P L A S

Kindergarten Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) in Reading

Agenda

- PALS Overview
- K-PALS Background & Purpose
- How to Implement K-PALS

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Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)

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http://www.kc.vanderbilt.edu/pals/

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Training Objectives

- Describe the benefits of PALS to parents, principals, colleagues, and others
- Assign students to PALS pairs and teams
- Train students to prepare PALS materials and conduct PALS reading activities
- Use PALS correctly and independently in the classroom

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What is PALS?

- § **P**eer
- § **A**ssisted
- § **L**earning
- § **S**trategies

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Why use PALS?

- More children entering school unprepared for success
- Broad range of achievement levels in classrooms
- Increasing need to address a variety of individual needs
- Increasing demand for evidence-based practice in the classroom

PALS Overview   6

PALS Overview: Background

- Based on Juniper Gardens Classwide Peer Tutoring model
- Originally developed for Grades 2-6
- Extended upward to High School and downward to Kindergarten and First Grade

PALS Overview: Background

- 15 years of experimental research
  - Title I and Non-Title I schools
  - Urban and suburban schools
  - High, average, and low achievers
  - Students in special education
  - English Language Learners
- "What Works Clearinghouse" ~ U.S. Dept. of Education

Important Features of PALS

- Reciprocal roles (Coaches and Readers)
- Structured activities
- Individualized
- More time engaged on task
- Includes all students
- Opportunities for success for all students
- Encourages positive peer interactions
- Practical AND effective

Why use PALS for Beginning Readers?

- Early reading failure is difficult to remediate *(Juel, 1988)*
- "Matthew Effect" *(Stanovich, 1986)*
- Early intervention is critical

Purpose of PALS for Beginning Readers

- To develop important beginning reading skills for young children including
  - Phonological awareness
  - Letter-sound recognition
  - Decoding
  - Fluency
- To provide teachers with a practical and effective means of meeting early literacy needs in the regular classroom

What Is Phonological Awareness (PA)?

- The ability to recognize and manipulate the sounds in words
- PA includes:
  - Blending
  - Segmenting
  - Rhyming
  - Other types of sound manipulation

Why Is PA Important?

- Children who start out out with strong PA become better readers
- PA can be taught

What Are Letter-Sounds and Why Are They Important?

- Sounds made by individual letters of the alphabet and letter combinations
- Students use known letter-sound correspondences to sound out unfamiliar words

What Is Decoding and Why Is It Important?

- Identification of unknown words based on letter-sound correspondences, morphemic units, and other word parts.
- Decoding skills provide strategies that can be used consistently across many unknown words for word identification.

K-PALS Effectiveness

- 3 years of research
- Conducted in Nashville public schools
- Used random assignment
- Compared PA, Decoding, PA + Decoding, and controls

K-PALS Effectiveness

- K-PALS students outperformed peers in non-PALS classrooms
- Improved PA and reading performance by 10 to 15 percentile points
- Effective for low-, average-, and high-achieving students
- Effective in Title I (high poverty) and middle-class schools

Recent Research (2004-05)

- K-PALS students outperformed controls on measures of phonemic awareness, word recognition, and oral reading.
- On some measures, students whose teachers received ongoing "booster" support outperformed students whose teachers only attended a one-day workshop.
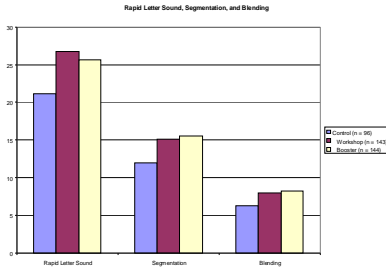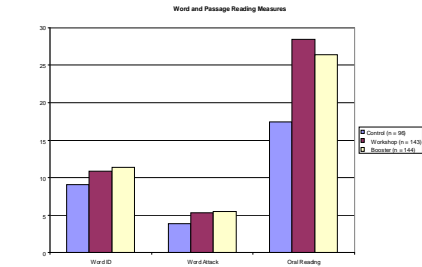
Findings in Minnesota

Rapid Letter Sound, Segmentation, and Blending

Legend: Control (n = 98), Workshop (n = 143), Booster (n = 144)

