PALS in Reading

Acknowledgements

- This presentation is based on material covered in *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies: Reading Methods for Grades 2-6* 2008 Revised Edition by Douglas Fuchs, Lynn S. Fuchs, Deborah Simmons, & Patricia Mathes

- Contributors to the presentation include Kristin Taylor, Devin Kearns, Loulee Yen, Kristen McMaster, and Laura Saenz

Objectives

- After today's session, you will be able to:
    - Describe PALS and its research base
    - Identify benefits of PALS
    - Identify PALS components and activities
    - Pair students and make PALS seating arrangements
    - Schedule PALS
    - Prepare PALS materials and select appropriate texts

PALS Overview

What is PALS?

Peer

Assisted

Learning

Strategies

What is PALS?

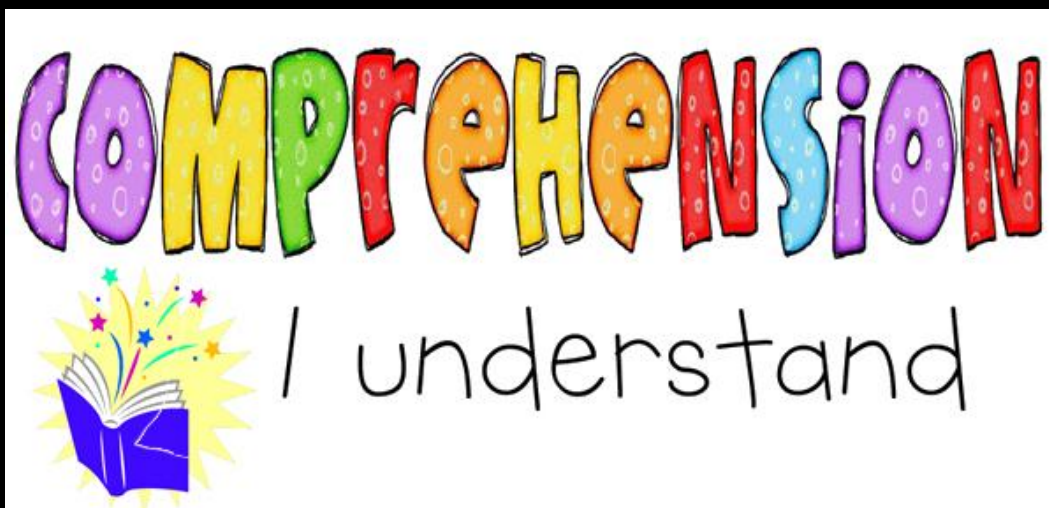- A class-wide peer tutoring program

First Reader
(Stronger reader, reads first)

Second Reader
(Weaker reader, "Coaches" first)

What is PALS?

- A supplement to core reading instruction
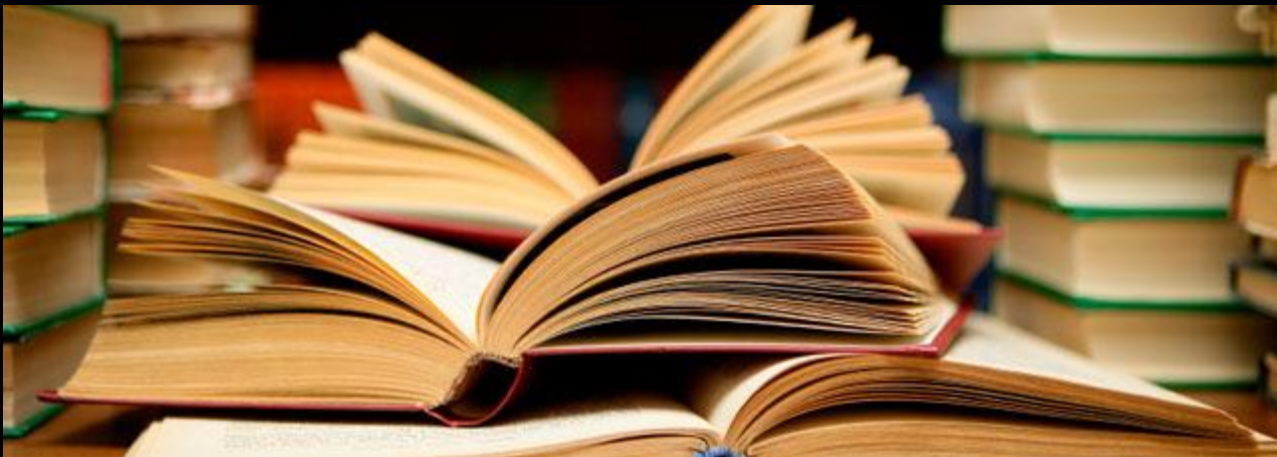- Focus is on reading fluency and…

Why Does PALS Work?

