

Partner Think Alouds

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In a comprehension centered classroom, we get used to integrating think alouds into our read alouds, science lessons and guided reading sessions. As our students observe, they are gaining understanding of the strategies we emphasize but also developing an understanding of the way a think aloud looks and sounds.

To extend strategy use, I frequently engage students in Partner Think Alouds. At these times, I ask learners to prepare a passage for sharing with a partner. They read the passage, plan the points where they will stop to open the window into their thinking. This level of preparation is just as important for the students as it is for teachers. When think alouds are planned in advance, the strategy comes into clear focus. Talking points are targeted and explicit.

Sometimes, I assign a strategy for the think aloud. This helps learners who are just beginning to apply a strategy to stay focused and present the strategy clearly for their partner.

As learners gain control over multiple strategies, they choose the strategy they would like to share with their partner. Finally, students meet in partners to share their passages

and think alouds. The listener focuses on active listening and asks questions about the selection that was read and about the strategy.

Students have told me how much they have learned through this process. They love the partner interaction and feel that they are synthesizing their understanding of the strategy as they plan and then execute their Partner Think Alouds.



CAPTION: Partners prepare a reading selection and a think aloud for each other. They understand that they are to read and think aloud to help their partner understand the strategy they are using for comprehension.

As students gain confidence with peers in the classroom, Partner Think Alouds can be extended to cross age buddy reading time. In this setting, an older reader plans a reading and think aloud for a younger student. After the sharing of the book and the think aloud, the younger student is invited to talk about what was learned as well as how the strategy might help them as a reader.

CAPTION: Think alouds can be added to buddy reading times when cross age partners meet to read and talk about books.



CAPTION: Bilingual partners can engage in read aloud/think aloud times in the language they find most comfortable.



Planning A Think Aloud for a

Partner

Reader _____ Date _____

You have probably noticed that your teacher uses “think alouds” as a way to help you understand the thinking inside of his/her head. Think alouds are an important way to share our thinking and our strategy use.

You are going to be doing a “think aloud” for a partner. You can select the strategy you would like to emphasize. Your job will be to help your partner understand what you are thinking and how you are using the strategy to go deeper in your comprehension of the text.

1. Select a strategy you would like to use in your think aloud. Write the strategy you have selected: _____

2. Think about your strategy. What is important to share about this strategy?

What would your partner need to know to use it?

I want my partner to understand that _____

3. Look at the reading selection. Select a portion of it that you could use in a think aloud for your partner. Reread this section and think about the words you would use in a think aloud. List some important ideas/words you want to include in your think aloud _____

4. Practice your think aloud. Try to use the words/ideas you listed above.

5. Meet with your partner and share the Think Aloud you have planned.

6. Did your partner understand the strategy? How do you know? How might you find out? Was your partner able to ask you questions about the strategy or about the passage?