose of this research project is to educate and train teachers, administrators, and counselors to utilize read alouds in the classroom, regardless of the content area. Research shows that read alouds are not present in the middle level classroom (Albright & Ariail, 2006). The reason could be either, or both, that teachers do not know why they are important or how to incorporate them. The why and how of read alouds will be explored during the professional development. It is anticipated that with proper and adequate instruction, teachers will find that read alouds can easily become an important element to their specific curriculum.

I, as the reading specialist, will be in charge of planning and conducting the professional development sessions. The professional development sessions will follow the non-traditional model (Bayar, 2014). I will create a blog for the teachers, administrators, and counselors to use. I will also be available to meet with teachers in between professional development sessions upon teacher request. If participants have questions as they are conducting read alouds in their classrooms, I will be available to answer those. In addition to the previously listed tasks, I will check in on teachers and observe them from time to time. The information gathered from observations will be helpful in future professional development sessions.
Role Expectations

This year long, four session, read aloud professional development is designed to take place in a middle school, grades 6-8. The entire staff of the school consists of many different roles. There are teachers, administrators, and counselors. They will all be present during the professional development. Each participating member will learn how to conduct read alouds and will have different reasons for utilizing and incorporating them.

**Teachers.** The teachers of all grade levels and content areas will attend the professional development sessions. They will be learning how to conduct read alouds so they can be incorporated into their curriculum. They will be encouraged to practice read alouds in their classrooms in between the professional development sessions. The teachers will also need to bring feedback from their experiences in the classroom to the second, third, and fourth professional development sessions and be ready to discuss with a small group. In addition to learning and practicing read alouds in their classrooms, the teachers will be planning read alouds with others that teach the same content.

**Administrators.** The administrators will have many roles in the professional development. The first is to attend and learn about read alouds. When administrators have the same professional development experience about read alouds, it will create a shared understanding about the read aloud practice in the classroom and they will be better prepared to conduct walk throughs and observations of teachers practicing in their classrooms. They will also be able to perform evaluations on teachers’ use of read alouds. The administrators may
also be a model for teachers. Lastly, they will have the task of determining if growth is being made by the students after the course of one year. That information will be gleaned from the Iowa Assessments results.

*Guidance Counselors.* The guidance counselors in the school will also be a part of the participants involved in the read aloud professional development. They often come into classrooms to work with the students or hold small groups. The guidance counselors will be able to utilize the read aloud strategies learned through the professional development when reading aloud to students, whether that be in a small or large group.

*Professional Development Sessions*

This read aloud professional development will take place in the media center of the school over the course of four sessions, lasting the length of one school year. Each session will be 90 minutes long and will focus on topics such as text selection, vocabulary, interactive read alouds, and comprehension. All of the teachers, administrators, and counselors in the middle school, grades 6-8, will attend each session. This includes teachers of all subject areas; reading, language arts, social studies, science, social studies, math, art, computer, health, physical education, industrial technology, general music, and family consumer science.
### Overview of Sessions 1-4

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
<th>Session 3</th>
<th>Session 4</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>May</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| • Team building  
  • Introduce purpose of professional development  
  • Demonstrate read aloud with fiction text  
  • Give participants time to practice | • Share read aloud experience  
  • Demonstrate content specific read aloud  
  • Give participants time to practice with their own content text | • Share read aloud experience  
  • Interactive read alouds  
  • Plan read aloud with similar content teachers | • Share read aloud experience  
  • Future curriculum development utilizing read alouds |

### Objectives

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| • Begin to develop a community among other members  
  • Learn about read alouds  
  • Observe a fiction read aloud | • Learn how to complete a content area read aloud by listening to a social studies text  
  • Practice a read aloud with their own content area text | • Learn about interactive read alouds  
  • Learn how to complete an interactive read aloud by listening to a science text  
  • Plan an interactive read aloud | • Plan read alouds for their own curriculum to implement in future years |
Session 1

Objectives

- Participating members will begin to develop a community among other members
- Participating members will learn about read alouds

Materials

- Laptop or iPad (participants will be sent an email asking them to bring their laptop or iPad- see appendix A)
- Computer
- Projector
- PowerPoint
- One copy per person of PowerPoint presentation
- Mine Field materials
- The All American Slurp copies

The first professional development session will take place in August, during a scheduled professional development day before the students begin school for the year. This session will focus on the participants becoming comfortable with each other through a team building activity. Since there will be a large variety of participants with different teaching styles, and beliefs among the group, a sense of community will need to be established in order for the professional development sessions to be successful.
The second focus of the first session is to teach the participants about read alouds. The participants will learn the purpose of read alouds and the reasons to incorporate them. The participants will also watch me complete a demonstration of a read aloud with a fiction text.

Before the content of session one begins, the participants will participate in a team building activity called *The Mine Field*. Everyone will go to the gym to participate in this activity. There will be cones placed randomly around the gym. Each person will need to have a partner, someone that they do not work with on a daily basis. The purpose of each of the participating members being partners with someone they do not work with on a daily basis is so they begin to get to know other people in the school. One partner will be blindfolded and the other will not. The non-blindfolded person will need to give the blindfolded person verbal instructions to help them get from one end of the gym to the other without running into any mines or any other people. When the blindfolded person successfully gets to the other side of the gym, the participating members will choose another partner. When the participating members are in new partnerships, they will continue the activity with their new partner. Through this team building activity, the participating members are encouraged to work together and begin to be comfortable with co-workers that they do not work with every day.

After the activity everyone will return to the media center. Once all of the participating members are in the media center, I will place them in collaborative learning groups of 4-5 people, none of the participants of the same content area
will be in a group. After the participants have moved to their collaborative learning group, I will introduce the read aloud professional development by informing them that it is a year-long professional development that involves four 90-minute sessions with a focus on incorporating read alouds into the curriculum. At this time, I will give the participants a few minutes to talk with the other members at their table group about read alouds, what they think they are and how they are relevant to the middle level. After the table groups have had time to talk, groups that would like to share with the entire group will be given the opportunity.

After the sharing portion of the professional development, I will show the participants a seven minute video on the importance of read alouds in the middle school [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnTFjAGYs2Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnTFjAGYs2Y). The video will be played on my computer and projected through the use of a projector so everyone can see it. The purpose of showing the video is to explain that read alouds are not just for elementary students but are beneficial to older students, in all content areas.

Following the video, I will explain the purpose of read alouds and give the participants basic information (what read alouds are, what subject areas they are able to be utilized in, the benefits for students, how they can be incorporated into the curriculum, the types of text that can be read aloud, and what teacher preparation is required) through the use of a PowerPoint presentation (see appendix B). The PowerPoint presentation will be projected from my computer for everyone to see. Each person will be given a hard copy of the PowerPoint
so they are able to take notes as it is being presented. After the professional development session, the PowerPoint will also be e-mailed to the participants in case there is anyone that prefers to have an electronic copy.

Then, I will introduce the participants to the blog that will be utilized throughout the year. I will have asked all of the participating members to bring their laptop computer with them, via email, prior to the first session. If there are participating members that did not bring their laptop with them or do not have one, they can either watch the screen as I am projecting the blog from my computer or look at the computer of someone sitting near them.

The participants will be given the blog web address that they will be able to pull it up on their computer. The blog will have been created through the website Weebly (see appendix C). As I am introducing and discussing the blog, it will be projected on the projector from my computer for the staff to see and follow along. To practice writing blog posts, I am going to ask each participant to post an introduction about themselves. They will create a new post with their name, grade, and subject area they teach, and one question or comment they have about read alouds. I will walk around the media center to help any participants that may need help with writing their practice blog post.

After the participants have made their practice blog post, I will explain to them that through the use of the blog, the participating members in the professional development will be able to post their experiences, example lesson plans, successes, challenges, and any questions or suggestions they may have for others. Throughout the professional development, I will answer questions,
give feedback, and post information that might be helpful for the participants.
The blog is designed to increase collaboration between all participating members and myself.

After the blog has been introduced, the participants will watch me complete a demonstration of a read aloud using the fiction text, *The All-American Slurp* by Lensey Namioka (see appendix D). The text will be pulled up on my computer through the Holt McDougal online textbook and shown on the projector for the participants to view. There will also be two copies of the story on each table for those that prefer to view a hard copy. There will be additional hard copies that can be given to participants if there are more than two people at a table that prefer one.

I will begin the read aloud demonstration by introducing the title and author of the text, *The All-American Slurp* by Lensey Namioka. I will tell the participants that the focus area of the read aloud of this text is tone and imagery. I will explain to the participants that tone is the narrator’s attitude towards an event and imagery are words and phrases that help the reader imagine and put pictures in their mind of the people and events. Throughout the text, there are letters (A-J) that correspond with a question in the margin that either focus on tone or imagery. Each time I come to a letter, I will stop reading and ask the participants the question(s). I will ask the participants to raise their hand if they would like to answer the question. If no one knows the answer, then I will break the question down into smaller parts to guide the participants' thinking. For example, if a question is focusing on imagery, I will ask the participants to re-
read particular lines from the selection and think about the specific words that help them to put a picture in their mind. I will continue to read the text out loud, stopping at each letter and following the same read aloud procedure, for the remainder of the text (for more details about the process of this read aloud for *The All-American Slurp*, see appendix E).