- PALS allows you to differentiate instruction
  - Students read texts at the right level
  - Students get help when they need it

Why Does PALS Work?

- Students practice reading a lot!
  - Structure
  - Efficiency
  - Routines are the same throughout program
  - Students stay on task

PALS Research

What research has been conducted?

What does it say?

PALS Development

- Doug & Lynn Fuchs (Vanderbilt University) and colleagues:

  >15 years of experimental research

PALS Development

- Researchers have found effects for students
  - From high poverty and middle-class schools
  - From urban, suburban, and rural settings
  - Of all skill levels (high, average, and low)
  - With disabilities
  - Learning English as a Second Language
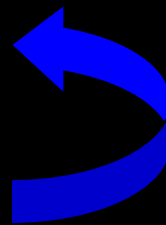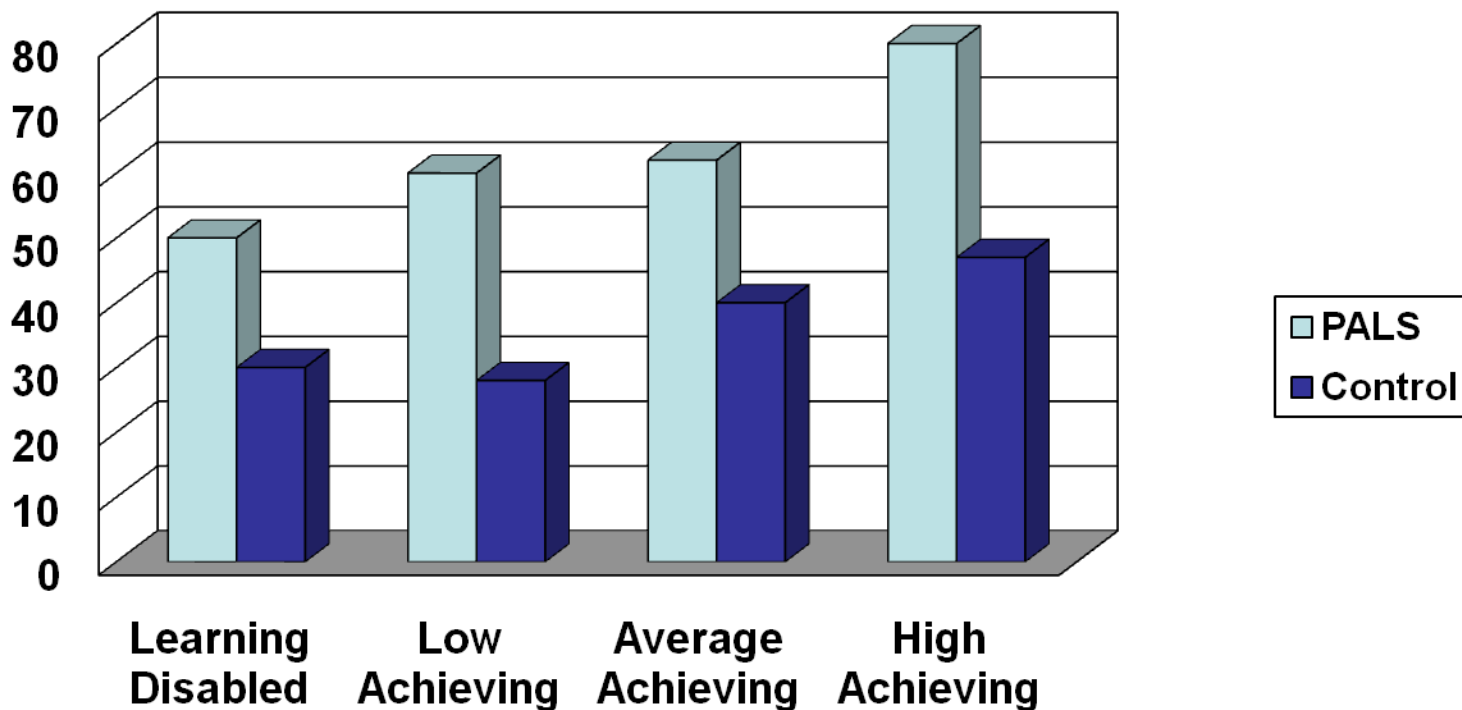
PALS Research Model

