

Rethinking "Round Robin Reading"

"When children are made to focus on their own oral reading 'performance' they will pay less attention to the meaning of what they are reading. When the teacher seems to focus on the oral reading "performance" the student gets the message that pronouncing words correctly is the most important thing about reading, and that comprehension and strategic purposeful reading are not nearly as important. Evans and Carr's research study clearly shows that oral reading of text resulted in far lower achievement on comprehension tests."

Rona Flippo, *What The Experts Say*

Wilkinson and Anderson (1992) studied 'round robin' reading and found that reading for an audience reduced comprehension significantly in young children. They also found that students that "word call" and correct other readers at point of instruction limit teacher effectiveness in supplying essential strategies to students at time of miscue.

Allington (1980) found that "round robin" reading especially impacts struggling readers, placing unnecessary emphasis on word pronunciation at the expense of comprehension.

Johnston (1997) found that oral reading "can be a socially threatening activity for students who struggle with word recognition." Alfie Kohn's research found that "students who are afraid to make mistakes in front of peers are unlikely to ask for help when they need it, unlikely to take intellectual risks, do not feel safe and accepted by their teacher and will lose motivation and interest in improving their performance in reading."

There is evidence that students who are passively sitting and waiting for their turns to read are rehearsing the selection they anticipate will be assigned to them and not focusing on current oral reading.