After the read aloud demonstration, I will give the participants time to talk with the other people at their table about new information they learned about read alouds through the demonstration. The purpose of allowing them to talk with other people at their tables is so they are able to reflect on the read aloud demonstration they observed. While the participants are talking to the other people at their tables, I will walk around to different tables. As I am walking around, I will be available to answer questions from participants. After the participants have talked at their individual tables, I will pull all of them together and ask for questions as a whole group. I will answer the questions the participants ask, if there are questions I cannot answer, I will find out the answer and communicate those with all the participants via the blog.

At the end of this first professional development session, I will ask all of the participants to do three things before the next professional development session in October. *First, I will* ask them to try a read aloud in their subject area, with any text they want, and bring feedback, positive or negative, and questions. In addition to feedback, I will ask all of the participants to bring a content specific text that they will be able to share with participants of other subject areas during the next professional development session. This content specific text could be
any text that the participants use to teach their content (magazine, book, article, newspaper, poem, etc.) Lastly, I will ask the participants to write two blog posts before the next read aloud session. The first post must be about an experience with read alouds they have before the next session. The second blog post may be a question, new learning, thoughts, or a reflection.
Session 2

Objectives

- Participants will learn how to complete a content area read aloud by listening to a social studies text.
- Participating members will practice a read aloud with their own content area text.

Materials

- Read aloud feedback
- Computer
- Projector
- *History and Culture* (of Mexico)
- Content specific text brought by staff

The second session will take place in October. This session will have three focus areas. The first will be for the participants to share their experiences with read alouds in their own classroom since the first professional development session. The second focus will be to watch me complete a demonstration of a social studies content area read aloud. The third focus will be for the participants to practice a read aloud with a content specific text they were asked to bring with them. In addition to practicing, they will be provided the opportunity to give and receive feedback to and from other participants that teach the same content area.

When the participants come in, they will sit wherever they choose. I am beginning session two with this seating arrangement because the participants
are going to be sharing their experience with a read aloud with students. They might be sharing challenges that they experienced, so I want them to be comfortable with the people they are sharing this information. Once each person is finished sharing with their table group, each group will be asked to share one of their personal read aloud experience with the entire group.

At the end of the first session, I had given the assignment to write two entries in the blog, so after the participating members have had time to discuss their read aloud experiences, we will discuss it. I will have the participating members share their thoughts about the blog. I will encourage them to share whether they like it or not and whether they find it helpful or not. After those have shared that want to, I will show examples from my computer on the projector of two blog posts (I will obtain permission from the authors prior to sharing). The blog posts that I show will be determined by what the participants write, but I choose one that shares a read aloud experience and one that poses questions. I will discuss what each of them are and how they are beneficial to the person that wrote the post and to others reading it. If the person that wrote each blog post would like to talk to the group about what they wrote, they will have the opportunity to do so. I will read the entire blog in between professional development sessions. Depending on what the participants reflect on and ask questions about, we will discuss some questions and ideas as a group. My hope is that if there are participants that do not find it helpful, then they can observe and learn how to use it as a helpful resource.
After we have discussed the blog, I will rearrange the participants into collaborative learning groups of 4-5 people that I pre-determine. In each group, only one content area will be represented (example, reading teachers will be in a group with other reading teachers, science teachers will be in a group with other science teachers, etc.). The purpose of this type of grouping is so that during the allotted practice time, the participants will be able to receive feedback from teachers that teach the same content area. Since the participants may not know each other or be comfortable with one another, they will begin by sharing one interesting fact about themselves with the rest of the group.

After a few minutes of the participants getting to know the other people at their table, I will demonstrate a read aloud with a social studies text about Mexico called *History and Culture* (see appendix F). The purpose of the demonstration is for the participants to see an example of how read alouds can be used effectively in a content area classroom. Since there is not an electronic copy of the social studies textbook that the text came from originally, I will provide a scanned version of the text. From my computer, I will project this scanned version for everyone to see. There will also be two copies of the story on each table for those that prefer to view a hard copy. There will be additional hard copies that can be given to participants if there are more than two people at a table that prefer one.

I will begin the read aloud by introducing the text by saying, “This is section two of the text, called *History and Culture*. We will be learning about early cultures of Mexico, Mexico’s time as a Spanish colony, and how Spanish
and native cultures have influenced the customs in Mexico today." After I introduce the text, I will begin reading out loud. I will stop reading when I come to the vocabulary word *empire*. Empire is defined right there in the paragraph on page 43, so I will discuss its meaning (*a land with different territories and peoples under a single ruler*). I will continue to read until I get to the first reading check on the bottom of page 43. Throughout the social studies text, there are three reading checks built into the reading. The reading check asks the students to summarize some early achievements of Mexico’s early cultures. I will ask the participants to think back to the page I just read and ask them to raise their hand to answer the question. After we discussed the reading check, I will continue to read, stopping at the rest of the vocabulary words (mestizos, missions, and haciendas) to discuss. Similarly to the first vocabulary word, the rest are also defined right there in the text. I will also stop at each reading check to discuss them the same way I discussed the first one with the participants (for more details, see appendix G).

When the demonstration of the social studies text read aloud is completed, the participants will then be instructed to take turns sharing the content specific text that they brought. When they share their text, they will read it to the group, or a portion of it if it is a long text, and practice conducting a read aloud. The participants will be able to give each other feedback based on what was done well and what should be improved. Throughout the work time, I will be walking around and be available to help and answer questions.
Before it is time to leave, I will ask the participants to complete three things before the next professional development session in February. The first is to conduct another read aloud with students, with the text they shared today, and bring feedback. The second is to bring a different content specific text which they could use to highlight vocabulary instruction. The third is to write two blog posts before the next read aloud session. The first post must be, again, about an experience with read alouds they have before the next session. The second blog post may be a question, new learning, thoughts, or a reflection.
Session 3

Objectives

- Participating members will learn about interactive read alouds.
- Participating members will learn how to complete an interactive read aloud by listening to a science text.
- Participating members will plan an interactive read aloud for their own content area.

Materials

- Read aloud feedback
- Computer
- Projector
- Interactive Read Aloud PowerPoint presentation
- One copy per person of Interactive Read Aloud PowerPoint presentation
- Life on Earth 150 Million Years Ago

The third session will take place in February. The focus of this session will be interactive read alouds. Interactive read alouds are a tool for the teacher to utilize to talk about the content of the reading with the students, during the reading. Through the use of talking with students, the students are encouraged to participate, therefore, increasing their engagement and understanding.

To begin session three, I will place the participants in the same collaborative learning groups as session two, 4-5 people of the same content area. The purpose of this type of grouping is so that the participants can
practice their interactive read alouds with other participants that understand and
teach the same content.

First, they will be asked to share the feedback they brought from
completing read alouds in their classroom since the last professional
development session in October. Then, just as in the last session, the
participants that would like to share with the entire group will be given the
opportunity.

At the end of the second session, I had given the assignment to write two
more entries in the blog, so after the participating members have had time to
discuss their read aloud experiences, we will discuss it. I will have the
participating members share their thoughts on the blog since we discussed at
the start of the previous session. After those have shared that want to, I will
show examples from my computer on the projector of two blog posts (I will
obtain permission from each person prior to sharing). The blog posts that I
show will be determined by what the participants write, but I will, again, choose
one that shares a read aloud experience and one that poses questions. I will
discuss how they are beneficial to the person that wrote the post and to others
reading it. If the person that wrote each blog post would like to talk to the group
about what they wrote, they will have the opportunity to do so. I will read the
entire blog in between professional development sessions. Depending on what
the participants reflect on and ask questions about, we will discuss some
questions and ideas as a group. My hope is that if there are participants that do
not find it helpful, then they can observe and learn how to use it as a helpful resource.

After the blog discussion, I will show a PowerPoint presentation about interactive read alouds. This PowerPoint will explain what interactive read alouds are, why they should be utilized, and before, during, and after reading strategies (see appendix H). The PowerPoint presentation will be projected from my computer for everyone to see. Through the PowerPoint, the participants will learn what they are and why they are important to incorporate into the content area classroom. Each person will be given a hard copy of the PowerPoint so they are able to take notes as it is being presented. After the professional development session, the PowerPoint I will also email it to the participants in case there are people that prefer to have an electronic copy.

After the PowerPoint presentation, I will conduct a read aloud with a science content text, called Life on Earth 150 Million Years Ago (see appendix I). Since there is not an electronic copy of the Models and Design book that the text came from, I will scan the text to my computer. From my computer, I will project it for everyone to see. There will also be two copies of the story on each table for those that prefer to view a hard copy. There will be additional hard copies that can be given to participants if there are more than two people at a table that prefer one.