Basic Idea

↓

Test

↓

Revise

↓

Test ↻

PALS Research – Grades 2-6 Reading Fluency

Improvement over 16 Weeks

PALS
Control

Learning Disabled | Low Achieving | Average Achieving | High Achieving

Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., Mathes, P. G., & Simmons, D. C. (1997). Peer-assisted learning strategies: Making classrooms more responsive to diversity. American Educational Research Journal, 34, 174-206.
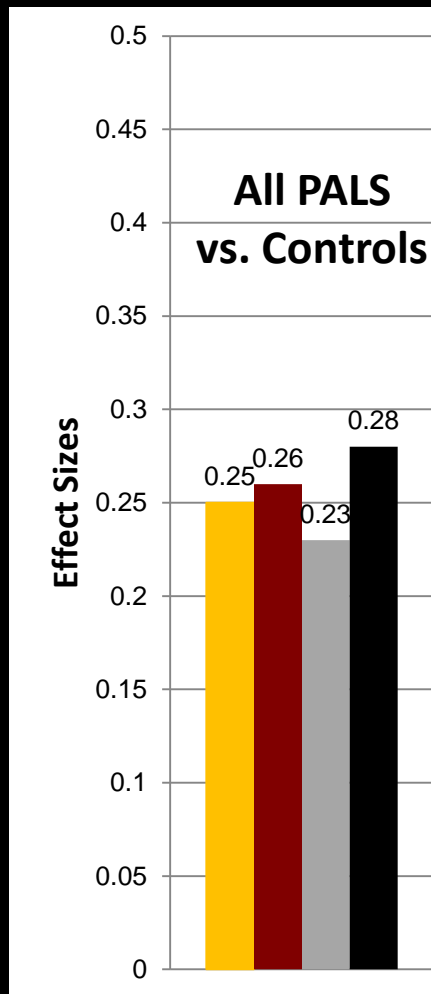
PALS Research – Grades 2-6 Reading Comprehension

Improvement over 16 Weeks
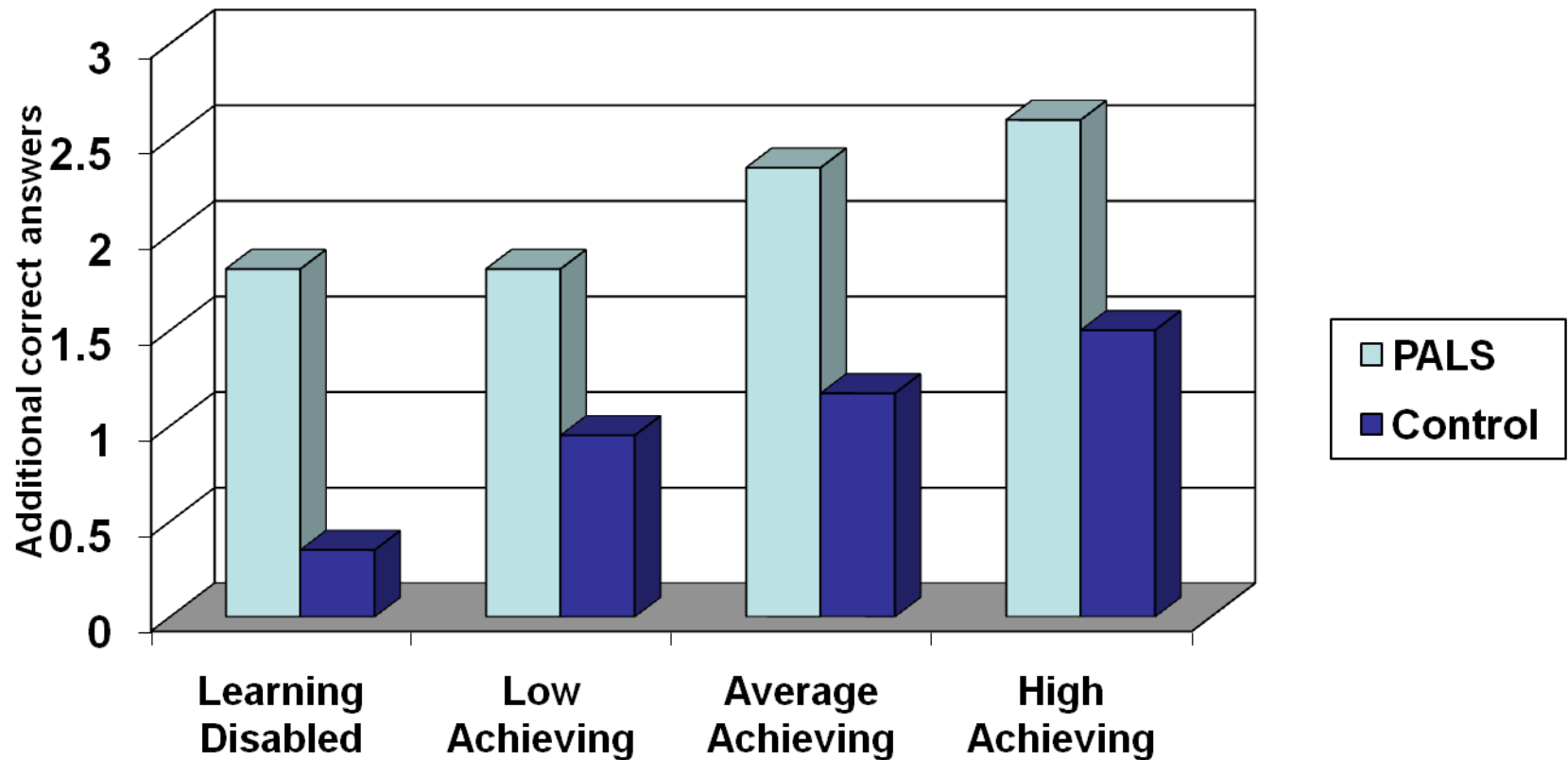
Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., Mathes, P. G., & Simmons, D. C. (1997). Peer-assisted learning strategies: Making classrooms more responsive to diversity. American Educational Research Journal, 34, 174-206.

