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Reading out loud as a ritual

Goal

Reading out loud is one of the easiest and at the same time most effective methods of furthering the motivation for reading. In reading aloud, students can simply enjoy the stories or a book. They experience just how fascinating stories can be and that it pays off to be able to read well and fast.

1st–9th grade

15–20 minutes



Materials:
book (as continuation) or a
collection of shorter texts.

Procedure:

Each HLT unit (e.g. a weekly double lesson) begins with a sequence of reading out loud. The students sit comfortably while the instructors read from a book to the class for at least 15 minutes. The main purpose is to enjoy and to immerse themselves into a story.

Remarks:

- If a book is read aloud (not as individual short stories), it is particularly important that the ritual extend itself over a longer period of time and without interruptions, as the students might otherwise lose the story line.
- HLT classes are often simultaneously frequented by students from different classes. In order to meet the needs of a heterogeneous group, the text read aloud must be chosen so that is most widely appropriate for all age groups. Alternatives: short texts may be more appropriate for the lower, middle, and upper levels.
- During the read aloud sequence, the class must be quiet. Students may draw something, but nothing should be permitted that could make noise and distract.

Variants:

1. Students can take part in deciding on a text, based on a selection, previously prepared by the teacher. Students may, of course, also bring a text to class for reading aloud.
2. It must not always be the instructor who reads the books or stories; students may also perform this task. It is important, however, that reading aloud by students is previously practiced intensively. To that end, students should be given a week's time to practice reading at home. (See also the support for one's own reading aloud on page 38).
3. The text that is being read out loud is always recorded by tape recorder or other media (dictaphone, cell phone, computer). The created audiobook may also be checked out; copies might be lent to other classes. Variant: the older students read and record a book for younger students on a recording device. See also the teaching suggestion 10 "expressive reading out loud for others".