Foundational Facts: *Round Robin Reading*

Round Robin reading is an instructional technique that has been around for years– maybe even centuries. It is a practice where one student is called upon to read a section of text aloud while the rest of the students follow along.

Teachers use Round Robin for a variety of reasons. First, it is something familiar. Most of us have experienced Round Robin as a student in a classroom at some point. It's an easy technique to fall back on due to familiarity. Second, teachers often see it as a way to embed accountability or simply manage behavior. A student must be engaged to be prepared for the next turn. Finally, it is a way to observe individual student reading performance. Decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension can be informally monitored when a student has their turn.

Unfortunately, this technique is **NOT** grounded in Science of Reading research. There is no empirical evidence that Round Robin provides positive benefits to reading development or practice. In fact, it can be harmful to our most at risk readers. Please continue reading below for more facts, information, and researched replacement techniques that encourage the Robin to fly south for a long winter!

Round Robin *Myths*

1. Students are focused on following the text
2. Students like it– we share the work
3. It's good for ELL students to hear reading
4. Everyone gets a turn to practice

Round Robin *Facts*

1. Students are often focused only on finding where their turn begins or stressing about who is next
2. At risk readers have increased anxiety, better readers are frustrated with slower paced students
3. ELLs have an inaccurate view of reading due to inability to process English quickly enough
4. Only one at a time limits the amount of actual practice students have



Good Idea

- **Partner Read**
- **Choral Read**
- **Whisper Read**
- **Radio Read**
- **Echo Read**

Shanahan on Round Robin

"Don't get me wrong. I'm a big fan of oral reading practice throughout the grades. It is just that oral reading practice should not be a spectator sport. "



Not So Great

- **Popcorn Read**
- **Popsicle Stick**
- **Combat Read**
- **Follow Along**
- **Tap and Go Read**

Want to know more? Here are some great articles and resources to explore!

Todd Finley– Alternatives to Round Robin Reading

Tim Shannahan– Are Read Alongs a Good Idea?

Tim Shannahan– I Round Robin Really That Bad?

Melanie Kuhn– What's Really Wrong with Round Robin Reading?

Kristin Pennycuff-Trent- Round Robin Reading Rethought

Jennifer Gonzalez– 5 Common Practices to Kick to the Curb

Remember

We have ALL used practices in our teaching that we thought were okay only to learn differently later. (This author used Round Robin back in the day…) There should only be a moment of wishing "I had known…" when thinking of the past. Our energy should go to a determination to do much better tomorrow!