

Reading Strategies For Content Areas Part I



During Reading

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Questions to Promote Metacomprehension

(Use "Think-alouds" and reflections to promote student use of the process of metacomprehension)

During Reading Questions

- What do you think the main ideas of the passage are so far?
- What kind of graphic organizer would you use to begin organizing these ideas?
- What did you picture in your mind about these ideas while you were reading?
- Is the information in this passage similar to anything you have learned before? How?
- What are you wondering about at this point in your reading? Write down a question.
- What is your attitude toward reading the passage at this point? Do you need to modify any of your behaviors, attitudes, or resources in order to reach your goal?

QUESTION - GENERATING STRATEGY

(Independent Practice)

1. Preview a text:
 - a. Read titles, subheadings, the table of contents
 - b. Look at pictures or illustrations
 - c. Read the *first paragraph*

2. Think of an "I Wonder" question. Write it down.

I wonder _____

3. Read to answer your question. Write the answer when you find it.

4. Ask yourself another "I Wonder" question, then read the next section to find the answer.

I wonder _____

5. Continue to read small segments - be sure to ask yourself a question *before* each section.

6. Write or draw to show the most important ideas you learned.

Read, Cover, Remember, and Retell

Unfortunately, some learners will continue reading even if they aren't understanding the material. The Read, Cover, Remember, and Retell process supports readers by stopping them frequently to THINK about the meaning. Students tell us that this strategy is very helpful during standardized testing. Thanks to Jan Ellison, Title I teacher, Beaverton, OR.

READ only as much as your hand can cover.

COVER the words with your hand.

REMEMBER what you have just read.
(It is OK to take another look.)

RETELL what you just read inside your head or to a partner.

Thick and Thin Questions

(adapted from Larry Lewin)

"Thick" and "thin" are words you can use to help students distinguish between literal-level questions that can be answered by the text alone and inferential questions that students must answer by considering both the text and their own knowledge.

Thin questions are "easy" questions; students know the answers because they are directly stated in the text.

Thick questions are "hard" questions; students have to think to find the answers because they aren't directly stated in the text.

You can use the idea of thick and thin questions in several ways.

- ❖ You might simply label your questions for students as thick and thin, to help them know what they will have to do to find answers.
- ❖ You can have students write thick and thin questions as they are reading. Direct them to stop at pre-determined places in the text (e.g., at the end of each section of a chapter) and write both thick and thin questions about that section. Because asking their own questions while they are reading is not a familiar practice (but is a strategy that proficient readers use), this activity helps students learn how to form questions as they are reading and become more active readers.
- ❖ You might require students to answer their own questions or have them trade questions with other students for answering.

(This may be an appropriate adaptation of QAR for Special Ed. Students since it's easier to differentiate between "thick" and "thin" questions.)

Question-Answer Relationships (QAR)

What is it?

QAR (Raphael, 1982; 1986) is a strategy that is "designed to demystify the questioning process, providing teachers and students with a common vocabulary to discuss different types of questions and sources of information for answering these questions..."

(Anthony & Raphael, p. 319). Four levels of questions are studied during strategy use and practice. Two are text-based QARs:

- ◆ "Right There" questions ask students to respond at the literal level; the words used to formulate the question and used to answer the question can be found "right there" in the same sentence of the text. "Right There" questions begin with words or statements such as "who is," "where is," "list," "what is," "when is," "how many," "when did," "name," "what kind of." These questions usually elicit a one-word or short-phrase response and require one right answer. Sample questions are "Who discovered America?" or "Who was the first person to walk on the moon?"
- ◆ "Think and Search" questions require students to "think" about how the information or ideas in the text relate to one another, and to "search through the entire passage they read to find information that applies. "Think and Search questions may begin with words or statements such as "summarize," "what caused," "contrast," "retell," "how did/" "explain" "find two examples," "for what reason," or "compare." A sample question is, "Which strategies could the individual described in this chapter use to improve his financial situation?"

