

## F: School Years

### *Helping your child with learning to read and reading to learn: Directed Reading Thinking*

Directed Reading Thinking (DRT) techniques are known to improve reading and learning for students with varying abilities, of any age, and for any reading material. DRT is also referred to as Reciprocal Reading/Teaching (RRT).

Any competent reader (e.g., parent, teacher, friend) can carry out the procedures with any student. The techniques have been shown to improve reading in high school students following as few as 20 days of using Directed Reading Thinking (DRT) or RRT.

### **What is it? How does it work?**

Struggling readers practice reading with the support of a competent reader, or helper, such as parent, teacher, or friend. Strategies to increase the student's understanding are taught with the assistance of a knowledgeable helper. Reading materials of any type can be used, including magazine, newspaper articles, stories, text books, manuals, and video games instructions.

### **Basic Procedure**

The student and helper read the chosen text silently. If the student has not yet mastered the decoding skills that a text may require, the helper and the student can alternate reading aloud, or the student may use a text to speech program to have it read to them.

Following the reading, the reading partners engage in the following sequence:

1. **Question generating** (e.g., What do I need to know)
2. **Summarizing** (e.g., What did I learn);
3. **Clarifying** (e.g., What do I need to understand better or find out more about); and
4. **Predicting** (e.g., What predictions can be made from the passage).

The student is assuming responsibility for their own learning with the assistance of the helper.

Additionally, any or all of the following can be encouraged to increase comprehension:

- **Verbal Mediation** - talking, explaining, sequencing or describing story/text.
- **Rehearsal** – Practice aloud or silently.
- **Paraphrasing** - Message is transformed into the child's own words and integrated with information the child knows.
- **Visual Imagery** - Drawing or describing a mental picture to portray the ideas or information presented.

- **Analysis of key ideas** and networking - Identify important words or concepts and relate them to familiar concepts. The student then elaborates and builds networks or bridges from stored ideas to new concepts.
- **Systematic retrieval strategy** - Ideas are elaborated on verbally and linked to previously known ideas. These elaborations improve understanding and retrieval of the material to be remembered.
- **Asking questions** and probing or inquiring about meaning
- **Summarization** - Ranges from a single sentence that captures the main idea of a paragraph to more elaborate summaries capturing the primary chunks of the story.
- **Practice and review** - If summarization proves difficult, review is necessary or clarification is required. Thus comprehension monitoring is encouraged naturally.

All of these strategies can be adjusted to the level of the students' needs. With the use of these strategies the students' understanding or comprehension of reading should improve.

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