I will begin the read aloud by introducing the text by saying, “This is investigation number one called Life on Earth 150 Million Years Ago. We will be learning about how geologists and paleontologists study rocks to find out what
life was like millions of years ago on Earth.” Then, I will begin reading the text as the students follow along. When I come to a vocabulary word (words in italics), I will stop and talk about the word with the students. The first two words are in the first sentence, “geologists” and “paleontologists”. They are both defined right there in the paragraph. Geologists study rocks and how they were formed and Paleontologists study the history of the Earth. Once we have discussed the meaning of the first two vocabulary words, I will continue to read. When I come to the rest of the vocabulary words (words in italics), I will stop reading and we will discuss the meaning of the words together. The remainder of the vocabulary words that we will stop and discuss are: sedimentary rocks, radiation, radiometric dating, Precambrian, Paleozoic, Mesozoic, Cenozoic, fossils, Jurassic, dinosaurs, stegosaurus, allosaurus, seismosaurus, reconstruction, dinosaurs, restoration, and seismosaurus. After I have completed reading the text, I will wrap up discussing the four main ideas (for more details, see appendix J).

After the example science read aloud, the participants will use the content area text they brought with them and practice conducting a read aloud to the other people at their table. Since the participants are sitting with others of the same content area, they will be able to work together to determine what works the best for the students and their content area. With their group members, they will be practicing stopping and talking about the vocabulary in the text and important ideas. When thinking about the vocabulary in the content area text they brought, they will be reminded to think about these four components, which
I will project from page six of the interactive PowerPoint (see appendix H) on my computer to the screen.

- Is understanding the word important to understanding the selection in which it appears?
- Are students able to use context or structural analysis skills to discover the word's meaning?
- Can working with this word be useful in furthering students' context, structural-analysis, or dictionary skills?
- How useful is this word outside the reading selection currently being taught?

Throughout the work time, I will be walking around and available to help and answer questions.

When the participants have had ample time (20-30 minutes, or more if needed) to work together and practice read alouds with others that teach the same content area, they will be asked to come back together as a whole group. I will ask for one volunteer to practice a read aloud with their content area text for the entire group. The purpose of this sharing is for the participants to see an example of a read aloud from more novice user. If the participant that is sharing their content area read aloud has their computer and an electronic copy of the text with them, we will plug their computer into the projector. If the participant does not have an electronic copy of the text with them, a document camera will be used. The document camera will plug into the projector and the text can be projected for everyone to see. Since this sharing portion is not planned ahead
of time, there will not be additional copies available for the participants, they will have to watch on the projector. The participant that shares their read aloud with the entire group will be able to receive feedback from myself and the other participants.

After one person has shared with the entire group, I will ask the participants to complete three things for the last professional development session before we wrap up session three. Those three things are to practice an interactive read aloud, that includes vocabulary and bring feedback with them. I will also ask the participants to write two blog posts before the next read aloud session. The first post must be, again, about an experience with read alouds they have before the next session. The second blog post may be a question, new learning, thoughts, or a reflection. Lastly, the participants will need to bring their curriculum materials with them for at least one unit. They are going to be planning how they will be incorporating read alouds into the curriculum for the next school year.
Session 4

Objective

- Participating members will plan read alouds for their own curriculum to implement in future years.

Materials

- Read aloud feedback
- Computer
- Sample read aloud plan
- Curriculum materials
- iPads or laptops

The fourth session will take place in May. The focus of this session is for the participants to have time to work with their content team to plan read alouds that they will incorporate into the curriculum the following school year. The participants will be allowed to sit at a table of their choice. The participants will be allowed to choose their own table because they have had the opportunity to work with others in the same content area and different content areas. They should know which collaborative group format works best for them. This time, they will be able to share with the group they are most comfortable with, whether that be the same or different content areas.

To begin this session, the teachers, administrators, and counselors will share successes and challenges they have had throughout the year with incorporating read alouds in the classroom. To begin, they will share with the
other members at their table group. Once everyone has been given time to share within their own table group, those that would like, will be given the opportunity to share with the whole group.

After the participants have shared their successes and challenges with others, we are going to discuss the blog. I will have the participating members share any new thoughts on the blog since we discussed at the start of the previous session. After those have shared that want to, I will show examples from my computer on the projector of two blog posts (I will obtain permission from each person prior to sharing). The blog posts that I show will be determined by what the participants write, but I will choose one that shares a read aloud experience and one that poses questions. If the person that wrote each blog post would like to talk to the group about what they wrote, they will have the opportunity to do so. I will discuss how they are beneficial to the person that wrote the post and to others reading it. I will read the entire blog in between professional development sessions. Depending on what the participants reflect on and ask questions about, we will discuss some questions and ideas as a group. I will also inform the participants that they are welcome and encouraged to continue to use the blog, even though the professional development sessions are over. Even though we are not meeting formally every few months, it would still be beneficial to all the participating members to continue to reflect, share experiences, and ask questions of each other and myself through the blog.
Once we are done discussing the blog, I will explain next part of the last professional development session to the participants. If they are not sitting in their content grade level team, then they will be instructed to move so that they are. The participants are going to have time to develop read alouds to incorporate into their curriculum so it will be important that they are with their content grade level team. Each group will be given an instruction and example sheet to reference (see appendix K) as they are working. Throughout the work time, I will be walking around and available to help and answer questions as groups have them.

Before it is time to wrap up the last professional development session of the school year, the participants will be encouraged to continue to utilize the blog that they have been using all year. The initial learning about read alouds has come to a close, but the participants are welcome and encouraged to continue incorporating them into their curriculum, for years to come. Through use of the blog, the participants are able to continue to reflect, ask questions, and read about experience other teachers in the building are encountering.
Conclusion

Teacher read alouds have many proven benefits for students of all grade and achievement levels. Those benefits are; to help students develop a positive attitude about reading (Ariail & Albright, 2006), to increase student engagement and motivation (Ariail & Albright, 2006), to improve fluency development through modeling fluent reading (Albright & Ariail, 2005; Zehr, 2010), to help build content knowledge (Albright, 2002), to make texts available to students that cannot read for themselves (Ariail & Albright, 2006), help students make meaningful connections to text (Albright & Ariail, 2005), and are effective in introducing new genres (Lesesne, 2001). Read alouds are important to utilize in all subject areas, not just literacy classrooms. In the content area classrooms, they are a great tool for teaching about specific topics, while still having the same positive benefits for the students.

Even though read alouds are important and beneficial, they are rarely done in the middle level (Ariail & Albright, 2006). Through this year long, middle level, professional development all teachers in the middle school will have the knowledge to understand that teacher read alouds are important and beneficial to all students. The goal is that they will want to use this practice in their own classroom.

Through this read aloud professional development, teachers will learn how to correctly conduct read alouds so that they are effective. They will watch examples of read alouds and practice themselves in collaborative learning groups. The teachers will also work with other teachers that teach the same
content area to plan read alouds that they will implement in their own curriculum. Through observations, practice, discussion, and reflection, teachers will understand that read alouds are powerful instructional supports for middle school students and can serve to address literacy across content areas. Read alouds are beneficial for all students, in all subject, and in all grade levels.
References


Appendix A
Email to participating members
Welcome!

Our first read aloud professional development session will take place on August 29, 2016 from 10-11:30. We will meet in the media center of Excelsior Middle School. For our first session, please bring your laptop or iPad with you so you are able to participate in the planned activities. I hope everyone is excited to learn about and incorporate read alouds into their subject area curriculum!

Thank you,

Kelly Behmer

Reading Specialist
Appendix B
Blog
My name is Dave Smith and I tried read alouds for the first time today in my social studies classroom. We are beginning to discuss elections and I used the book. I began the read aloud by asking my students what they already know about elections. I was surprised by their prior knowledge. I then continued to read the book to the students. I was happy about the conversations we had as I was reading the book, Vote! By Eileen Christelow. My question is, how much talk is okay to use during the reading part? There were things I wanted to stop and talk about, but I do not know if that takes away from the effectiveness of the read aloud or not.

Welcome to the middle level professional development! Please utilize this blog to write about your personal experiences incorporating blogs into your classroom and post any questions or feedback you have for others. You are also welcome to comment on blog posts made by others. I look forward to hearing about your experiences throughout this school year!
Appendix C
Read Aloud PowerPoint
Effective Read Alouds in the Middle Level

Middle School Professional Development

What is a read aloud?

Read aloud is a strategy in which a teacher sets aside time to read orally to students on a consistent basis from texts above their independent reading level but at their listening level.
Utilize in all subject areas

- Reading
- Language Arts
- Science
- Social Studies
- Math
- Foreign language
- Art
- Technology
- Health
- Physical Education
- Music

Benefits for students

- Develop a positive attitude about reading
- Become engaged and motivated
- Understand content
- Listen to books they cannot read on their own
- Become a more fluent reader
- Become aware of new genres
Read alouds can be used to...

- Start the day
- Support reading and writing mini lessons
- Support content area curriculum
- Introduce a new novel
- Introduce/discuss a theme
- Whole class book studies
- Help students talk and think about text
- Familiarize students with text structures and genres

What type of text?

- Fiction
  - Novels
  - Short stories
  - Poetry
  - Picture books
- Non fiction
  - Informational text
  - Biographies
  - Autobiographies
  - Speeches
  - Historical documents
  - Content area text
- Magazine articles
- Newspaper articles

*Any text that is high interest, has lively characters, and an exciting plot!
Reading aloud allows the teacher to...