The other QARs could be called knowledge-based because students must use their prior knowledge to answer the question:

- ◆ "Author and You" questions require students to answer with information not in the text; however, students must have read the text material to understand what the question is asking. A sample question is, "The topic of the passage was cloning. In what instances, if ever, do you think cloning should be used?"
- ◆ "On My Own" questions can be answered with information from the students' background knowledge and do not require reading the text.

Students who become skilled at this strategy recognize the relationship between the questions teachers ask and the answers they expect; therefore, they know where to find information needed for a correct response. Although teaching this strategy can take time, Richardson and Morgan (1994) report that students who learned and practiced this strategy for as little as eight weeks showed significant gains in reading comprehension.

Anthony and Raphael assert that QAR can also facilitate the transfer of control of the questioning process from teacher to learner. That is, when students become skilled at QAR, they need to rely less on their teacher because they are able to generate different levels of questions, themselves, during independent reading.

How to use it:

1. Introduce the strategy by giving students a written and verbal description of each question-answer relationship.
2. Assign short passages to be read from the textbook. As students finish reading each passage, ask them one question from each QAR category. Point out the differences between each question and the kind of answer it requires.
3. After students demonstrate that they understand the differences among the four QAR levels, assign several more short passages to be read. Again, ask one question for each category of QAR per passage, provide students with answers to the questions, and identify each question's QAR type. Discuss why the questions represent one QAR but not another.
4. Next, assign short text passages, and provide the questions and the answers. This time, however, have students identify each question as a particular QAR and explain their answer. Repeat the reading and questioning process, but have students work in groups to determine which QAR each question represents and I write out their answers, accordingly.
5. At this point have students read a longer text passage. Give them several questions, not necessarily one per QAR level. Have students individually determine the QAR and write their answers. Continue assigning longer passages and various QARs for students to identify and answer.
6. Eventually, when reading is assigned in class, students should generate various QARs on their own that they present to the rest of the class for identification and answers.

Question Answer Relationships

Four Types of Questioning

In the Book QAR's

Right There

The answer is in the text, usually easy to find. The words used to make up the question and words used to answer the question are *Right There* in the same sentence.

One day, there was.....So, Jack rode a horse to school today!

Q: What did Jack ride to school today?

A: A horse!

(Literal question)

Think and Search (Putting it Together)

The answer is in the selection, but you need to put together different pieces of information to find it. Words for the question and words for the answer are not found in the same sentence. They come from different places in the selection.

Several observations and calculations need to be made to identify minerals. First, you need to determine the Specific Gravity. This is done by...The next test is the streak test. To find a streak...Another observation is the cleavage of the mineral sample...

Q: List the observations & calculations needed to identify minerals.

(More complex literal question)

In My Head QAR's

Author and You

The answer is not in the story. You need to think about what you already know, what the author tells you in the text and how it fits together.

Martha Canary, known as "Calamity Jane," often dressed like a man. She held men's jobs like Indian scout and freight wagon driver. She was an excellent aim with that rifle she carried! Calamity was in Hays City at the same time as "Wild Bill" Hickok. One story says they were sweethearts.

Q: What kind of person was "Calamity Jane?"

(Inferential question)

On Your Own

The answer is not in the selection. You need to use your own experience. Students ask this type of question to bring out their prior knowledge.

Prior to a unit on Martin Luther King...

Q: What are the traits of a great leader?

(Evaluative question)

Where to Find Answers to Questions



"Right There"

The answer to the question is **in the text**. The words used for the question and the words for the answer are usually found in the same sentence.