PALS Effects in Reading

PALS Research Conclusions

- PALS students reliably outperform controls on important reading outcomes
- Works best when done with fidelity
- Works best when students receive a full "dose"

PALS Basics

Four Activities

What are the basic elements?

- Four reading activities in pairs
  - Partner Reading – 10 min
  - Retell – 2 min
  - Paragraph Shrinking – 10 min
  - Prediction Relay – 10 min
- "Points" system for motivation
  - Student level
  - Teacher level

Getting Started

Assigning Pairs

Higher-Performing Readers (HP)	Lower-Performing Readers (LP)	Pairs
Top HP	Top LP	A
2nd HP	2nd LP	B
3rd HP	3rd LP	C
4th HP	4th LP	D
5th HP	5th LP	E
6th HP	6th LP	F
7th HP	7th LP	G
8th HP	8th LP	H

Assembling Pairs

- Use the pairing system *flexibly*
  - The First Reader is always higher in reading skill level than the Second Reader
  - The difference between the two students in a pair should not be TOO great

Assembling Pairs

- Focus on pair dynamics
- To determine who will be paired together:
  - Results from reading assessments
  - Intuition and opinion of reading and cooperating ability
- Pairs work together for 4 weeks

Post Pairs and Teams

Pairs and Teams Assignments

First Reader	Second Reader	Folder	Pair Points	First Reader	Second Reader	Folder	Pair Points
		Total Team Points				Total Team Points	

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Pair Management

- Maintain flexibility

- Give a pair at least 1 week to "get along"

- You may change some pairs before the 4 weeks are up

Using Triads

- If numbers are odd or you have absences, a triad (group of 3) may be necessary
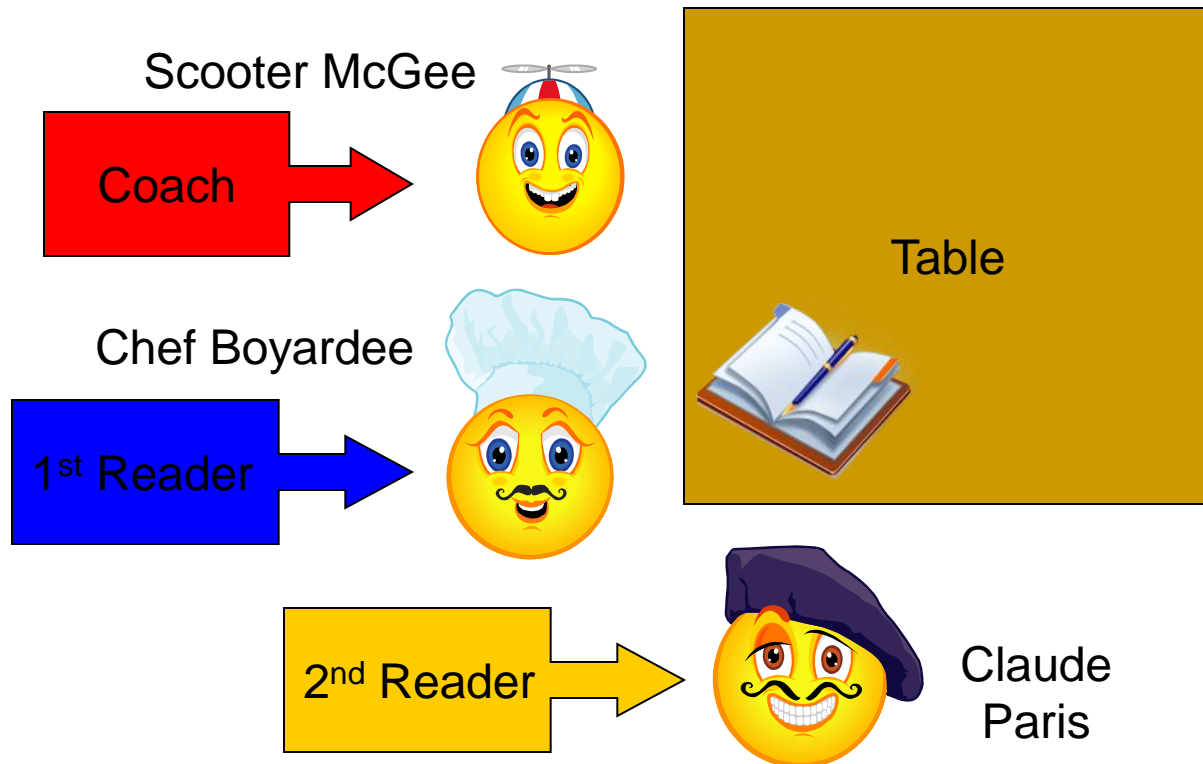
- Make the triad an average-to-high achieving group