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Findings in Minnesota

Word and Passage Reading Measures

Legend: Control (n = 98), Workshop (n = 143), Booster (n = 144)
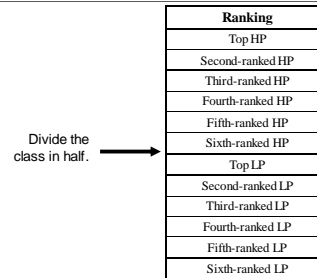
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K-PALS Video

PALS Partners

Coaches and Readers

- Higher performing readers are paired with lower performing readers
- Coach
  - Provides prompts and helps Reader; takes turns reading
- Reader
  - Reads and accepts help from Coach; takes turns helping
- Roles are reciprocal
- Partners remain the same for 4 weeks

Ranking the class

Ranking
Top HP
Second-ranked HP
Third-ranked HP
Fourth-ranked HP
Fifth-ranked HP
Sixth-ranked HP
Top LP
Second-ranked LP
Third-ranked LP
Fourth-ranked LP
Fifth-ranked LP
Sixth-ranked LP

Divide the class in half. →

Sample Pairing Scheme

Higher Performers (HP)	Lower Performers (LP)	Pairs
Top HP	Top LP	Pair 1
Second-ranked HP	Second-ranked LP	Pair 2
Third-ranked HP	Third-ranked LP	Pair 3
Fourth-ranked HP	Fourth-ranked LP	Pair 4
Fifth-ranked HP	Fifth-ranked LP	Pair 5
Sixth-ranked HP	Sixth-ranked LP	Pair 6

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Pairing Students

- Pairs remain together for approximately 4 weeks
- Each time, pair students based on reading ability and personality
- Identify folders with letters or numbers
- Maintain flexibility

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Student Assignment Chart

Coaches	Readers

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Handling Absentees/Odd Numbers

- When two students are absent, their partners may be paired with each other.
  - The stronger student acts as Coach.
  - The pair can record points on point sheets from both folders.
- Form a triad, but avoid using very low performers or students with disabilities.
  - Two students act as Coach, while the remaining student acts as Reader.
  - They alternate: two Coaches, one Reader.

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Triads

- Assign each of the three students to be the coach during one of the three reading activities
- If a permanent triad is necessary, you can designate one student as a "floater" who fills in when other students are absent
- Do not place learning disabled or low-performing readers in a triad for more than a day
- Three average-achieving students are the best combination for a long-term triad

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PALS Seating and Moving Arrangements

- Assign partners to adjacent seats for the 4 weeks that students are paired together.
- If partners do not sit together, designate one student as the "mover" and one as the "stayer." The mover picks up the folder and pencil.

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Conducting Kindergarten PALS

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Conducting K-PALS

- Teacher-led and partner activities are conducted 3-4 times per week for approximately 20- to 30-minute sessions.
- Conduct PALS at a regularly scheduled time: same time each day

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Structure of K-PALS

- Teacher-led practice
- Partner activities
- Monitoring students
- Point system

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Teacher-Led Practice

- Teacher leads class in Sound Play activity
- Teacher leads class in Decoding activities
  - Introduce new sounds and lead class in saying sounds
  - Introduce new sight words and lead class in saying sight words
  - Lead class in singing and reading words
  - Starting Lesson 29, lead class in reading sentence(s)
  - Starting Lesson 39, introduce book reading procedures

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Partner Activities

- Decoding Worksheet
  - Letter sounds (What sound?)
  - Sight words (What word?)
  - Sound boxes (Read it slowly. Sing it and read it.)
  - Sentence reading
- Book Reading (partners take turns reading from decodable books--introduced approximately Week 10 or around Lesson 39)

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Monitoring Students

- Observe pairs
- Provide corrections and feedback
- Praise and mark bonus points
- Pace lessons appropriately
- Individualize lessons appropriately

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Point System

- Pairs keep point sheet
- Teacher checks each pair's progress toward accumulating 100 points
- Teacher announces students' accumulation of 100 points and students clap for these pairs

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Preparing K-PALS Materials

- Teacher Materials
  - Timer
  - PALS rules
  - Student assignment chart
  - Reference card and scripts
- Student Materials
  - Point sheets (in folders)
  - Lesson sheets (in folders)
  - Pencils
  - Books

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Scheduling K-PALS Lessons

- 30 minutes, 3-4 times per week
  (4 times for Title I classrooms)
- Same times each day
- Same days each week