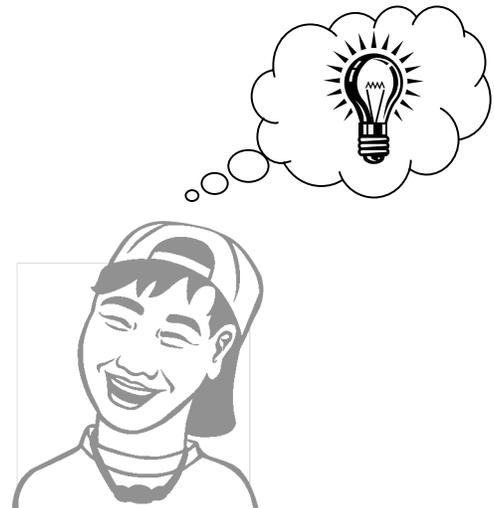
"Think and Search"

The answer is **in the text**. You need to think about different parts of the text and how ideas can be put together before you can answer the question.



"Author and You"

The answer is **not** in the text. You must think about what you already know, what the author says, and how they fit together.



"On Your Own"

The answer got you thinking, but the answer is **inside your head**. The author can't help you much. You will have to use what you already know to answer the question.

Children, Television, and Violence

Children, as well as adults, see a great deal of violence on television. Saturday morning cartoon programs show a violent act every two minutes. By high school graduation, an average youth has seen some 18,000 make-believe murders on television.

Some television critics worry that watching so much violence has negative effects on children. Experiments show that children tend to be more aggressive and overactive after viewing violence on television. Unfortunately, there are no conclusive studies on the effects of television violence after weeks, months, years of viewing.

But even television critics agree that television is not all bad. Creative programs such as "Sesame Street" may help children to develop basic skills. Many television programs, and even some commercials, show young people to see different lifestyles and cultures. American children learn about life in faraway lands. Inner-city youths learn about the lives of farm children.

RT: _____
RT: _____

T&S: _____
T&S: _____

AY: _____
AY: _____

OYO: _____
OYO: _____

Question Around

(An extension of QAR)

Procedure:

- For homework the previous night, have students generate a number of questions about the text they read.
- In class, have a student read one of his/her questions.
- Ask students to raise their hands if they know the answer to the question *and* the type of question it is.
- Have the student who posed the question call on someone who raised his or her hand.
- Have that student answer the question and tell the class which type of question it is.
- Have that student read on of his or her questions to the class.
- Repeat the process until everyone in the class has asked at least one question.

The types of question you teach your students to identify are:

Right there-The answer is in the text and easy to find. (literal comprehension)

Think & Search- The answer is in the text but comes from different parts of the text. (literal comprehension, higher level)

Author and You-The answer is not directly stated in the text. You need to "read between the lines" and draw conclusions based on what the author has said. (inferential comprehension)

On Your Own- answer is not in the text, but it relates to the reading. The answer will be based upon experience and opinion combined with the textual information. (evaluative comprehension)

OR

Literal
Inferential
Evaluative

Clarifying A Text

(Purpose: To move students to self-monitor the thinking and process they go through while reading.)

Procedure

1. Have students make the following chart:

<u>Text</u>	<u>Question or Confusion</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Clarification</u>
-------------	------------------------------	-----------------	----------------------

2. Assign a text for homework, and have students fill out the chart, noting what they needed to clarify as they read and what strategy they used.
3. Go over the charts the next day in class, and discuss the different strategies students used to help themselves out.

Clarifying

1. To make the meaning of a text clear or easier to understand by using different comprehension strategies (plans to figure out the meaning).

Steps for Clarifying

1. Ignore and read on if you understand enough to keep going
2. Keep reading to see if the meaning gets clearer
3. Reread what is unclear
4. Reread the section right before what was unclear
5. Connect what you are reading to things you already know or have read before
6. Get outside help

ReQuest

(Reciprocal Questioning)

Reciprocal questioning, or ReQuest, was developed by Manzo (1969). This procedure was designed to help students develop an inquisitive attitude about what is to be read and to help students formulate questions. Students then use the questions to set their own purpose for reading.

To use this ReQuest strategy, select material at the students' instructional or independent reading level. The students and teacher read a predetermined section of the text silently. After reading, they take turns asking each other questions. The teacher models good questioning behavior by asking questions that promote higher level thinking and the making of predictions.

