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Facilitator Guidebooks for Reading Strategy Workshops in:

Reciprocal Teaching

Scaffolding

Journaling

by

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Introduction

These reading instructional materials (Reading Strategy Power Point presentations and supporting Guidebooks for Facilitators) were developed in response to a concern with the low reading skills of many Career and Technical Education (CTE) students. Further, the reading strategies incorporated in these materials were selected for their proven effectiveness with students from a variety of backgrounds, and in particular, with students in selected CTE programs in Pennsylvania through a research and development project conducted by the Temple University Center for Professional Development in Career and Technical Education funded by the Pennsylvania State Department of Education, Bureau of Career and Technical Education, (Wichowski & Garnes, 2003-04).

Reading is a fundamental skill. It is central to all learning and contributes to varying levels of success in school as well as in the workplace. After an analysis of the 1999 National Assessment of Educational Progress, NAEP, examination data, it was concluded that the reading levels of high school age students are alarmingly low. It has been determined that reading ability level is the common denominator for predicting success levels on all of the NAEP examinations.

 The ability to read at an early age is an accurate predictor for later success in school as well as in other aspects of one's life. It has the ability to predict academic success, academic difficulty, discipline problems and drop-out rates with a fairly high level of accuracy. Even more serious, it should be noted that sociologists in several states have used early elementary grade reading scores (first, second and third grade) to accurately predict prison populations at a point fifteen years later.

According to the National Institute for Literacy, unemployment rates among people with very low literacy rates were 4 to 7 times higher than individuals in the labor force with high literacy rates (Sims, 1999). PSSA 2001 data of 11th grade vocational-technical students indicated that 61% sometimes or rarely consider the purpose of reading. Yet, the ability to read and the application of reading in the workplace is increasingly critical and schools must play a leading role in creating interventions that will increase reading ability.

Traditionally, the teaching of reading in Pennsylvania, as well as in most states, does not extend beyond the sixth grade. Further, the availability of any specialized reading support beyond the sixth grade is usually not provided unless a student has a severe reading problem. Under this structure, the good reader will often evolve into a good student. The average or poor reader will likely remain an average or poor student. Without any additional assistance, the fate of the marginal reader is not very promising.

Also contributing to this unfortunate situation is the preparation of the teacher. Almost all teachers (and it should be noted that this includes most English teachers, as well as most other academic and CTE teachers) have not been exposed to nor have they been professionally prepared to use reading strategies in their instruction. Despite this, there are content related instructional modifications that can be done by the teacher to assist the marginal reader. Further, these modifications may be particularly effective in a CTE setting.

It is important to recognize that the CTE student is motivated. Most CTE students have **elected** to be in a CTE program area because they are interested in it. This basic fact is extremely important for at least two fundamental reasons. First, this motivation provides a window of opportunity for the teacher to integrate proven reading strategies into the CTE instructional process. Secondly, many of these reading strategies that can be incorporated into the delivery of CTE content are particularly appealing to the interactive learning styles which are characteristic of many CTE students.

This instructional modification will provide the CTE student who may be a marginal reader with the reading skills that the good reader already has developed. And they can provide the CTE student who is already a good reader with skills that will further enhance their reading ability.

It should be noted that the use of these reading strategies is not an attempt to make the CTE teacher a reading teacher. Nor is it an attempt to change the focus of the CTE instructional content. It is, however, an opportunity for CTE teachers to incorporate proven reading strategies into their instructional practices in order to enhance the teaching learning process for the instructor and their students.

Ultimately, the use of these strategies will improve the reading ability of CTE students in the classroom and be transported with them after graduation to the workplace and throughout all aspects of their life. The following student outcomes have been documented by CTE teachers who have incorporated these reading strategies into their instructional practices.

    1. Students are adopting new reading techniques which include predicting, questioning, clarifying, knowledge chunking, outlining, think-pair-share, scanning to locate key information, and student reflection.

    2. Students are participating more in class discussion, are asking more questions, have a more enhanced vocabulary, are following instructions better, are having greater content related dialog among students, and are displaying a greater comprehension of material studied.

    3. There were 12% gains on 11th grade PSSA Reading scores.

4. Students developed their own vocabulary games by adopting a variation of post-it-note reading strategies.

5. Students are self monitoring their reading strategies and are suggesting ways to learn more content.

6. There has been between an 8% and a 20% increase in student scores on teacher made tests.

7. The pass rate of students on publisher made tests has increased to 95% when compared to a pass rate of 40% in previous years on difficult unit tests.