- Model fluent and expressive reading
- Think aloud
- Discuss events
- Discuss vocabulary
- Facilitate comprehension
- Model making connections
- Introduce different genres of text

Teacher preparation for read alouds

- Pre-read and re-read text
- Write discussion questions before the lesson
- Practice reading the text using expression
- Anticipate where background knowledge will need to be built
- Plan before, during, and after reading activities
- Mark places to stop, question, make predictions, or make connections
Appendix D
The All American Slurp
The first time our family was invited to dinner in America, we disgraced ourselves while eating celery. We had emigrated to this country from China, and during our early days here we had a hard time with American table manners.

In China we never ate celery raw, or any other kind of vegetable raw. We always had to disinfect the vegetables in boiling water first. When we were presented with our first Relish tray, the raw celery caught us unprepared.

We had been invited to dinner by our neighbors, the Gleasons. After arriving at the house, we shook hands with our hosts and packed ourselves into a sofa. As our family of four sat stiffly in a row, my younger brother and I stole glances at our parents for a clue as to what to do next.

Mrs. Gleason offered the relish tray to Mother. The tray looked pretty, with its tiny red radishes, curly sticks of carrots, and long, slender stalks of pale green celery. "Do try some of the celery, Mrs. Lin," she said. "It’s from a local farmer, and it’s sweet."

Mother picked up one of the green stalks, and Father followed suit. Then I picked up a stalk, and my brother did too. So there we sat, each with a stalk of celery in our right hand.

Mrs. Gleason kept smiling. "Would you like to try some of the dip, Mrs. Lin? It’s my own recipe: sour cream and onion flakes, with a dash of Tabasco sauce."

TONE AND IMAGERY
Reread lines 1-12. What words and images help create a humorous tone toward the subject of the story?
Most Chinese don't care for dairy products, and in those days I wasn't even ready to drink fresh milk. Sour cream sounded perfectly revolting. Our family shook our heads in unison.

Mrs. Gleason went off with the relish tray to the other guests, and we carefully watched to see what they did. Everyone seemed to eat the raw vegetables quite happily.

Mother took a bite of her celery. Crunch. "It's not bad!" she whispered.

Father took a bite of his celery. Crunch. "Yes, it is good," he said, looking surprised.

I took a bite, and then my brother. Crunch, crunch. It was more than good; it was delicious. Raw celery has a slight sparkle, a zingy taste that you don't get in cooked celery. When Mrs. Gleason came around with the relish tray, we each took another stalk of celery, except my brother. He took two.

There was only one problem: long strings ran through the length of the stalk, and they got caught in my teeth. When I help my mother in the kitchen, I always pull the strings out before slicing celery.

I pulled the strings out of my stalk. Zip, zip, zip. My brother followed suit. Zip, zip, zip. To my left, my parents were taking care of their own stalks. Zip, zip, zip.

Suddenly I realized that there was dead silence except for our zipping. Looking up, I saw that the eyes of everyone in the room were on our family. Mr. and Mrs. Gleason, their daughter Meg, who was my friend, and their neighbors the Badels—they were all staring at us as we busily pulled the strings of our celery.

That wasn't the end of it. Mrs. Gleason announced that dinner was served and invited us to the dining table. It was lavishly covered with platters of food, but we couldn't see any chairs around the table. So we helpfully carried over some dining chairs and sat down. All the other guests just stood there.

Mrs. Gleason bent down and whispered to us, "This is a buffet dinner. You help yourselves to some food and eat it in the living room.

Our family beat a retreat back to the sofa as if chased by enemy soldiers. For the rest of the evening, too mortified to go back to the dining table, I nursed a bit of potato salad on my plate.

Next day Meg and I got on the school bus together. I wasn't sure how she would feel about me after the spectacle of our family made at the party.

But she was just the same as usual, and the only reference she made to the party was, "Hope you and your folks got enough to eat last night. You certainly didn't take too much. Mom never tries to figure out how...

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1. revolting (rē vap'ling) adj. causing disgust
2. mortified (mōr'tə fid') adj. ashamed, humiliated
3. lavishly (lā'vish-ē) adv. in a rich or plentiful way; abundantly
4. visualize (vi-zə-liz') v. to form a mental picture of

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UNIT 3: SENSORY LANGUAGE, IMAGERY, AND STYLE

446
much food to prepare. She just puts everything on the table and hopes for the best."

I began to relax. The Gleasons' dinner party wasn't so different from a Chinese meal after all. My mother also puts everything on the table and hopes for the best.

Meg was the first friend I had made after we came to America. I eventually got acquainted with a few other kids in school, but Meg was still the only real friend I had.

My brother didn't have any problems making friends. He spent all his time with some boys who were teaching him baseball, and in no time he could speak English much faster than I could—not better, but faster.

I worried more about making mistakes, and I spoke carefully, making sure I could say everything right before opening my mouth. At least I had a better accent than my parents, who never really got rid of their Chinese accent, even years later. My parents had both studied English in school before coming to America, but what they had studied was mostly written English, not spoken.
Father's approach to English was a scientific one. Since Chinese verbs have no tense, he was fascinated by the way English verbs changed form according to whether they were in the present, past imperfect, perfect, pluperfect, future, or future perfect tense. He was always making diagrams of verbs and their inflections, and he looked for opportunities to show off his mastery of the pluperfect and future perfect tenses, his two favorites. "I shall have finished my project by Monday," he would say smugly.

Mother's approach was to memorize lists of polite phrases that would cover all possible social situations. She was constantly muttering things like "I'm fine, thank you. And you?" Once she accidentally stepped on someone's foot, and hurriedly blurted, "Oh, that's quite all right!" Embarrassed by her slip, she resolved to do better next time. So when someone stepped on her foot, she cried, "You're welcome!"

In our own different ways, we made progress in learning English. But I had another worry, and that was my appearance. My brother didn't have to worry, since Mother bought him blue jeans for school, and he dressed like all the other boys. But she insisted that girls had to wear skirts. By the time she saw that Meg and the other girls were wearing jeans, it was too late. My school clothes were bought already, and we didn't have money left to buy new outfits for me. We had too many other things to buy first, like furniture, pots, and pans.

The first time I visited Meg's house, she took me upstairs to her room, and I wound up trying on her clothes. We were pretty much the same size, since Meg was shorter and thinner than average. Maybe that's how we became friends in the first place. Wearing Meg's jeans and T-shirt, I looked at myself in the mirror. I could almost pass for an American—from the back, anyway. At least the kids in school wouldn't stop and stare at me in the hallways, which was what they did when they saw me in my white blouse and navy blue skirt that were a couple of inches below the knees.

When Meg came to my house, I invited her to try on my Chinese dresses. She chose a high collar and slit up the sides. Meg's eyes were bright as she looked at herself in the mirror. She struck several sultry poses, and we nearly fell over laughing.

The dinner party at the Gleason's didn't stop my growing friendship with Meg. Things were getting better for me in other ways too. Mother finally bought me some jeans at the end of the month, when Father got his paycheck. She wasn't in any hurry about buying them at first, until

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Language Coach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>To express an action or state of being that is occurring now</td>
<td>Father makes diagrams of verbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>To express an action or state of being that occurred in the past</td>
<td>Father made diagrams of verbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>To express an action or state of being that will occur in the future</td>
<td>Father will make diagrams of verbs tomorrow.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. inflections to form seven different tenses.
I worked on her. This is what I did. Since we didn't have a car in those
days, I often ran down to the neighborhood store to pick up things for her.
The groceries cost less at a big supermarket, but the closest one was many
blocks away. One day, when she ran out of flour, I offered to borrow a
bike from our neighbor's son and buy a ten-pound bag of flour at the big
supermarket. I mounted the boy's bike and waved to Mother. "I'll be back
in five minutes!"

Before I started pedaling, I heard her voice behind me. "You can't go
out in public like that! People can see all the way up to your thighs!"

"I'm sorry," I said innocently. "I thought you were in a hurry to get the
flour." For dinner we were going to have pot-stickers (fried Chinese
dumplings), and we needed a lot of flour.

"Couldn't you borrow a girl's bicycle?" complained Mother. "That way
your skirt won't be pushed up."

"There aren't too many of those around," I said. "Almost all the girls
wear jeans while riding a bike, so they don't see any point buying a
girl's bike."

We didn't eat pot-stickers that evening, and Mother was thoughtful.
Next day we took the bus downtown and she bought me a pair of jeans.
In the same week, my brother made the baseball team of his junior high
school, Father started taking driving lessons, and Mother discovered
rummage sales. We soon got all the furniture we needed, plus a dart board
and a 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzle (fourteen hours later, we discovered that it
was a 999-piece jigsaw puzzle). There was hope that the Lins might
become a normal American family after all.

Then came our dinner at the Lakeview Restaurant.
The Lakeview was an expensive restaurant, one of those places where
a headwaiter dressed in tails conducted you to your seat, and the only light
came from candles and flaming desserts. In one corner of the room a lady
harpist played tinkling melodies.

Father wanted to celebrate, because he had just been promoted. He
worked for an electronics company, and after his English started improving,
his superiors decided to appoint him to a position more suited to his training.
The promotion not only brought a higher salary but was also a tremendous
boost to his pride.

Up to then we had eaten only in Chinese restaurants. Although my
brother and I were becoming fond of hamburgers, my parents didn't care
much for Western food, other than chow mein.®

5. chow mein (Chinese-American dish of vegetables and meat served over fried noodles.)
But this was a special occasion, and Father asked his coworkers to recommend a really elegant restaurant. So there we were at the Lakeview, stumbling after the headwaiter in the murky dining room.