Model Reciprocal Teaching Lesson:

Step One-Silent reading: Both teacher and students read the first sentence or section in a selection.

Step Two-Student Questioning: The teacher closes the book; the students keep their book open. The students may ask the teacher any question they wish that relates to that section. The teacher must answer as accurately and completely as possible. When pertinent, the teacher gives feedback to the students on the quality of the types of questions being asked.

Step Three-Teacher Questioning: The students then close their books and the teacher asks another set of questions, modeling thick/thin questions (see page 39 for details).

Step Four-Integration of text: Students and teacher continue reading sections using the same reciprocal questioning technique. Students will soon be able to project answers to questions such as "What do you think you will find out in the rest of the selection?" Integrate the new section with previous sections by asking questions that relate to new and old sections.

Content area teachers who fear that teaching reading will take time away from their content like this strategy because it focuses on content while it facilitates effective reading abilities and questioning strategies. Eventually, students should be able to engage in self-questioning, and thus improve their comprehension abilities.

Reciprocal Reading

Adapted from Palinscar and Brown

Step One: Take time to help students learn about the four underpinnings of reciprocal teaching and learning. Read an informational text to the students and stop often throughout the reading to model the following process. (*Modeling and guiding is more necessary with your younger students or special needs students. Many secondary students can take off with this reading/learning process after a simple explanation*)

- **Predict.** What do you think the next section is going to be about?
- **Read.** Model various ways to effectively read as a group.
- **Clarify.** What did the author mean when he or she said _____? What does the word _____ mean on page _____?
- **Ask yourself questions.** What were the important ideas?
- **Orally summarize the reading.** State the main idea and important details up to this point in the reading?

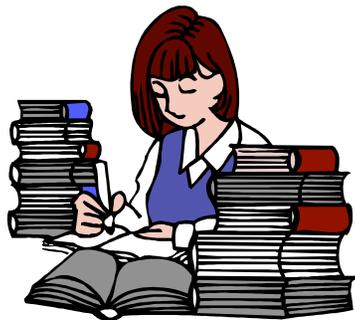
Step Two: After several "Think Aloud" experiences with the process, students are ready to continue the process in small groups. The teacher is a member of the group and takes a turn as group leader, just as the students do. Reading segments are kept short so that the students can work together to negotiate meaning in manageable chunks. The group leader reads the cards, one section at a time and guides the discussion.

The cards are passed to the next group member and the process is repeated with the next segment of reading and a new group leader.

Classroom Management hints:

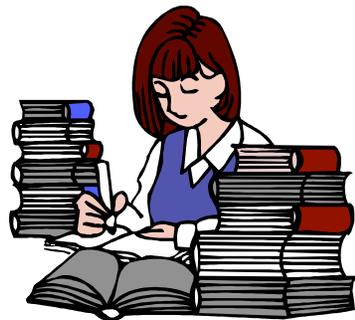
Create groups of 3-4 students. Have each student do a section of the guide and then they rotate roles. Keeps all students involved and on-task.

Another grouping option is to pair students. Assign one student to facilitate steps 1,3, and 5 for a section of reading and the other student facilitates 2 and 4. They alternate roles for each section needing to be read and processed.



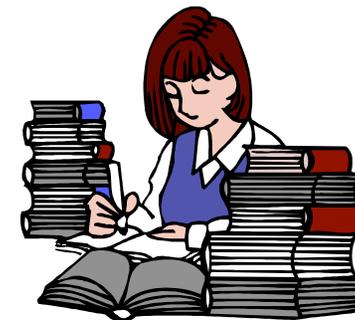
Reciprocal Reading:
Reading to
Understand

1. **Predict:**
 - What will be learned in this part?
 - What will happen next?
 - How do you know?
 - Are there any other predictions?
2. **Read:**
 - You read
 - Choose a reader
 - Whole group-silent
 - Choral Read
3. **Clarify:**
 - Does it make sense?
 - Is there a word or idea you don't understand?
 - Do you have any "I wonder" questions?
 - Discuss
4. **Question:**
 - Ask a "Teacher Question": Who? What? Where? When? How? Why? Which?
5. **Summary**
 - This part is mainly about...
 - The key ideas are...
 - It's important to remember...
 - Anything else?