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Reading PALS Manual

- Training Lessons
  - Goal of these Training Lessons: to train your students to do PALS independently
  - Each of the Training Lessons contains a script
- Templates for all materials you will need to do each PALS activity

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Teacher Manual

- Overview of PALS
- Teacher Responsibilities
- Introduction lessons 1-4
- Scripts for Sound Play
- Scripts for Decoding

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Lesson Sequence (p. 70 in manual)

Week	Lesson #	New Sounds	Decodable Words	New Sight Words	Sentences	Sound Play Activity
0	Intro 1					Clap the Syllables
0	Intro 2					Clap the Syllables
0	Intro 3					First Sound A
0	Intro 4					First Sound A
1	1	a, m				First Sound A
1	2	t				First Sound A
1	3 X		at mat			First Sound A
1	4	s	at mat			First Sound A
2	5		at mat sat	the		First Sound B
2	6 X		at mat sat			First Sound B
2	7	b	at mat sat			First Sound B
2	8	c	sat bat			First Sound B

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K-PALS Lessons

- During Week 0, teachers will do brief Teacher-Directed Sound Play activities
- During Week 1, students are taught
  – PALS roles: Coach and Reader
  – Moving to PALS positions
  – Decoding Lessons 1-4: each corresponds to a Sound Play lesson

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K-PALS Lessons

- After Week 0, there is a Decoding Lesson that corresponds to each Sound Play lesson
- The Teacher-Directed Sound Play activity is followed by a Teacher-Directed Decoding activity
- The Teacher-Directed Sound Play and Decoding activities are followed by Peer-Mediated Decoding

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Week 0: Introduction to Sound Play

About 5-10 minutes per lesson

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Introduction Lesson 1

- Day 1: Sound Play activity only
  Introduction Lesson 1
  – Clapping syllables
  – Learn about being a Coach
  – Making corrections

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Introduction Lesson 2

- Day 2: Sound Play activity only
  Introduction Lesson 2
  – Clapping syllables
  – Making corrections

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Introduction Lesson 3

- Day 3: Sound Play activity only
  Introduction Lesson 3:
  – First Sound A

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Introduction Lesson 4

- Day 4: Sound Play activity only
  Introduction Lesson 4:
  – First Sound A

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Sound Play Games

- Appendix G: Reference Card for Sound Play games has all prompts and correction procedures for all Sound Play Games

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Sound Play Tip

- Sound Play Lessons are repetitive and will show up again at different points in the year.
- If students are not "getting it", don't worry, they will have many more opportunities to practice and become better.
- Do not spend more than the 3-5 minutes allotted on the Teacher-Directed Sound Play Game.

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Week 1:
Introduction to Decoding and Working in Pairs

About 20-30 minutes per lesson

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Sounds Practice

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Most Common Sounds

Continuous sounds: Sounds that may be held for several seconds without distorting the sound.

a (fat)	l (let)	r (rat)	w (wet)
e (bet)	m (mad)	s (sell)	y (yes)
f (fill)	n (nut)	u (cut)	z (zoo)
i (sit)	o (not)	v (vet)	

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Most Common Sounds

Stop sounds: Sounds that cannot be held without distortion--that is, **NO /uh/ sound!**

b (boy)	k (kiss)
c (can)	p (pet)
d (did)	qu (quit)
g (got)	t (top)
h (his)	x (fox)
j (jet)	

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Common Letter Combinations

ch (chip)   sh (ship)   th (thank)

(source: Carnine, Silbert, & Kame'enui, 2004)

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Sound Play Lesson 1

- Completed during PALS time prior to Decoding lesson 1
- Practice listening for the first sounds in words during the First Sound A game
- Review correction procedures

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Decoding Lesson 1

- (Follows Teacher-Directed Sound Play Lesson 1 activities)
- Learn PALS procedures and rules
- Learn the What Sound? activity
- Learn the /a/ & /m/ sounds
- New sound (in box--"The new sound is /_____/")
- Learn correction procedures
- Learn to mark points
- Students practice being Coach and Reader

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What Sound? Correction

("What sound?"--error)

- "Stop. That sound is /_____/. What sound?"
- "Go back and read that line again."