At our table were handed our menus, and they were so big that to read mine I almost had to stand up again. But why bother? It was mostly in French, anyway.

Father, being an engineer, was always systematic. He took out a pocket French dictionary. "They told me that most of the items would be in French, so I came prepared," He even had a pocket flashlight, the size of a marking pen. While Mother held the flashlight over the menu, he looked up the items that were in French.

"Plat en croûte," he muttered. "Let's see . . . plat is paste . . . croûte is crust . . . hmm . . . a paste in crust."

The waiter stood looking patient. I squirmed and died at least fifty times.

At long last Father gave up. "Why don't we just order four complete dinners at random?" he suggested.

"Isn't that risky?" asked Mother. "The French eat some rather peculiar things, I've heard."

"A Chinese can eat anything a Frenchman can eat," Father declared.

The soup arrived in a plate. How do you get soup up from a plate? I glanced at the other diners, but the ones at the nearby tables were not on their soup course, while the more distant ones were invisible in the darkness.

Fortunately my parents had studied books on Western etiquette before they came to America. "Tilt your plate," whispered my mother. "It's easier to spoon the soup up that way."

She was right. Tilting the plate did the trick. But the etiquette book didn't say anything about what you did after the soup reached your lips. As any respectable Chinese knows, the correct way to eat your soup is to slurp. This helps to cool the liquid and prevent you from burning your lips. It also shows your appreciation.

We showed our appreciation. Shloop, went my father. Shloop, went my mother. Shloop, shloop, went my brother, who was the hungriest.

The lady harpist stopped playing to take a rest. And in the silence, our family's consumption of soup suddenly seemed unnaturally loud. You know how it sounds on a rocky beach when the tide goes out and the water drains from all those little pools? They go shloop, shloop, shloop. That was the Lin family eating soup.

At the next table a waiter was pouring wine. When a large shloop reached him, he froze. The bottle continued to pour, and red wine flooded the tabletop and into the lap of a customer. Even the customer didn't notice anything at first, being also hypnotized by the shloop, shloop, shloop.

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etiquette (e-tik' ə-tē') n. the practice of social manners

consumption (kon-sum' shan) n. the act of taking in, eating, or drinking consume v.
It was too much. "I need to go to the toilet," I mumbled, jumping to my feet. A waiter, sensing my urgency, quickly directed me to the ladies' room.

I splashed cold water on my burning face, and as I dried myself with a paper towel, I stared into the mirror. In this perfumed ladies' room, with its pink-and-silver wallpaper and marbled sinks, I looked completely out of place. What was I doing here? What was our family doing in the Lakeview Restaurant? In America?

The door to the ladies' room opened. A woman came in and glanced curiously at me. I retreated into one of the toilet cubicles and latched the door.

Time passed—maybe half an hour, maybe an hour. Then I heard the door open again, and my mother's voice. "Are you in there? You're not sick, are you?"

There was real concern in her voice. A girl can't leave her family just because they slurp their soup. Besides, the toilet cubicle had a few drawbacks as a permanent residence. "I'm all right," I said, undoing the latch.

Mother didn't tell me how the rest of the dinner went, and I didn't want to know. In the weeks following, I managed to push the whole thing into the back of my mind, where it jumped out at me only a few times a day. Even now, I turn hot all over when I think of the Lakeview Restaurant.
But by the time we had been in this country for three months, our family was definitely making progress toward becoming Americanized. I remember my parents' first PTA meeting. Father wore a neat suit and tie, and Mother put on her first pair of high heels. She stumbled only once. They met my homeroom teacher and beamed as she told them that I would make honor roll soon at the rate I was going. Of course Chinese etiquette forced Father to say that I was a very stupid girl and Mother to protest that the teacher was showing favoritism toward me. But I could tell they were both very proud.

The day came when my parents announced that they wanted to give a dinner party. We had invited Chinese friends to eat with us before, but this dinner was going to be different. In addition to a Chinese-American family, we were going to invite the Gleasons.

"Gee, I can hardly wait to have dinner at your house," Meg said to me. "I just love Chinese food."

That was a relief. Mother was a good cook, but I wasn't sure if people who ate sour cream would also eat chicken gizzards stewed in soy sauce.

Mother decided not to take a chance with chicken gizzards. Since we had Western guests, she set the table with large dinner plates, which we never used in Chinese meals. In fact we didn't use individual plates at all, but picked up food from the platters in the middle of the table and brought it directly to our rice bowls. Following the practice of Chinese-American restaurants, Mother also placed large serving spoons on the platters.

The dinner started well. Mrs. Gleason exclaimed at the beautifully arranged dishes of food: the colorful candied fruit in the sweet-and-sour pork dish, the noodle-skin shreds of chicken meat stir-fried with tiny peas, and the glistening pink prawns in a ginger sauce.

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7. gizzards: A gizzard is the muscular part of a bird's stomach that helps with digestion.
8. prawns: Spiny or large shelled, similar to shrimp.
At first I was too busy enjoying my food to notice how the guests were doing. But soon I remembered my duties. Sometimes guests were too polite to help themselves and you had to serve them with more food.

I glanced at Meg, to see if she needed more food, and my eyes nearly popped out at the sight of her plate. It was piled with food: the sweet-and-sour meat pushed right against the chicken shreds, and the chicken sauce ran into the prawns. She had been taking food from a second dish before she finished eating her helping from the first!

Horrified, I turned to look at Mrs. Gleason. She was dumping rice out of her bowl and putting it on her dinner plate. Then she ladled prawns and gravy on top of the rice and mixed everything together, the way you mix sand, gravel, and cement to make concrete.

I couldn't bear to look any longer, and I turned to Mr. Gleason. He was chasing a pea around his plate. Several times he got it to the edge, but when he tried to pick it up with his chopsticks, it rolled back toward the center of the plate again. Finally he put down his chopsticks and picked up the pea with his fingers. He really did! A grown man!

All of us, our family and the Chinese guests, stopped eating to watch the activities of the Gleasons. I wanted to giggle. Then I caught my mother's eyes on me. She frowned and shook her head slightly, and I understood the message: the Gleasons were not used to Chinese ways, and they were just coping the best they could. For some reason I thought of celery strings.

When the main courses were finished, Mother brought out a platter of fruit. "I hope you weren't expecting a sweet dessert," she said. "Since the Chinese don't eat dessert, I didn't think to prepare any."

"Oh, I couldn't possibly eat dessert!" cried Mrs. Gleason. "I'm simply stuffed!"

Meg had different ideas. When the table was cleared, she announced that she and I were going for a walk. "I don't know about you, but I feel like dessert," she told me, when we were outside. "Come on, there's a Dairy Queen down the street. I could use a big chocolate milkshake!"

Although I didn't really want anything more to eat, I insisted on paying for the milkshakes. After all, I was still hostess.

Meg got her large chocolate milkshake and I had a small one. Even so, she was finishing hers while I was only half done. Toward the end she pulled hard on her straw and went shoop, shoop.

"Do you always slurp when you eat a milkshake?" I asked, before I could stop myself.

Meg grinned. "Sure. All Americans slurp."

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**TONE AND IMAGERY**

What does the tone and imagery in lines 290–295 tell you about how the narrator feels after her parents' dinner party?
Appendix E

*All American Slurp* Read Aloud Process
Read Aloud Process

*The All American Slurp* by Lensey Namioka

Choose a focus area for reading the text. The focus of this story is tone and imagery.

There are many questions to stop and talk about with the students.

1. "The title of this story is *The All American Slurp* by Lensey Namioka".
2. "It is about a family that moves from China and they are invited to eat dinner at another family's home. They are not used to American culture."
3. "When we read the story, we are going to be focusing on tone and imagery. Tone is the narrator's attitude towards an event. Imagery are words and phrases that appeal to one or more of our senses, to help you imagine and put pictures in your mind of the people and events."
4. Begin reading the text with expression.
5. Read question A, "What words and images help create a humorous tone towards the subject of the story?" Ask the students, "what does a humorous tone mean (it means that something is funny)". "Who can tell us what words help create a humorous tone?" Call on someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer if correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer if correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, "packed ourselves into a sofa", "sat stiffly in a row".
6. Continue to read with expression.
7. Read question B. "How do these words (*crunch* and *z-z-zip*) add humor to the story? Which senses do these images of eating celery appeal to?" Call on
someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer if correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer if correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, “the words crunch and z-z-zip add humor because they are eating celery for the first time and it is very loud and dramatic. These words appeal to the sense of hearing.”

8. Continue to read with expression.

9. Read questions C. “In line 55, what picture does the description of the family beating a retreat back to the sofa as if chased by enemy soldiers create in your mind?” Call on someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer if correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer if correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, “It suggests that the Lins ran back to the sofa quickly, it suggests that the Lins were running as if their safety depended on it.”

10. Continue to read with expression.

11. Read question D. “The tone of lines 65-67 is different from the tone the author used to describe the dinner party. Choose one word to describe the tone of this paragraph.” Call on someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer if correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer if correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, “relaxed and calm, the Lins are more comfortable with the Gleason’s.”