Why are Pairs Better than Triads?

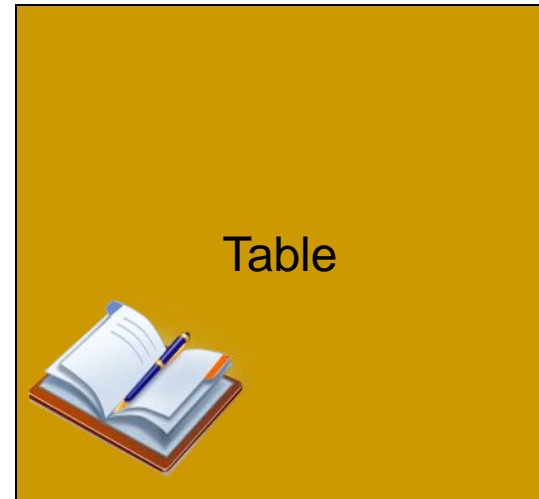- In a *pair*, each student reads 1/2 of the time
- In a *triad*, each student only reads 1/3 of the time

How Triads Look
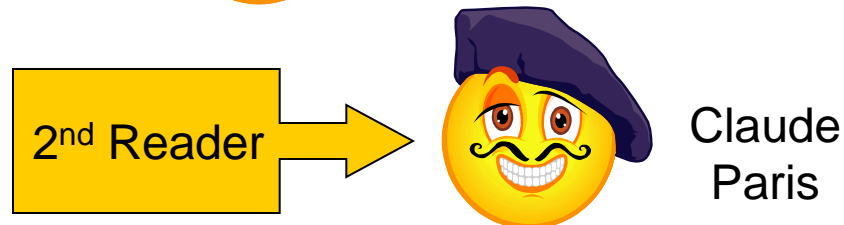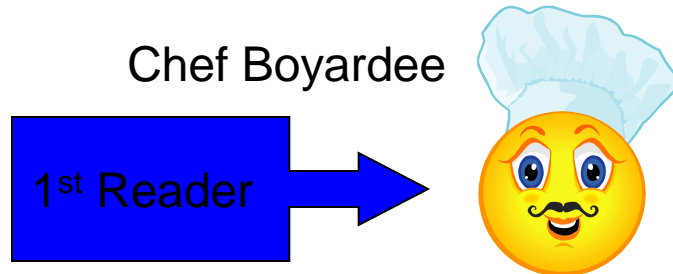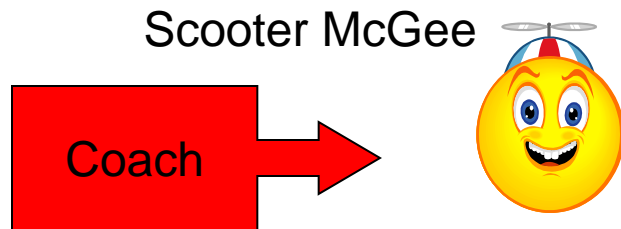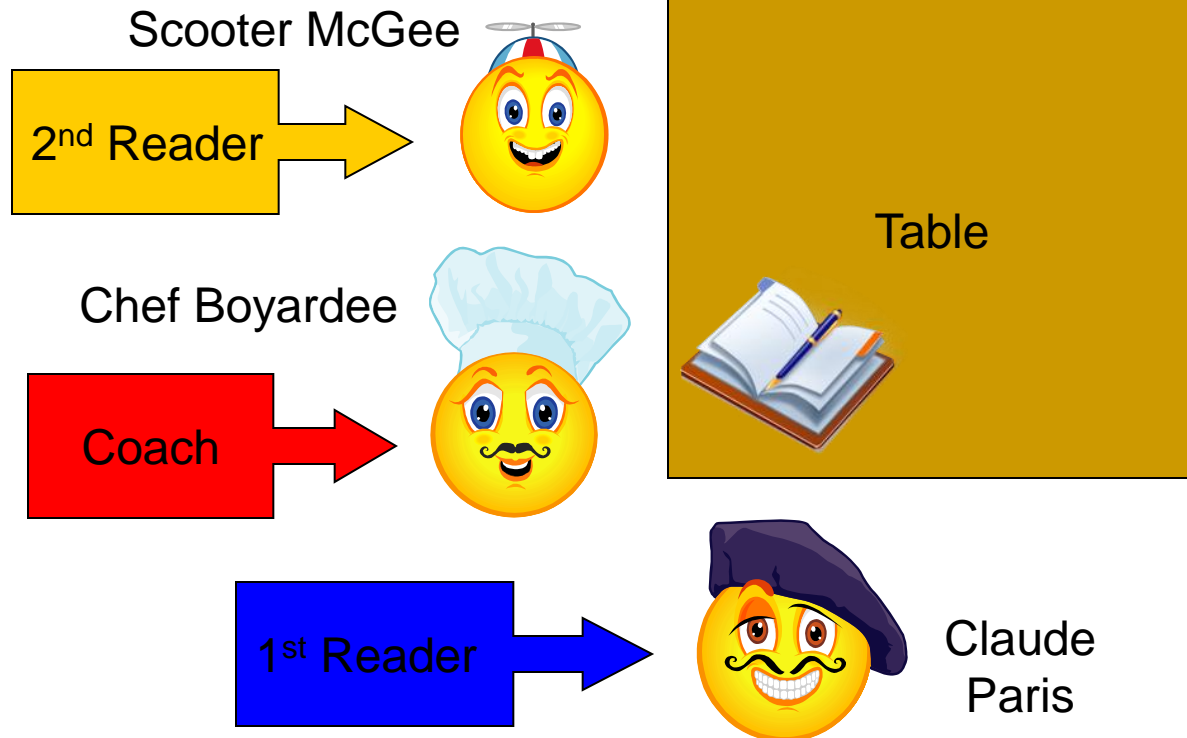
- Partner Reading & Retell

- Paragraph Shrinking

How Triads Look

- Prediction Relay

Teams

- PALS points accumulate toward a team total

- Pairs report points to you and you total the team points

- The second place team gets applause

- The winning team gets applause and takes a bow

Making Teams Fair

- What's wrong with this?

Higher-Performing Readers (HP)	Lower-Performing Readers (LP)	Pairs
Top HP	Top LP	A
2nd HP	2nd LP	B
3rd HP	3rd LP	C
4th HP	4th LP	D
5th HP	5th LP	E
6th HP	6th LP	F
7th HP	7th LP	G
8th HP	8th LP	H

Making Teams Fair

- Why is this better?

Higher-Performing Readers (HP)	Lower-Performing Readers (LP)	Pairs
Top HP	Top LP	A
2nd HP	2nd LP	B
3rd HP	3rd LP	C
4th HP	4th LP	D
5th HP	5th LP	E
6th HP	6th LP	F
7th HP	7th LP	G
8th HP	8th LP	H

Making Teams Fair

- Balance the teams
  - Pairs A, D, E, H are one team
  - Pairs B, C, F, G are one team
- What if there is an odd number of teams?
  - The highest team gives their points to both teams and they will be on the winning team
  - Pairs B, E are one team
  - Pairs C, D are one team
  - Pair A is on both teams

Seating Arrangements

- Assign partners to sit together all the time.
  - This eliminates the need for movement before and after each PALS session
- If partners do not sit together, designate one student as the "Mover" and one as the "Stayer."
  - The Mover picks up the materials on his or her way.

Scheduling PALS

- Implement PALS:
  - 2-3 times per week
  - 35-45 minutes per session
  - for at least 16-18 weeks
- Implement PALS at a regular time.
  - Same time each day.
  - Same days each week.