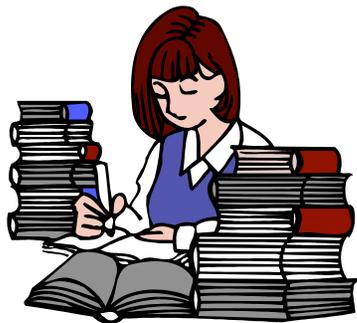
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Lectura Recíproca: Leer Para Entender

1. Predicción:

- ¿Qué se aprenderé en esta parte?
- ¿Qué pasará después?
- ¿Cómo lo sabe?
- Pedir otras predicciones.

2. Leer:

- El maestro lee.
- Un estudiante lee.
- Todo el grupo lee en silencio.
- Todo el grupo lee en voz alta.

3. Clarificación:

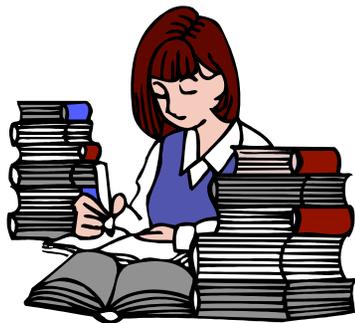
- ¿Tiene sentido?
- ¿Hay una idea o palabra que no entiende?

4. Pregunta:

- Haz una pregunta "De Maestro" como:
- ¿Quién?, ¿Qué?, ¿Dónde?, ¿Cuánto?, ¿Cómo?, ¿Por qué?, ¿Cuál?

5. Resumen:

- El maestro hace un resumen: "Esta parte en su mayoría de"
- Las ideas principales son
- Es importante recordar
- ¿Algo más?



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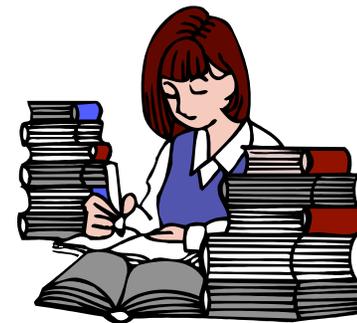
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- ¿Algo más?

Reading for Context Clues

(A model lesson from a science classroom)

Suppose you are reading and come across an unfamiliar word. You do not have a dictionary or other reference material. How do you find out what the word means? You do not even recognize the prefix, root, and suffix. What can you do? You can try to find the meaning by looking at the word's context. Context means the parts of a sentence or paragraph just before and after the word.

To find the meaning of a word by context, first look at the sentence. For example, look at the following sentence:

An inclined plane is a straight, slanted surface. From the context, you know an inclined plain is a "straight, slanted surface." Notice that words like "is" and "are" can often be clues that a definition follows.

Sometimes the meaning of a word cannot be found in the sentence. In this case, look in the sentences around the sentence containing the word. Read the following short paragraph:

A radio wave travels through space and matter as photons. These tiny packets of energy move through space at the speed of light. They pass through matter at a slower speed.

The definition of photon is not given. Yet, from the context, you know that a photon is a tiny packet of energy.

Reading for Context Clues (Continued)

PRACTICE

READ EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES. UNDERLINE THE MEANING OF THE BOLDFACED WORD.

1. The **average speed** is the total distance divided by the total time passed.
2. A seesaw is a **lever**, that is, a simple machine made of a rigid bar that is free to pivot.
3. A substance that can be hammered or shaped without breaking is said to be **malleable**.
4. Sulfuric acid is used in **dehydration**. Dehydration is the removal of water from a material.
5. A fireplace provides another kind of energy transfer: **radiation**. Radiation is the transfer of energy by electromagnetic waves.