12. Continue to read with expression.
13. Read question E. “Try to visualize the narrator’s image of a ‘normal American family’. Which of the narrator’s descriptions stand out to you the most?” Call on someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer it correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer it correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, “jeans, baseball, driving, furniture, dart board, jigsaw puzzle.”

14. Continue to read with expression.

15. Read question F. “The narrator says the menu was so big ‘I almost had to stand up’ to read it. Find two more examples that put an image into your head.” Call on someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer it correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer it correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, “how it sounds on a rocky beach, wine flooded the table top, waiter being hypnotized.”

16. Continue to read with expression.

17. Read question G. “What phrases in this paragraph include sensory language and which of the five senses do each phrase appeal to?” Call on someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer it correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer it correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, “cold water (touch), burning face (touch), stared into the mirror (sight), perfumed ladies room (smell).”

18. Continue to read with expression.
19. Read question H. "Many events embarrass the narrator during the dinner at Lakeview Restaurant. What details made you visualize something in your mind?"

Call on someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, "using a flashlight and dictionary for the menu" and "family slurps soup."

20. Continue to read with expression.

21. Read question I. "Is it the Gleasons’ actions, the narrator’s responses, or both that add humor to the story?" Call on someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, "the Gleasons’ actions add humor by the way Mrs. Gleason mixed her food together, the narrator’s responses added humor by her comments about the food on Meg’s plate."

22. Continue to read with expression.

23. Read question J. "What does the tone and imagery in lines 290-295 tell you about how the narrator feels after her parents’ dinner party?" Call on someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, "the imagery is the Lins slurping soup. The tone is relaxed because the narrator is still
surprised by American customs, but happy to find that some customs are
shared."

24. Continue to read with expression.

25. To wrap up this read aloud, ask the students, "What do you think the narrator has
learned about adapting to a new culture?" Possible answer is, "The narrator has
learned how difficult it is to adjust to new customs and etiquette." Then, review
with the students what tone and imagery are. Tone is the narrator's attitude
towards an event. Imagery are words and phrases that appeal to one or more of
our senses, to help you imagine and put pictures in your mind of the people and
events.
Appendix F
History and Culture
History and Culture

If YOU lived there...

You belong to one of the native Indian peoples in southern Mexico in the early 1500s. Years ago, the Aztec rulers went to war against your people. They took many captives. They have always treated you cruelly. Now some strangers have come from across the sea. They want your people to help them conquer the Aztecs.

Will you help the strangers fight the Aztecs? Why or why not?

BUILDING BACKGROUND

Mexico was home to several of the earliest advanced cultures in the Americas. Early farmers there developed crops that became staples in much of North America. Mexico also has valuable minerals, which drew Spanish conquerors and colonists. Spanish culture blended with native Mexican cultures.

Early Cultures

People first came to Mexico many thousands of years ago. As early as 5,000 years ago, they were growing beans, peppers, and squash. They also domesticated an early form of corn. Farming allowed these people to build the first permanent settlements in the Americas.

Early Cultures of Mexico

Olme

- The Olmec made sculptures of giant stone heads.
- The heads may have represented rulers or gods.
Olmec
By about 1500 BC the Olmec people in Mexico were living in small villages. The Olmec lived on the humid southern coast of the Gulf of Mexico, where they built temples and giant statues. They also traded carved stones like jade and obsidian with other cultures in eastern Mexico.

Maya
A few hundred years later, the Maya built on the achievements of the Olmec. Between about AD 250 and 900, the Maya built large cities in Mexico and Central America. In those cities they built stone temples to worship their gods. They studied the stars and developed a detailed calendar. They also kept written records that scholars still study today to learn about Maya history. However, scholars do not fully understand why Maya civilization suddenly collapsed sometime after 900.

Aztec
After the decline of the Maya civilization, people called the Aztecs moved to central Mexico from the north. In 1325 they built their capital on an island in a lake. Known as Tenochtitlán (tay-nawch-teet-LAHN), this capital grew into one of the largest and most impressive cities of its time.

The Aztecs also built a large, powerful empire. An empire is a land with different territories and peoples under a single ruler.

CONNECTING TO Technology

Chinampas
The Aztecs practiced a form of raised-field farming in the swampy lake areas of central Mexico. They called these raised fields chinampas. To make them, Aztec farmers piled earth on rafts anchored to trees in the lake. There they grew the corn, beans, and squash that most people ate.

Analyzing Why do you think the Aztecs decided to build raised fields for their crops?

The Aztecs planted trees in the lake to anchor the rafts.

Reading Check Summarizing What were some achievements of Mexico’s early cultures?

- The Maya had a trade network between cities.
- This Maya pyramid stands in Uxmal.
- The Aztecs built the first empire in the Americas.
- Aztec artisans made art like this turquoise mask.
Colonial Mexico and Independence

In spite of its great size and power, the Aztec Empire did not last long after the first Europeans landed in Mexico. In 1519 Hernán Cortés, a Spanish soldier, arrived in Mexico with about 600 men. These conquistadors (kahn-KESS-tuh-dawrz), or conquerors, gained allies from other tribes in the region. They also had guns and horses, which the Aztecs had never seen before. The new weapons terrified the Aztecs and gave the Spanish an advantage.

The Spanish also unknowingly brought European diseases such as smallpox. The Aztecs had no resistance to these diseases, so many of them died. Greatly weakened by disease, the Aztecs were defeated. In 1521 Cortés claimed the land for Spain.

Colonial Times

After the conquest, Spanish and American Indian peoples and cultures mixed. This mixing formed a new Mexican identity. Spaniards called people of mixed European and Indian ancestry mestizos (me-STEE-zohs). When Africans were brought to America as slaves, they added to this mix of peoples. The Spaniards called people of mixed European and African ancestry mulattoes (muh-LAH-tohs). Africans and American Indians also intermarried.

Life in colonial Mexico was greatly influenced by the Roman Catholic Church. Large areas of northern Mexico were left to the church to explore and to rule. Church outposts known as missions were scattered throughout the area. Priests at the missions learned native languages and taught the Indians Spanish. They also worked to convert the American Indians to Catholicism.

In addition to spreading Christianity, the Spaniards wanted to find gold and silver in Mexico. American Indians and enslaved Africans did most of the hard physical labor in the mines. As a result, many died from disease and overwork.

Like mining, agriculture became an important part of the colonial economy. After the conquest, the Spanish monarch granted haciendas (hah-see-EN-duhs), or huge expanses of farm or ranch land, to some favored people of Spanish ancestry. Peasants, usually Indians, lived and worked on these haciendas. The haciendas made their owners very wealthy.

Hidalgo Calls for Independence

Miguel Hidalgo (center, in black) calls for Independence from Spain in 1810. The famous Mexican painter Juan O'Gorman painted this image.

Analyzing Visuals What kinds of people joined Hidalgo in his revolt?
Independence
Spain ruled Mexico for almost 300 years before the people of Mexico demanded independence. The revolt against Spanish rule was led by a Catholic priest named Miguel Hidalgo. In 1810, he gave a famous speech calling for the common people to rise up against the Spanish. Hidalgo was killed in 1811, but fighting continued until Mexico won its independence in 1821.

Later Struggles
Fifteen years after Mexico gained its independence, a large area, Texas, broke away. Eventually, Texas joined the United States. As a result, Mexico and the United States fought over Texas and the location of their shared border. This conflict led to the Mexican-American War, in which Mexico lost nearly half its territory to the United States.

In the mid-1800s, Mexico faced other challenges. During this time, the popular president Benito Juárez helped Mexico survive a French invasion. He also made reforms that reduced the privileges of the church and the army.

In spite of these reforms, in the early 1900s the president helped the hacienda owners take land from peasants. Also, foreign companies owned huge amounts of land in Mexico and, in turn, influenced Mexican politics. Many Mexicans thought the president gave these large landowners too many privileges.

As a result, the Mexican Revolution broke out in 1910. The fighting lasted 10 years. One major result of the Mexican Revolution was land reform. The newly formed government took land from the large landowners and gave it back to the peasant villages.

Reading Check: Sequencing What events occurred after Mexico gained independence?

Biography
Benito Juárez (1806–1872)
Benito Juárez was Mexico's first president of Indian heritage. A wise and passionate leader, Juárez stood up for the rights of all Mexicans. As the minister of justice, he got rid of special courts for members of the church and the military. As president, he passed reforms that laid the foundation for a democratic government. Today he is considered a national hero in Mexico.

Drawing Conclusions: How may Juárez’s heritage have affected his efforts for Mexico's citizens?

Culture
Mexico’s history has influenced its culture. For example, one major influence from history is language. Most Mexicans speak Spanish because of the Spanish influence in colonial times. Another influence from Spain is religion. About 90 percent of all Mexicans are Roman Catholic.

However, Mexico’s culture also reflects its American Indian heritage. For example, many people still speak American Indian languages. In Mexico, a person’s language is tied to his or her ethnic group. Speaking an American Indian language identifies a person as Indian.

