

## Reading Aloud

Although story time programs may target children at many different ages, reading aloud from longer works, such as short stories or chapters from novels, is most often reserved for children above the second or third grade. Several read aloud suggestions are offered in this section.

The benefits of reading aloud are many and especially when working with children for whom English is not their first language, reading aloud exposes the listener to new vocabulary. For all children, reading aloud introduces new ideas and exposes the listeners to books they might not have selected on their own.

Before reading any book aloud to a class or group, teachers and librarians should, of course, read the book to ensure that the material will be appropriate for the whole group. Tips on reading aloud for various age groups, including elementary school children and teenagers, are available from Reading is Fundamental at <http://www.rif.org/parents/readingaloud/default.msp>. Jim Trelease's Web site at <http://www.trelease-on-reading.com/> also provides tips and suggestions for good books to read aloud. A complete discussion of reading aloud can be found in Chapter 8 of Teri Lesene's book, *Making the Match*.

Portions of many books and short stories offer effective read aloud material. Some suggestions are listed below. These are listed in order of maturity, with the first selection appealing to third and fourth grade children and the last suggestion targeting a high school audience.

Mueller, Pamela Bauer. *Hello, Goodbye, I Love You*. Escobár volunteers to train, and then give up, a guide dog for the blind. The thirteenth chapter addresses some of the difficulties in training a guide dog, Diego's pride in his work, and his love for the dog, Aloha.

Johnston, Tony. *Any Small Goodness A Novel of the Barrio*. The opening chapter introduces Arturo, "Turo," who, after arriving in the United States has his name Anglicized to "Arthur." He first accepts the change, then rejects it. This section introduces a strong, proud boy who shares other stories throughout this episodic novel.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Esperanza Rising. (Esperanza Renace)*. After her father is murdered, Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their once comfortable life in Mexico and join thousands of workers trying to eke out a living during the Great Depression. One particularly suspenseful section (pages 8-22 in the hardcover edition cited in the bibliography), the night Esperanza and her mother wait for her father's return, creates a sense of drama and an interest in the book and as such provides a teaser for encouraging children to read more on their own. Whereas the previous section will have more appeal for children who prefer plot driven books, pages 23-33, which describe Esperanza's despair over her father's death, should draw in readers who favor character driven books. Both sections will require some introduction of characters, such as Esperanza's best friend Marisol as well as some background information that mentions the setting is Esperanza's birthday.

Alvarez, Julia. *Before We Were Free/Antes de ser libre*. Twelve-year-old Anita de la Torre has spent her entire life comfortably surrounded by family and friends in the Dominican Republic. Little by little, however, she learns that her family is in real danger for they are part of an underground movement attempting to overthrow the dictator. As an introduction to the book, read aloud chapter two ("Shhh!") that recreates the suspense of having the family compound searched by the secret police. Some family members will have to be introduced to listeners before the reading. Also, page

66-71 in the edition cited in the bibliography, introduces the terror of having a powerful old man (General Trujillo) interested in Anita's beautiful older sister.

Rice, David. *Crazy Loco*. One of the short stories in this collection, "Valentine," amusingly covers a childhood incident that has grown out of proportion for one character and been all but forgotten by another.

Cólón, Jesús. "Kipling and I." Celebrate National Poetry Month, along with El día de los niños/El día de los libros, with this story of the power of a single poem to comfort (both literally and figuratively) one memorable young man. It's available in *Wáchale!: Poetry and Prose About Growing up in Latin America* edited by Ilan Stavans.