



Cambridge English
Teacher

Reading Aloud: Why and How?

Teacher Training Plan

Why reading aloud?

1. EFL coursebooks don't often include activities with a focus on reading aloud. Why might this be?
2. Do you include much work on reading aloud in your own teaching? Why? / Why not?
3. In what ways could work on reading aloud be of benefit to learners?

Why reading aloud?

- Coursebooks tend to focus on comprehension of reading texts and development of sub-skills like skimming, scanning, etc.
- It's probably true to say that most reading in real life happens silently, so reading aloud can seem artificial or childish.
- Reading aloud is regarded as something distinct from 'real' reading, e.g. it's arguably more about pronunciation than anything else.
- Practically speaking, it can be difficult to have a whole group of learners reading aloud at once.

Stage aims

- To clarify/check the meaning of ten vocabulary items for different kinds of TV programme.
- To provide personalised practice of the vocabulary in 1.
- To engage the students with the reading and listening to come, to help them understand the context.
- To practice reading and listening for specific information.

Example lesson: Procedure

- a) The students re-read the story quietly.
- b) In groups of five, the students read the story aloud with expression to the rest of the class.
- c) The students listen to and read the photo story on page 59 again. As they listen and read the story, they underline the stressed words. If necessary, they listen again. To check, the students take turns reading aloud the stressed words in the text.
- d) The students read the questions in activity 4 on page 58. The teacher checks that the students understand them. The students read and listen to the photo story on page 59, and write their answers to the questions in activity 4. The students check their answers in pairs and as a whole class.
- e) The students practice reading aloud along with the recording.
- f) The students look at the photos on page 59. Then they work in pairs to discuss the answers to the questions in activity 3 on page 58. The teacher then asks individual students to answer the questions.
- g) As there are five characters in the story, the students work in groups of five, preparing for a 'readers theatre' performance in front of the whole class. The students continue to practise until they are able to read with expression and fluently (without too many pauses or hesitations).
- h) The students listen to and read the photo story on page 59 again. As they listen to and read the story, they mark pauses using forward slashes on their books. To check, the teacher plays the story again and asks the students to raise their hand whenever there is a pause. The students then listen to and read a copy of the story with slashes showing the pauses.
- i) The students read with a partner. Each partner takes a turn reading to the other.

Example lesson: Procedure

Stage 1	f) The students look at the photos on page 59. Then they work in pairs to discuss the answers to the questions in activity 3 on page 58. The teacher then asks individual students to answer the questions.
Stage 2	d) The students read the questions in activity 4 on page 58. The teacher checks that the students understand them. The students read and listen to the photo story on page 59, and write their answers to the questions in activity 4. The students check their answers in pairs and as a whole class.
Stage 3	h) The students listen to and read the photo story on page 59 again. As they listen to and read the story, they mark pauses using forward slashes on their books. To check, the teacher plays the story again and asks the students to raise their hand whenever there is a pause. The students then listen to and read a copy of the story with slashes showing the pauses.

Example lesson: Procedure

Stage 4	c) The students listen to and read the photo story on page 59 again. As they listen and read the story, they underline the stressed words. If necessary, they listen again. To check, the students take turns reading aloud the stressed words in the text.
Stage 5	a) The students re-read the story quietly.
Stage 6	e) The students practice reading aloud along with the recording.
Stage 7	i) The students read with a partner. Each partner takes a turn reading to the other.
Stage 8	g) As there are five characters in the story, the students work in groups of five, preparing for a 'readers theatre' performance in front of the whole class. The students continue to practise until they are able to read with expression and fluently (without too many pauses or hesitations).
Stage 9	b) In groups of five, the students read the story aloud with expression to the rest of the class.

The 'shape' of the lesson

Stages 1–2:

- A typical reading/listening procedure, engaging the students and then read/listen with a definite purpose in mind.
- Make sure that students understand the text and practise reading/listening comprehension before doing work on reading aloud.

The 'shape' of the lesson

Stages 3–4:

- Provide students with a good example of reading aloud.
- Raise awareness and focus on relevant features of pronunciation like pausing and stress.

The 'shape' of the lesson

Stages 5–9:

- Students practise reading aloud, but are provided with progressively more difficult stages.
- Students aren't asked to read aloud 'in public' until they've had plenty of time to rehearse the text.