Mexicans also have some unique cultural practices that combine elements of Spanish influence with the influence of Mexican Indians. An example of this combining can be seen in a holiday called Day of the Dead. This holiday is a day to remember and honor dead ancestors.
Focus on Culture

Day of the Dead

Everyone is sad when a loved one dies. But during Day of the Dead, Mexicans celebrate death as part of life. This attitude comes from the Mexican Indian belief that the souls of the dead return every year to visit their living relatives. To prepare for this visit, Mexican families gather in graveyards. They clean up around their loved one's grave and decorate it with flowers and candles. They also set out food and drink for the celebration. Favorite foods often include sugar candy skulls, chocolate coffins, and sweet breads shaped like bones.

Mexicans celebrate Day of the Dead on November 1 and 2. These dates are similar to the dates that the Catholic Church honors the dead with All Souls' Day. The holiday also reflects native customs and beliefs about hopes of life after death.

Reading Check Categorizing What aspects of Mexican culture show the influence of Spanish rule?

Summary and Preview

Mexico's early cultures formed great civilizations, but after the conquest of the Aztec Empire, power in Mexico shifted to Spain. Spain ruled Mexico for nearly 300 years before Mexico gained independence. Mexico's history and its mix of Indian and Spanish backgrounds have influenced the country's culture. In the next section you will learn about life in Mexico today.

Section 2 Assessment

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and Places
1. a. Recall Where in Mexico did the Olmec live?
   b. Explain How did the Aztecs build and rule their empire?
   c. Elaborate Why do you think scholars are not sure what caused the end of Maya civilization?
2. a. Identify Who began the revolt that led to Mexico's independence?
   b. Explain What was Mexico like in colonial times?
   c. Predict How may history have been different if the Aztecs had defeated the Spanish?
3. a. Identify What Mexican holiday honors dead ancestors?
   b. Summarize How did Mexico's colonial past shape its culture?

Critical Thinking
4. Sequencing Draw a diagram like the one below. Then, using your notes, list the major events in Mexico's history in the order they happened.

   □ Mexico gains independence

   □ Mexico gains independence

5. Learning about History and Culture Mexico's history is full of fascinating stories. In your notebook, jot down ideas about people and stories from Mexico's history.
Appendix G
History and Culture Read Aloud Process
Read Aloud Process

History and Culture

1. Begin by saying, "The title of section two is History and Culture. We will be learning about"

2. After introducing the text, instruct the students to look in the left margin of page 42. There are main ideas and a big idea, and four vocabulary words that are stated. Call on four different students. One to read each of the three main ideas, the big idea, and the four vocabulary words.

3. Begin reading the text out loud. After the first paragraph, there are two questions. Will you help the strangers fight the Aztecs? Why or why not? Explain to the students that through reading the text, they will be able to answer those two questions.

4. Continue reading out loud until reaching the word "empire" on page 43. Empire is defined right there, a land with different territories and peoples under a single ruler. Go over that definition with the students.

5. Continue reading the next three sentences until reaching the first reading check. The reading check says, "What were some achievements of Mexico’s early cultures?" Call on a student, or a few, to answer this question. Olmec people built temples and giant statues, the Maya built large cities in Mexico and Central America with stone temples to worship gods, the Maya built a calendar from studying the stars and kept written records for people to understand Maya history, the Aztec built a large and powerful empire by defeating neighboring tribes. If no one is able to answer the question, then walk through each section;
Olmec, Maya, and Aztec with the students and have them help decide which of the things each did that are achievements.

6. Continue reading out loud until reaching the word, “mestizos”. The word is defined right there in the text, the term the Spaniards called people of mixed European and Indian ancestry. Review the definition with the students.

7. Continue reading out loud until reaching the word, “missions”. The word is defined right there in the text, church outposts. Review the definition with the students.

8. Continue reading out loud until reaching the word, “haciendas”. Since this is a tough word to pronounce, say it out loud and have the students repeat it. The word is defined in the text, so review the definition with the students; huge expanses of farm or rich land.

9. Continue reading out loud until reaching the sequencing reading check at the bottom of the first column on page 45. The reading check says, “What events occurred after Mexico gained independence?” Call on a student, or a few, to answer this question. The answer is; after Mexico gained its independence, a large area, now Texas, broke away. The United States and Mexico fought over Texas; the Mexican-American War. In the mid 1800’s president Benito Juarez helped Mexico withstand a French invasion. In 1910, the Mexican Revolution broke out. If no one is able to answer the reading check, or parts of it, begin with the part when Mexico gained its independence under the section titled “Later Struggles”. Read and stop at each event that happened to discuss.
10. Continue reading out loud until reaching the categorizing reading check at the end of the text on page 46. Call on a student, or a few, to answer this question. The reading check says, "What aspects of Mexican culture show the influence of Spanish rule." The answer is the language (Spanish), religion (Roman Catholic), and celebrating Day of the Dead. If no one is able to answer this question, then begin reading under the section titled, "Culture". Stop at each tradition that Mexico now has that has come from Spanish rule.

11. To wrap up the reading, ask the students to summarize with one other partner that is sitting near them (behind, in front, next to). They can write their summary on a piece of paper. When everyone is done with their summary, ask groups that would like to share with the whole group to raise their hand.
Appendix H
Interactive Read Aloud PowerPoint Presentation
INTERACTIVE READ ALOUDS

Middle School Professional Development

WHAT ARE INTERACTIVE READ ALOUDS?

* Before, during, and after reading strategies adults use when reading to children

* Interactive read alouds can be used with any text!
**WHY USE INTERACTIVE READ ALouds?**

- Help students be engaged and interested
- Model and scaffold comprehension strategies
- Point out text features
- Promote students' language use
- They encourage students to
  - Be active participants
  - Answer questions
  - Ask questions
  - Make comments
  - Make connections
  - Reflect on text/content learned

**BEFORE READING**

- Open up conversation
- Identify author, title, setting, characters, and background
- Activate prior knowledge
- Picture walk (if there are pictures)
- Have conversations about text
- Make predictions
- Introduce anticipation guides, story maps, note taking strategies
DURING READING

• On-going interaction
• Response and dialogue
• Help students notice aspects of narrative/informational texts
• Sharing
• Questions
• Discussion
• Story maps/graphic organizers

DURING READING, CONTINUED

• Vocabulary instruction—when choosing vocabulary words consider the following criterion
  • Is understanding the word important to understanding the selection in which it appears?
  • Are students able to use context or structural analysis skills to discover the word’s meaning?
  • Can working with this word be useful in furthering students’ context, structural-analysis, or dictionary skills?
  • How useful is this word outside the reading selection currently being taught?
AFTER READING

- Answer questions
- Reflect on text/learning
- Respond and revisit text
- Retell story
- Summarize story
- Share understanding
- Result of predictions
- Story maps
Appendix I
Life on Earth 150 Million Years Ago
Scientists called geologists and paleontologists study the history of the Earth. Geologists focus their studies on rocks and how they formed. Paleontologists are interested in what life was like millions of years ago. These scientists can't travel back in time, so they look for evidence in rocks. From the evidence they find, they build models showing how plants and animals lived and what the world looked like.

**DIGGING THROUGH THE LAYERS**

Over billions of years, the surface of the Earth has changed dramatically. Areas once covered by water are now dry. Continents have shifted. Huge waves of ice covered the land, then melted.

Through all these changes, layers of rocks have built up on the Earth. Some rocks were formed by volcanic lava turning solid. Other rocks were formed by tiny particles that settled in the Earth's oceans. These rocks are called sedimentary rocks. By digging through layers of sedimentary rocks, geologists have determined the age of the Earth and what creatures have lived on it.
Many layers of sedimentary rocks have formed over time. Changes in the Earth, such as the erosion of land by rivers, can expose deep layers. Once a layer is exposed, scientists can dig through it to see what information it holds about the past.

Given two layers of rock, the bottom one is usually older than the top one. Scientists date a layer by studying the minerals in it. Substances in the minerals give off radiation. The radioactive materials change form. This change takes place over a specific amount of time that scientists can measure. Using a system called radiometric dating, scientists measure the amount of change of the radioactive material in the rock to determine its age.

Over time, geologists have created a model for the history of the Earth. The history is divided into distinct blocks of time called eras. The oldest era, called the Precambrian or Archaeozoic, dates back billions of years. Next was the Paleozoic, from about 570 million to 245 million years ago. The Mesozoic Era was from about 245 million years ago to 65 million years ago. The current era is the Cenozoic. Within each era, geologists also identify more specific periods based on the different layers of rock they have found.
Scientists also date the layers of rock based on fossils that have been found in them. Fossils are the remains of living things, including plants. Some fossils are actual parts of an animal, such as bones or teeth. Other fossils are entire animals that were trapped in sand and stone. The shapes of the animals are preserved in the rock.

Certain fossils are only found in certain layers of rock dating from the same period. If paleontologists find a fossil similar to one that already exists, they know the age of that fossil’s rock layer is the same as the first fossil’s.

The rocks that formed about 150 million years ago come from a period called the Jurassic. Fossils from this era include bones from animals known as dinosaurs. Dinosaurs of the Jurassic Period include stegosaurus, allosaurus, and the longest dinosaur of all, seismosaurus.

Dinosaurs weren’t the only creatures at this time. Insects, amphibians, and mammals also roamed the Earth. They left fossils, as well. But with their great size and numbers, dinosaurs truly ruled the world.
A dinosaur reconstruction amazes visitors at the Museum of Natural History in New York City.

