Reading, Writing, and Relationships
Why, How, and What to Read Aloud to Adults
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Why would you read aloud to adults?
• Comprehension increases
• Vocabularies improve
• Critical thinking advances
• Fluency evolves
• Writing develops
• Perspectives expand
• Opinions form
• Emotions flow
• Interest grows
• Imaginations soar
• Fun happens
• Relationships blossom
• Passions ignite for reading

How do you read aloud to adults?
• Familiarize yourself with the text
• Practice reading aloud expressively
• Generate interest before beginning to read aloud
• Make the text visible to students
• Punctuate the reading periodically with purposeful questions (see More Than Twenty Questions To Ask While Reading)
• Edit the text when necessary or helpful
• Read longer selections in installments over a period of weeks or months
• Connect the read-aloud selections to other learning opportunities
• Loan a copy of the book to students who want to read it on their own after you have read it to the class

What can you read aloud to adults?
• Anything interesting for a one-lesson fling (blogs, news articles, short stories, single chapters, or a first page or two, etc.)
• Anything inspiring for a weeks-long or months-long commitment to multiple chapters or a whole book
• Illustrated children’s books for English language learners, struggling readers, and family literacy students AND for Adult Basic Ed and Adult Secondary Ed students
• Books highly rated at amazon.com in editorial and customer reviews and suggested by “Customers Who Bought This Item Also Bought”
• Books recommended on book lovers’ sites and blogs (check out booksthathealkids.blogspot.com, amightygirl.com, and goodreads.com)
• Books suggested when you have asked people (including students) if they have read any good books
• Books whose stories have inspired the making of a movie
• Books and short stories which have been excerpted in GED preparation manuals

Let’s get more specific with recommended read-aloud selections, writing prompts, and additional activities . . . .

Carrie Stell reads aloud daily in her Adult Basic Education/Adult Secondary Education classes taught through Grayson College Adult Education and Literacy at Four Rivers (an addiction outreach center) in Sherman, Texas, and at Education Plus in Gainesville, Texas. As a former Social Studies teacher in a public middle school and a retired homeschool teacher of three now grown children, she has developed enriching techniques for reading aloud in multiple contexts with diverse age groups. You may contact her at stellc@grayson.edu.