

PEER-ASSISTED LEARNING STRATEGIES (PALS) FOR ENHANCED LITERACY

by:

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Reading is one of the most essential skills we learn as part of the macro skills. It's not just about recognizing words in a book or passage; it's about comprehensive understanding of the world around us, exploring the ideas we have read, and connecting with others through text. Reading opens doors to knowledge, imagination, and personal growth, especially for the students. However, no matter how many benefits there are of reading, most students still don't show any interest in it. Many students struggle with reading. Some find it difficult to understand what they're reading, while others might feel overwhelmed or uninterested. These challenges can lead to frustration and a lack of confidence, which can affect not just students' reading skills but also the overall academic performance. Despite its importance, reading remains a hurdle for many students, making it crucial to find effective ways to support and engage them in the learning process.

Too many interventions are implemented in schools solely to solve this reading issue. Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies, or PALS, is one such intervention. It is an effective strategy for raising literacy levels. PALS creates a nurturing environment where everyone may develop by allowing learners to collaborate as learning partners for an additional hour during this intervention. This approach promotes coordination, boosts self-esteem, and makes studying interesting in addition to assisting students in learning from one another. PALS can greatly improve literacy outcomes by utilizing the advantages of peer-to-peer interaction, assisting students in becoming more proficient

writers and readers in the classroom. PALS provides a fun and cooperative approach to developing lifelong learners and improving literacy.

Vardy et al. (2022), explains structured activities included in PALS vary based on the grade-level focus of each program. PALS for Grades 2–6 and High School both include Partner Reading, Retell, Paragraph Shrinking and Prediction Relay. In Partner Reading, students take turns reading instructional-level text with fluency. In Retell, students retell what they learned in sequence. In Paragraph Shrinking, students summarize the main idea of each paragraph they read. In Prediction Relay, students predict what will happen next in the story.

English primary and secondary students with or at risk for reading impairments benefit from PALS, which is evident in research by the study of Hertel et al. (2024). Through collaborative work, feedback, and encouraging active engagement, PALS has been demonstrated to improve reading fluency, comprehension, and overall accomplishment of the students. Given the fact that it helps both ordinary and low-achieving learners as well as students with various conditions, this method is inclusive and successful. Its capacity to accommodate a range of requirements while encouraging cooperation and participation in the classroom is what makes it successful.

In conclusion, all students who struggle with reading will be able to practice their abilities each day that the PALS intervention is administered if educators and schools are consistent in their implementation. Students who struggle with reading, particularly those with PALS, need to be well-served by resources that give them the means to participate in an activity that in the past has been denied and even penalized, especially because of the readers' race (Thorius & Graff, 2018).

References:

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