Scheduling PALS

- To implement PALS teachers have:
  - Replaced part of their teacher directed instruction
  - Replaced independent seat work time
  - Implemented PALS during their regular reading instruction time
  - Implemented PALS during content area instruction (e.g., science, history)

Setting Up Your Classroom

- PALS Display (e.g., on a bulletin board)
  - Pairs & Teams Assignment Chart
  - PALS Rules
  - Score Board

Preparing PALS Materials

- Teacher Materials
  - Timer
  - PALS rules
  - Student assignment chart
  - Scripts for training
  - Other training materials (see manual)
  - Pen/marker to mark additional points

- Student Materials
  - Book
  - PALS bookmark
  - Point sheets
  - Question card
  - Correction card
  - Pencil
  - Folder (labeled)

Student Materials
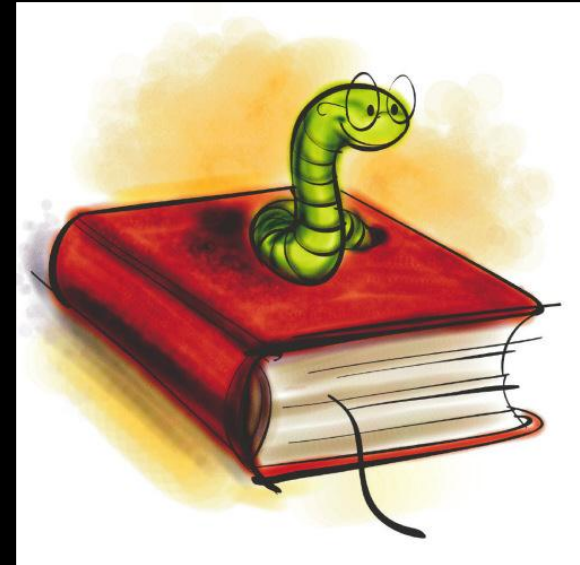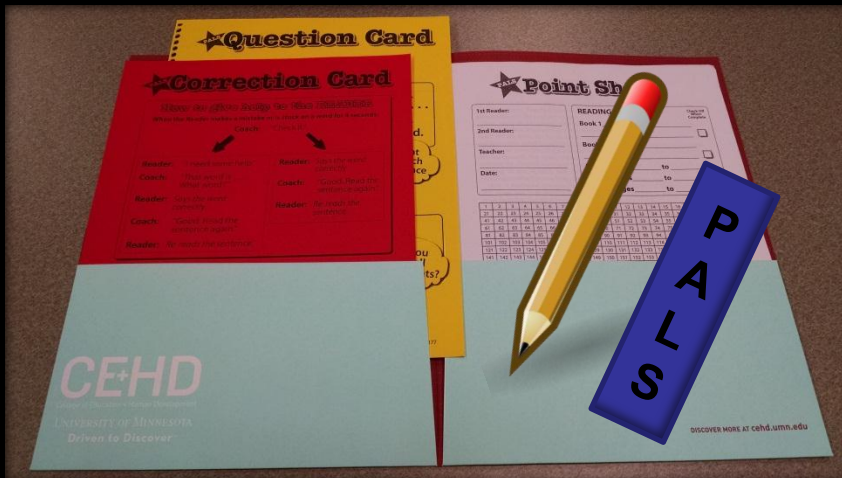
Selecting Appropriate Texts

- Text should be at weaker reader's level
  - No more than 10 errors per 100 words
- Each pair may read from DIFFERENT text
  - Within the pair, students read the same text
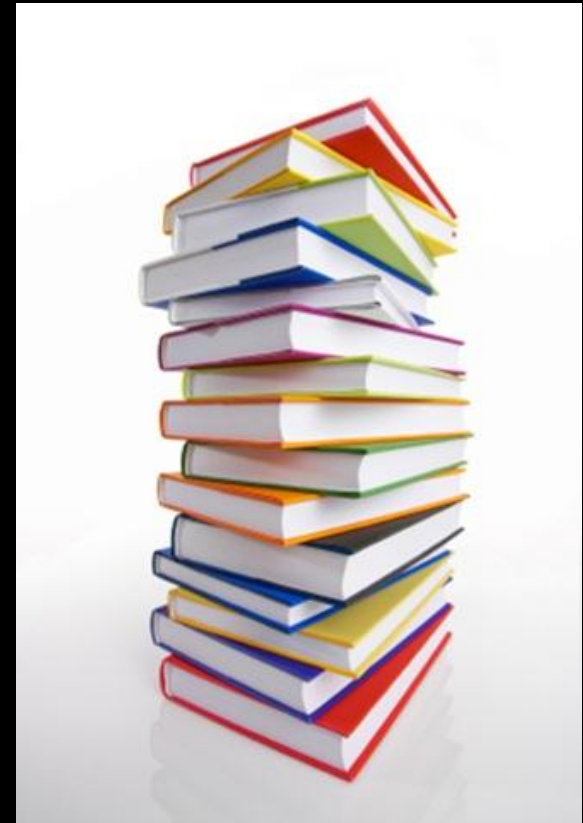
Selecting appropriate texts is critical to the success of PALS

