

The Read Aloud Teacher or Librarian:

Simple Tips:

Volume:

Have someone listen to you, an adult to get a sense if you are loud enough.

Using Your Voice

Following this section there is a whole workshop on using your voice. However, when simply reading, go easy. If you are prone to losing your voice, you are straining it. The two best things for your voice are water and sleep. Keep yourself rested and drink lots of water.

If you try this and you still lose your voice then you should seek out a professional. Contact your local university and seek out someone in the theatre department. You do not want a singing coach; you want someone who knows a great deal about speaking. When you find the correct person, they will ask you to come in for a visit and to speak for them. I am sure they will give you a few exercises to help you place your voice so that you are not straining it.

As a general rule, if you are hoarse or you have a sore throat after you have been speaking, then you are not placing your voice correctly

How Books Work

It is worth the little extra time it takes with very young readers to help them to understand how books work. Here are some very obvious but rather astounding things. Books work front to back. Books work left to right. Books work top to bottom. Each cluster on the page is a word. Books go in sequence. Books remain the same.

All of this seems quite obvious but there was a time when you did not know this. In most cases you were fortunate enough to have someone at home who read to you and you picked up at a very early age. However, there are some children out there who have no books in their homes at all. It is amazing but it is true. Imagine, no books. So, our job sometimes begins with the simplest and most obvious lessons.

I will now admit, and this is still a little embarrassing, that I could not read at the beginning of the second grade. I must have been clever because no one seems to have picked up on it until then but I could not read. I remember one of the things which I could not understand was that books only went one way. I remember, my teacher was trying to get me to read More Fun with Dick and Jane and all I was interested in was the character of Zeke the Handyman. He was the only character in the story that was remotely interesting and I remember asking my teacher what Zeke was doing. She said that it didn't matter and told me to read but I was only interested in Zeke, We had quite a battle.

I am certain that if the teacher had put the book aside and, using the same vocabulary, had written out sentences about Zeke I would have been a far more attentive reader. I didn't know that books only went one way.

If you are reading aloud a novel then look ahead for good places to stop. Even the greenest of readers will have a sense of how much can be read in a sitting. Look ahead in the book and try to close where there is a little suspense. You might even challenge them like the good old soap operas. And I wonder what will happen tomorrow. Stay tuned.

Advice for Good Read Alouds?

I will leave that to the master. You need only consult The New Read Aloud Handbook by Jim Trelease for fabulous suggestions for Read Alouds.