BUILDING A BETTER DINOSAUR

Most dinosaur fossils date from the Mesozoic Era, from 65 million to 225 million years ago. Fossils help scientists determine what dinosaurs looked like and how they lived. For example, a dinosaur's teeth reveal whether it ate meat or plants. The size of a limb can tell if the dinosaur walked on four legs or two.

When paleontologists find a complete skeleton, they can assemble it to show what a dinosaur looked like. This kind of model is called a reconstruction. The bones in a reconstruction might come from more than one skeleton of the same type of dinosaur. Sometimes, however, the paleontologists don't have a complete skeleton. They must build a full model of the dinosaur's body based on the bones they do have. Many museums display dinosaur reconstructions, but often they are not the real bones. They are copies of the original model.

Fascinating Fossils

Paleontologists have found the remains of many interesting things. The oldest known fossils date back about 3.5 billion years. They were created by simple, one-celled bacteria. A fossil dating back almost 400 million years features a spider's web. It is the oldest web ever found. Fossilized dinosaur eggs have contained dinosaur fetuses. Unborn babies that were still developing in the shell. Some of these eggs are about 150 million years old.
The first scientist to find a dinosaur fossil and try to create a model was a British doctor named Gideon Mantell (1790-1852). In 1822, he found some dinosaur teeth. Because they looked like iguana teeth, Mantell called the creature they came from an iguanodon. After he found more iguanodon bones, Mantell drew a picture of what he thought an entire iguanodon skeleton would look like.

Over the next few decades, more fossils were discovered. A British paleontologist named Richard Owen (1804-1892) created a name for the ancient creatures that once owned those bones. They were dinosaurs, Greek for “terrible lizards.” The bones being uncovered were similar to the bones of lizards living today.

Based on the few fossils he knew of, Owen had an idea of what dinosaurs looked like when they lived. For an exhibition in 1854, he worked with craftsmen to build life-sized models of several dinosaurs. These models were not just skeletons. They looked like living creatures, using Owen’s best guesses from the evidence he had. Paleontologists call this kind of model a restoration. Today some restorations of dinosaurs use electronics to create moving models.

**Pieces of a Puzzle**

Paleontologists still piece together models of dinosaurs based on just a few fossils. In 1985, paleontologists began digging bones out of rocks in
New Mexico. They compared the bones to existing dinosaur bones. When the new bones did not match, the scientists came to an exciting conclusion. They had discovered a new type of dinosaur.

The first bones discovered were from the dinosaur's tail. They seemed to come from a large creature. Again, after comparing these bones to existing bones, the paleontologists decided this dinosaur was longer than any other known dinosaur. Judging from the bones, the creature was up to 45 meters (150 feet) long. The scientists named this huge creature *seismosaurus*, or "earth shaker."

The *seismosaurus* found in New Mexico did not leave behind a complete skeleton. The paleontologists studying it have not been able to reconstruct a model of the skeleton. But they have been able to draw a model. They used their knowledge of similar dinosaurs to make educated guesses about the sizes and shapes of the missing bones.

The Great Bone Rush

Two of the greatest paleontologists of the 19th century were O.C. Marsh (1831–1899) and Edward Drinker Cope (1840–1897). A dinosaur model led to a feud between the two men. This feud pushed the men into a contest to see who could find the most new dinosaurs. Today scientists call this battle the "Great Bone Rush."

In 1870, Marsh saw a dinosaur skeleton Cope had assembled. Marsh pointed out that the model was wrong. The head was on the wrong end. Cope, who had just published a drawing of his model, was horrified with his error. He tried to buy up all the copies of the magazine with this drawing. Marsh, however, kept his copy, and the bitter dispute between the two scientists was on. They spent years trying to find bones and prove who was the better paleontologist.

Neither Cope nor Marsh really won the Great Bone Rush. It's not clear who found the most bones. But between them, the two men described 130 of the 287 types of dinosaurs known at the time.

Some bones are missing from this dinosaur skeleton. Scientists must use their judgment and existing information to fill in the gaps.
Appendix J

Life on Earth 150 Million Years Ago Read Aloud Process
Read Aloud Process

Science Text

Life on Earth 150 Million Years Ago

1. Begin by saying, “The title of investigation one is Life on Earth 150 Million Years Ago. We will be learning about how geologists and paleontologists study rocks to find out what life was like millions of years ago on Earth.”

2. After introducing the text, begin reading the text out loud. Immediately, the terms “geologists” and “paleontologists” are defined. Review the meanings of the terms with the students. “What are geologists?” Geologists study rocks and how they were formed. “What are paleontologists?” Paleontologists study the history of the Earth.

3. Continue to read out loud. Stop at the words “sedimentary rocks”. This term is not defined right there in the text, so ask the students, “What do you think sedimentary rocks are”? Call on a student with their hand up. If they do not get it correct, call on one more student. If they do not get it correct, ask all of the students to turn to the index in the back of the book. Sedimentary rocks are rocks that are formed by sediment over time.

4. Continue to read out loud. On page 12, stop at the word “radiation”. This term is not defined right there in the text, so ask the students, “What do you think radiation is”? Call on a student with their hand up. If they do not get it correct, call on one more student. If they do not get it correct, ask all of the students to turn to the index in the back of the book. Radiation is the emission of energy.
5. Continue to read the next three sentences until reaching the words “radiometric
dating”. This term is not defined right there in the text, so ask the students,
“What do you think radiation is”? Call on a student with their hand up. If they do
not get it correct, call on one more student. If they do not get it correct, ask all of
the students to turn to the index in the back of the book. Radiometric dating is
the determination of the date when materials were formed by analyzing the
decay of radioactive isotopes.

6. Continue to read the next three sentences until reaching the terms,
“Precambrian, Archaeozoic, Paleozoic, Mesozoic, and Cenozoic. Have the
students look at the time column just to the right of the text so they can visualize
the eras and the order that they came in.

7. Continue to read until reaching the word “fossils” on page 13. Fossils is defined
right there in the text, remains of living things, including plants. Review that
definition with the students.

8. Continue to read until reaching the three types of dinosaurs in the Jurassic
period; stegosaurus, allosaurus, and seismosaurus. Review that those are the
three types of dinosaurs from the Jurassic period.

9. Continue to read the rest of the fossil section until reaching the word
reconstruction on page 14. Reconstruction means that when paleontologists find
a complete skeleton, they can assemble it to show what the dinosaur looked like.
Review this with the students so they understand what the paleontologists are
able to do.
10. Continue to read until reaching the word “restoration” on page 15. Review what the term restoration means with the students; a life-size model of a creature that is more than just the skeleton.

11. Continue to read the text until the end.

12. At the end of the text, call on students to review the main ideas about what was read to wrap up. The main ideas are; geologists study rocks and how they were formed, paleontologists study the history of the Earth, the history of the earth is divided into four blocks of time (Precambrian Era, Paleozoic Era, Mesozoic Era, and Cenozoic Era), scientists can date the layers of rocks based on the fossils that have been found in them, scientists can build skeletons and models of creatures from the fossils that are found.
Appendix K
Read Aloud Instructions
Instructions for Planning Read Alouds

- When planning a read aloud, make sure that you have read the text in its entirety before planning.
- Use texts that are a part of and support your normal curriculum.

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<th>Instruction</th>
<th>Example (All American Slurp)</th>
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<td>Begin with the introduction. How are you going to introduce the text to the students? Give an overview and a purpose for reading.</td>
<td>&quot;The title of this story is <em>The All American Slurp</em> by Lensey Namioka*. &quot;It is about a family that moves from China and they are invited to eat dinner at another family's home. They are not used to American culture.&quot; &quot;When we read the story, we are going to be focusing on tone and imagery. Tone is the narrator's attitude towards an event. Imagery are words and phrases that appeal to one or more of our senses, to help you imagine and put pictures in your mind of the people and events.&quot;</td>
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<td>Decide how you are going to discuss the text with the students. Are you going to talk about big ideas or events presented? Are there questions or vocabulary for you to stop and discuss? In the planning phase,</td>
<td>Begin reading the text with expression. Read question A, &quot;What words and images help create a humorous tone towards the subject of the story?&quot; Ask the students, &quot;what does a humorous tone mean (it means that something is funny)&quot;. &quot;Who can tell us what words help</td>
</tr>
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<td>decide every place in the text you are going to stop to discuss.</td>
<td>create a humorous tone?” Call on someone with their hand up to answer the question. If they answer it correctly, tell them so and move on. If they do not answer it correctly, call on someone else with their hand up until someone answers it correctly. Possible answers are, “packed ourselves into a sofa”, “sat stiffly in a row”.</td>
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<td>Decide how you are going to wrap up the read aloud. Are you going to ask the students questions? Are you going to have the students summarize? Are you going to review key concepts or vocabulary? Are there summarizing questions included in the text that can be used as a wrap up? Are you going to complete the wrap up orally or written?</td>
<td>To wrap up this read aloud, ask the students, “What do you think the narrator has learned about adapting to a new culture?” Possible answer is, “The narrator has learned how difficult it is to adjust to new customs and etiquette.” Then, review with the students what tone and imagery are. Tone is the narrator’s attitude towards an event. Imagery are words and phrases that appeal to one or more of our senses, to help you imagine and put pictures in your mind of the people and events.</td>
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