Appropriate Text Suggestions

- Age-appropriate materials
- Leveled texts
- Chapter books
- High-interest, low-vocabulary texts
- Appropriate popular magazines
- Career-related texts
- Expository text–content area materials
- News articles

When Everyone Reads the Same Text

- Assign pages ahead of time
- Review vocabulary words before they begin reading
- Student who finished the assigned reading may read books that are at the weaker reader's level

Training Students

12-DAY TRAINING SEQUENCE

Week 1	**Day 1** Learning About PALS • Introduction to PALS • PALS Jobs: Coach & Reader • Working in Pairs • Teams & Team Points • Moving (Optional)	**Day 2** Introduction to Partner Reading • PALS Rules • How to Set Up PALS Materials • Partner Reading Procedures • Partner Practice: Partner Reading (without Correction Procedures)	**Day 3** Partner Reading Practice • Correction Procedures • Earning & Recording Points • Partner Practice: Partner Reading (with Correction Procedures) • Report Points (Week 1 Winning Team)
Week 2	**Day 4** Introduction to Retell • Partner Practice: Partner Reading (with Correction Procedures) • Retell Procedures • Earning Points • Whole Class Practice: Retell	**Day 5** Partner Reading & Retell Practice • Review: Retell • Partner Practice: Partner Reading & Retell	**Day 6** Introduction to Paragraph Shrinking • Review: Partner Reading & Retell • Paragraph Shrinking Procedures • Report Points (Week 2 Winning Team)
Week 3	**Day 7** Paragraph Shrinking Practice • Review: Paragraph Shrinking • Identifying Paragraphs (Optional) • Short Paragraphs • Earning Points • Whole Class Practice: Paragraph Shrinking	**Day 8** Partner Reading, Retell & Paragraph Shrinking Practice • Review: Paragraph Shrinking • Paragraph Shrinking Helping • Partner Practice: Paragraph Shrinking	**Day 9** Paragraph Shrinking Helping • Partner Practice: Partner Reading, Retell, and Paragraph Shrinking • Report Points (Week 3 Winning Team)
Week 4	**Day 10** Introduction to Prediction Relay • Prediction Relay Procedures • Reasonable Predictions • Whole Class Practice: Prediction Relay	**Day 11** Prediction Relay Practice • Review: Prediction Relay • Earning Points • Partner Practice: Prediction Relay	**Day 12** Putting It All Together • Practice Partner Reading, Retell, Paragraph Shrinking, and Prediction Relay • PALS Training Completion Certificates • Report Points (Week 4 Winning Team)

Monitoring Students

- Watch to see:
  - Are students following the routines?
  - How good is the feedback they give?
  - How strong are their main idea statements and retellings?
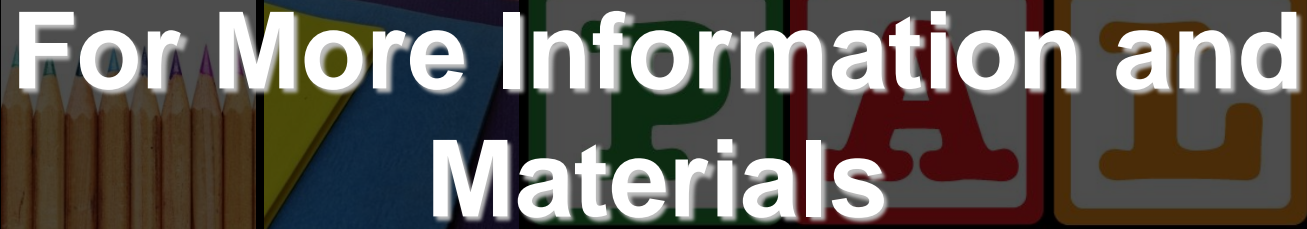 - How good are their predictions?

Monitoring is your most important job once students have started PALS!

Next Steps

1. If you haven't obtained a manual, I highly recommend purchasing one, and begin reading it ($40; http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/pals/order.html)

2. Pair your students using current reading data

3. Organize your classroom for PALS

4. Prepare PALS materials

5. Select texts

6. Look out for a brief email survey to share questions you'd like addressed in the next session

7. Join us for Session 2 on October 19!

For More Information and Materials

- Visit the Website
  - www.kc.vanderbilt.edu/pals/
- Email pals@vanderbilt.edu
- Email Kristen McMaster at University of Minnesota
  - mcmas004@umn.edu

Thanks!