READ EACH OF THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS. THEN WRITE THE MEANING FROM CONTEXT OF EACH OF THE WORDS OR PHRASES BELOW THE PARAGRAPH.

While studying the inert gas neon, scientists discovered that not all of the atoms of this inactive gas had the same mass. They had discovered the existence of isotopes. Isotopes of an element have the same number of protons in the nucleus, but have different masses.

6. An isotope is:
7. The word inert means:

Metals are elements that are easy to recognize and have similar properties. They are shiny, malleable (able to be hammered into sheets like aluminum), and ductile. Metals are also good conductors of electricity, allowing electricity to flow through them easily. In contrast, nonmetals have just the opposite properties, while metalloids such as boron and silicon have some properties in common with both groups.

8. An electric conductor is:
9. Malleable means:
10. A metalloid is:



3 + 3 Vocabulary

Name: _____

Below are three teacher-chosen vocabulary words for this lesson. As you are reading, add three new words of your own choosing. Words can be chosen because they are new, significant, unusual, etc.

Follow the steps with all six of the words:

1. Spell the word correctly
2. Write the sentence using the word in context; give page number
3. Write the definition of the word; give the definition that fits context
4. Tell why the word was selected on the three self-chosen word

Teacher Picks:

1. Word: _____
Sentence: _____

Definition: _____
Reason for choosing: _____
2. Word: _____
Sentence: _____

Definition: _____
Reason for choosing: _____
3. Word: _____
Sentence: _____

Definition: _____
Reason for choosing: _____

Student Picks:

4. Word: _____
Sentence: _____

Definition: _____
Reason for choosing: _____
5. Word: _____
Sentence: _____

Definition: _____
Reason for choosing: _____
6. Word: _____
Sentence: _____

Definition: _____
Reason for choosing: _____

INSERT

(An Interactive Notation System
for Effective Reading and Thinking)

Vaughn and Estes (1986) developed INSERT, which is a simple procedure to help students become more involved in their reading and to help them make decisions as they read and clarify their own understanding. This strategy consists of a marking system that records students' reactions to what is being read. If marking a book is a problem, supply students with strips of paper to place along side the text.

Some example marking codes:

✓ = I agree
X = I disagree/I thought differently
+ = New information
! = WOW
? = I wonder
??= I don't understand
* = Important

The entire INSERT marking system should be introduced gradually and may be simplified and changed when needed. Regardless of what notation system is used, the INSERT method provides a guide for thinking about and reacting to reading, which serves to improve metacognitive abilities in students.

(Special education students and ELL students also benefit from color-coded post-it notes. Use a different color for each code. Use consistent code markings and teach them one at a time. "Today we are going to read and notice when we see information that is new to us. Please place a yellow post-it note marked with a + at the location of new formation and facts you learn while reading.")

Simplified Insert Note Taking

1. Students place post-it notes alongside the text as they are reading. Students label post-it notes with a "+" for new information they have read which they understand or a "?" for new information which is confusing, new words which they don't know, etc. Students also write a phrase or sentence on the post-it note that specifically describes what they know or have questions about. They should also write down the page number from the text.
2. After completing the reading, students transfer their post-it notes to the form.
3. In small groups or as an entire class, students first discuss new information they understood. Next they discuss new information they don't understand. Students should be encouraged to reread sections where they still have questions. In this way all post-it notes can be moved to the "+" column.
4. The insert note taking form can be used later as a review tool.



Simplified Insert Note Taking

+

New information
I understand

?

New information
I don't understand

Three Column Notes

Main Headings	Key Points	Questions and Clarifications

Adopted from Pam Mathews, Oregon Reading Summit, March 2000

Content Response Notes

Name: _____

Title of Non-Fiction: _____

Format: (Text, Video, Speaker) _____

Content (Facts)	Response (Thoughts, questions, connections, ah-has)

NOTES

Information Worth Noting

Summary of Key Ideas

Graphic Representation of Key Ideas

Questions ? (I wonder...)