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Moving Rules

1. Go quickly and quietly to your PALS places.
2. Take what you need.
3. Sit in the PALS position side by side.

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PALS Rules

1. Talk only to your partner and talk only about PALS.
2. Keep your voice low.
3. Help your partner.
4. Try your best.

Happy Faces J

- When most pairs have completed the What Sound activity 4 times (students should have marked through 4 happy faces), stop the lesson.
- If some students finish 4 happy faces, instruct them to draw an additional happy face.
- Students should keep working until you instruct them to stop.
- There is no reason that students should ever be idle.

Happy Faces Suggestion

- When marking a happy face, they just slash the happy face (no coloring!)
- "I liked how you marked the happy face quickly. Two extra points!"
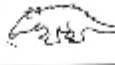
Sound Play and Decoding Lesson 2

- Sound Play
  - Practice listening for the first sound in words during the First Sound A game
  - Review correction procedure
- Decoding
  - Review PALS rules
  - Practice saying sounds ("What sound?")
  - Practice being Coach and Reader
  - Learn the /t/ sound

Sound Play and Decoding Lesson 3

- Sound Play
  - Practice listening for the first sound in words during the First Sound A game Review
  - Review correction procedure
- Decoding
  - Practice saying sounds ("What sound?")
  - Learn Sound Boxes activity ("Read it slowly; sing it and read it.")
  - Practice correction procedures

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Sounding Out Correction

("Read it slowly. Sing it and read it."--error)

- "Stop. That word is /aaat/."
- "What word?"
- "Go back and read that line again."

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Moving from Activity to Activity

- Pairs complete two happy faces before moving on to the next activity.
- Then they return to the top of the worksheet and start again.
- If the pair finishes and has time left, draw more happy faces and have them continue working until the timer rings.

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Sound Play and Decoding Lesson 4

- Sound play
  - Practice listening for the first sound in words during the First Sound A game
  - Practice correction procedure
- Decoding
  - Practice Saying Sounds ("What sound?")
  - Practice Sound Boxes activity ("Read it slowly; sing it and read.")
  - Practice correction procedures

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Sound Play and Decoding Lesson 5

- Sound Play
  - Learn the First Sound B game
  - Practice listening for the first sounds in words during the First Sound B game
  - Use correction procedure
- Decoding
  - Practice letter sounds
  - Practice blending known sounds to make words
  - Introduce Sight Words
  - Practice correction procedures

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Sight Words Correction

("What word?"--error)

- "Stop. That word is _____. What word?"
- "Start that line again."

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Sound Play and Decoding Lesson 6

- Sound Play
  - Practice listening for the first sounds in words during the First Sound B game
  - Use the correction procedure
- Decoding
  - Learns what to do when the timer rings
  - Timer should be set for about 15 minutes
  - Practice saying sounds, reading sight words, and blending familiar sounds to make words

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Sound Play and Decoding Lesson 7

- Sound Play
  - Practice listening for the first sounds in words during the First Sound B game
  - Use the correction procedures
- Decoding (Lessons 7-72)
  - Use the Script for Ongoing K-PALS Decoding Lessons 7-72 for the remaining Decoding Lessons
  - Saying Sounds ("What sound?")
  - Sight words ("What word?")
  - Sounding Out ("Read it slowly; Sing it and read it.")

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Sound Play and Decoding Lesson 8

- Sound Play
  - Practice listening for the first sounds in words during the First Sound B game
  - Use the correction procedures
- Decoding (Lessons 7-72)
  - Use the Script for Ongoing K-PALS Decoding Lessons 7-72 for the remaining Decoding Lessons
  - Saying Sounds ("What sound?")
  - Sight words ("What word?")
  - Sounding Out ("Read it slowly; Sing it and read it.")

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New Sound Play Game: Lessons 9-12

- Finding words that rhyme
- Learning to play Rhyming Game
- Correcting errors
  - Tell them the rhyming word

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New Sound Play Game: Lessons 13-16

- Practice segmenting words
- Practice blending sounds into words
- Learn the Guess My Word A Game
  - Word families
- Learn correction procedures
  - Point to readers' box; touch box and say each sound; say the word and point to the correct picture

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New Sound Play Game: Lessons 17-20

- Practice segmenting words
- Practice blending sounds into words
- Learn the Guess My Word B Game
  - All words start with the same sound so students have to listen even more carefully

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Decoding Lesson 29

- K-PALS Decoding: First Sentence Script Learn to read a sentence
  - Practice saying sounds, blending familiar sounds, reading sight words

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New Sound Play Game: Lessons 37-40

- Learn to listen for words that end with the same sound
- Learn correction procedures
  - Say the right word; then say the ending sound.