8. The use of different reading strategies contributes to the needs of a wide range of learning styles.

9. Reading gains were also noted in students with IEPs.

Other results have been noted on an individual basis as well as throughout the climate of the entire classroom. Some individual students have gained more self-confidence and achieved a greater sense of self-worth. Collectively, this change in individuals has contributed to a whole class environment that is much more participatory with students prepared for class and ready to learn.

The strategies that are included in these instructional materials are divided into 3 major categories. These are Reciprocal Teaching, Scaffolding, and Journaling. Each of the Guidebooks for Facilitators is organized around a Power Point presentation and includes the following, (1) Power Point Presentation, (2) List of Materials, (3) Facilitator Instructions, (4) Participant Instructions, (5) Facilitator Readings, and (6) Handouts for the Delivery of the Presentation are included in the Appendix. The Power Point presentation for each of the strategies is on the CD ROM provided with the instructional materials notebook.

The success of any of these strategies being integrated into the instructional process requires that they be used with intention, refection, and with guided practice over several applications. Further, it is also recommended that care be used in the selection of each strategy so that it fits the content of the lesson that it will be used with.

The successful adoption of any new teaching strategy takes several applications before it becomes a technique that the teacher has executive control over. This is true of reading strategies as well. As is the case with all good teaching, the use of reflective practices is a very powerful tool for achieving success. It is therefore recommended that reflective

practices be incorporated into the several stages associated with the adoption process with each of the reading strategies (i.e., novice to intermediate to expert). To gain maximum benefit, reflective practices should be used prior to, during, and as a post-teaching activity with the delivery of each strategy.

In addition to self-guided reflection, there can be even greater benefit if the knowledge gained from individual reflection experiences becomes part of a professional dialog with another teacher or teachers involved in the adoption of reading strategies in their content areas. Similar professional conversations during the adoption process can also take place with a peer coach or mentor during a regularly scheduled weekly helping conference. Most importantly, it should be recognized that the adoption of any new instructional strategy is a process that takes time and should not be done in isolation.

Some general questions that can be used to guide self-reflection, as well to frame professional dialog with a colleague or during a helping conference, are relatively simple. These include: what worked ?, what didn't work?, and how can improvement be achieved? More specific questions that are better suited to support reflection or the helping conference to aid in the implementation of reading strategies include:

> 1. How did the reading strategy (ies) work in regard to:
>
>> a. student reception/reaction?
>>
>> b. text/content appropriateness?
>>
>> c. integration into the curriculum?
>>
>> d. teacher interaction with students?
>
> 2. Describe any difficulties that may have been experienced when delivering the reading strategy.
>
>> a. How can any difficulties encountered be solved in the future?
>
> 3. Describe the successes that were observed with students as the reading strategy was being implemented.
>
>> a. How can these successes be planned for in the future?
>
> 4. Cite examples of questions that students asked when they were predicting, clarifying, and summarizing what they have read.
>
>> a. What actions can be taken to contribute to the generation of similar questions in the future?

The Guidebooks for Facilitators were developed in a self-contained manner and include everything needed to support in-service reading strategy training. Sometimes a facilitator may wish to learn more about a particular reading strategy or someone in the training session may wish to learn more about a particular reading strategy. To support either of these situations, it should be noted that the following primary reference books are cited in the "Facilitators Reading" section on many pages of the Guidebooks for Facilitators:

Reciprocal Teaching:

McKenna, Michael, C. (2002) *Help for Struggling Readers, Strategies for Grades 3-8*, Guilford Press: NY, NY. ISBN: -57230-760-9.

Scaffolding:

Stephens, Elaine, C. & Brown, Jean E. (2000) *A Handbook of Content Literacy Strategies: 75 Practical Reading and Writing Ideas*, Christopher-Gorden Publishers: Norwod, MA ISBN: 0-926842-96-X.

Journaling:

Billmeyer, Rachel & Barton, Mary Lee. (1998) *Teaching Reading in the Content Area, If Not Me, Then Who?* Second Edition, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), Alexandria, VA. ISBN: 1-893476-05-7.

These reference books have been identified as the primary sources for additional information in each of the Facilitator Guidebooks. In some cases, other secondary reference books are also listed in the Facilitator Guidebooks

Based on the successful results of the use of the reading strategies in several CTE settings over the past two years, I am confident that with some reasonable level of lesson preparation, reflection, and guided practice, teachers will find that the incorporation of these strategies into their instructional practices will be of great value. Further, it is expected that CTE teachers will begin to see a difference in the atmosphere of the classroom – students will be more prepared for class, be more involved as active learners, and as expected - increase their reading ability.

My best wishes for success to you and to your students.

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