Discussion Web Instructions

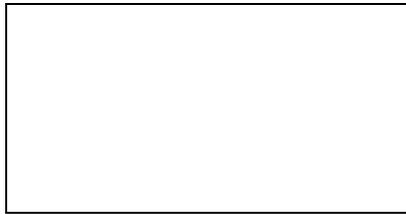
1. Present a controversial statement. For example: "Slave traders were justified in their actions." Have students write the statement in the box of the Discussion Web.
2. Ask students to read the text to locate information that supports and refutes the statement. Have students write this information in the stems of the Discussion Web.
3. Next ask students to discuss their webs with a partner. They should note differences and add any new information to their web.
4. Discuss the statement with the entire class. Encourage them to use their webs during the discussion.
5. Ask students to write a short paragraph that expresses their opinion and uses information from their web to support their opinion.



Adapted from the ASCD video, *During Reading Strategies for the Content Area*

Discussion Web

Yes



No

Say Something

Poor readers often don't see reading as an active process. As a result, they see the words but don't construct any meaning while reading a text. During reading strategies such as "Say Something" help students to read actively by

- predicting what will happen next
- questioning what they don't understand or what is confusing in the text
- monitoring their understanding of the text
- identifying ways to fix up what has confused them in the text
- clarifying what has confused them
- commenting on the text or their understanding of the text
- connecting what they are reading to other texts or personal experiences
- visualizing the text

Say Something (Harste, Short, and Burke, 1988) is a very simple strategy that interrupts a student's reading of a text, giving her a chance to think about what she is reading. It encourages her to talk about what she has read while reading. This is important because it is more critical, especially for dependent readers, to talk about texts during the reading experience than after it.

The process for Say Something is simple. Students get into groups of two or three and take turns reading a portion of the text aloud. As they read, they occasionally pause to "say something" about what was read. They make a prediction, ask a question, clarify confusion, comment on what's happening, or connect what's in the text to something they know. The reading partners offer a response to what was said, then a different student continues the reading until the next time they pause to say something.

Teacher Instructions for Say Something

1. *First, model the strategy*
2. *Explain the procedure to students. Go over the rules. Give them a certain number of paragraphs to read (e.g. 3 or 4) before they stop to say something.*
3. *The partner's job is to offer a response to what was said. In particular, the partner should try to answer questions.*
4. *Help dependent readers make comments by providing stem starters (see below).*
5. *Students first need to practice using Say Something on very short texts*

Rules for Say Something

1. With your partner, decide who will say something first.
2. When you say something, do one or more of the following:
 - Make a prediction
 - Ask a question
 - Clarify something you had misunderstood
 - Make a comment
 - Make a connection
3. If you can't do one of those five things, then you need to reread.

Stem Starters for Say Something comments

Make a Prediction

- I predict that...
- I bet that...
- I think that...
- Since this happened (fill in detail), then I bet the next thing that is going to happen is...
- Reading this part makes me think that this (fill in detail) is about to happen...
- I wonder if...

Ask a Question

- Why did...
- What's this part about...
- How is this (fill in detail) like this (fill in detail)...
- What would happen if...
- Why...
- Who is...
- What does this section (fill in detail) mean...
- Do you think that...
- I don't get this part here...

Clarify Something

- Oh, I get it...
- Now I understand...
- This makes sense now...
- No, I think it means...
- I agree with you. This means...
- At first I thought (fill in detail), but now I think...
- This part is really saying...

Make a Comment

- This is good because...
- This is hard because...
- This is confusing because...
- I like the part where...
- I don't like this part because...
- My favorite part so far is...
- I think that...

Make a Connection

- This reminds me of...
- This part is like...
- This is similar to...
- The differences are...
- I also (name something in the text that has also happened to you)
I never (name something in the text that has never happened to you)...