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Remaining Sound Play Games

- There are seven types of Sound Play Games
- Each Sound Play Game appears again (except for Clap the Syllables)
- See Reference Card

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Put it all together

Let's do a whole K-PALS Lesson

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Reading a Book

- Book reading begins around Lesson 39
- Coach reads title
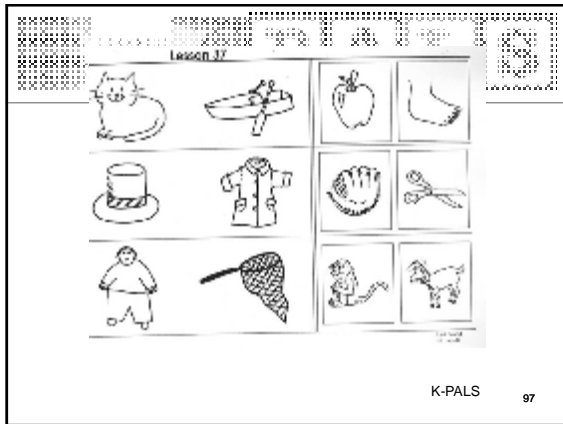- Reader follows along, then reads same title
- Coach reads first sentence; reader reads first sentence
- Coach and reader continue taking turns reading sentences until they finish the book
- Coach marks 5 points when book is finished
- Coaches/readers listen, correct mistakes, and praise their partners

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Selecting Text of Appropriate Difficulty

- Text should be at weaker reader's level
  - No more than 1 error per 10 words Each pair may read from DIFFERENT books.
- Select decodable books that include previously learned sounds and familiar sight words.

K-PALS 101

Selecting Text of Appropriate Difficulty

- Identify appropriate books and place in students' folders (at least one book).
- Books should be brief enough that they can be read within a short amount of time and with few or no errors.
- Rotate books at least once weekly between pairs, so they are exposed to a variety of books.

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Book Reading Correction

- Sight word error:

  "Stop. That word is the. What word? Good. Go back and read that line again."

- Decodable word error:

  "Stop. That word is mmmaaat. What word? Good. Go back and read that line again."

Book Reading Correction

- If the Coach and Reader both do not know a word, the Coach raises his/her hand
- While the Coach's hand is raised, the Reader continues to read
- If the pair is always raising their hand, that is a good sign that the book they are reading is too difficult for both students

Appropriate Book Suggestions for Partner Reading

- Reading A to Z
- Primary Phonics
- Bob Books
- Accelerated Reader reading list
- www.hubbardscupboard.org
- Basal Textbook
- Library books
- Any books in the room that are at the appropriate reading level for the weaker reader

Appropriate Book Suggestions for Partner Reading

- You can rotate books among pairs
- You can group books by reading level:
  – Red basket: easiest books
  – Blue basket: medium books
  – Yellow basket: hardest books

Helpful Hints

Before Your First PALS Session

- Pair students
- Determine a seating arrangement
- Create a PALS bulletin board
- Read scripts
- Schedule a time do PALS 4 times a week

Monitoring Students' Reading

- Once students are trained in PALS, they should be working fairly independently
- Circulate around your classroom during PALS
- Pace lessons appropriately
- Provide students with specific corrective and positive feedback
- Award bonus points: "I liked how you used the correction procedure and helped your partner. Three points."

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Make Sure Students are on the Correct Lesson

- Critical to the success of PALS
  - Does not have many opportunities to practice each activity because he/she keeps re-reading the same lines
  - The Coach is getting really frustrated
- Each student in pair may read from DIFFERENT lessons if a student is making a lot of mistakes

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Make Sure Students are on the Correct Lesson

- For lesson placement, you may want to refer to the letter sequence chart.
- Determine which letters the student doesn't know and start on the most appropriate lesson using the letter sequence chart

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More Teacher Tips

- Remember to keep the pacing brisk
- Keep transitions as brief as possible
- Make sure most students are responding
- Model activities, correction procedures and rules as needed
- Provide corrective feedback
- Reinforce appropriate behaviors
- Make sure students are on appropriate lessons

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For More Information and Materials

- Visit the Website
  - www.kc.vanderbilt.edu/pals/
- Email pals@vanderbilt.edu

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THANKS!! J

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