

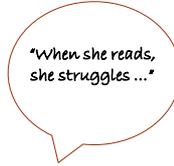
# Evidence Based Reading Comprehension Strategies: Proven Tools for Teachers

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1

## DO NOW:

Think of a child who struggles to understand what they read. Share a little about that child with your neighbor.



2

## Welcome

- Jennifer Gensor
  - Literacy Consultant – bringing evidence based practices to schools and districts
  - Currently - Literacy Training Specialist at Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES
  - Previously - Director of Curriculum & Professional Development at Independent School in Greenwich, CT
  - Special Ed and General Ed Teacher
  - Parent of child with disabilities

3

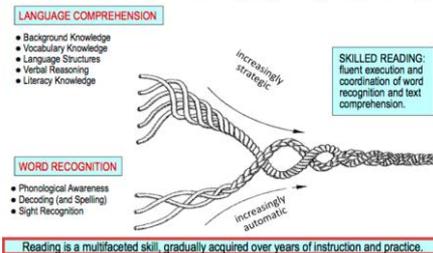
## Agenda

- Challenges of Reading Comprehension
- Research in Evidence Based Practices
- QAR
- Reciprocal Teaching
- Big Ideas



4

## Scarborough's Reading Rope (2001)



5

## Reading Today

"The Common Core asks students to read stories and literature, as well as more complex texts that provide facts and background knowledge in areas such as science and social studies. Students will be challenged and asked questions that push them to refer back to what they've read. This stresses critical-thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills that are required for success in college, career, and life."

Common Core State Standards Initiative Homepage  
<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>

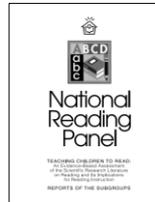
6

## Key Aspects of ELA

1. Regular practice with complex texts and their academic language
2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from texts, both literary and informational
3. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction

7

## Findings of the National Reading Report



- Focused on children in Grades K – 12, so findings relevant for ALL students
- Determined five key components to an effective reading program:
  1. Phonemic Awareness
  2. Phonics
  3. Fluency
  4. Vocabulary
  5. Reading Comprehension Strategies

8

## What is reading comprehension?

*“... the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language.”*

RAND Reading Study Group, 2002

9

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10

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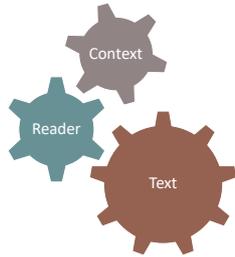
11

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12



13

### Components of Effective Reading Comprehension Instruction from NRP Report

1. Comprehension Monitoring
2. Cooperative Learning
3. Graphic Organizers
4. Story Structure
5. Question Answering
6. Question Generating
7. Summarization
8. Multiple Strategies



14

### Active Reading —→ Staying Engaged!

What are "independent" readers doing, while they read? What habits of mind are they using?

- ✓ Activating prior knowledge
- ✓ Predicting
- ✓ Visualizing
- ✓ Wondering
- ✓ Recapping and previewing
- ✓ Connecting (Text to Self, Text to Text, Text to World)
- ✓ Thinking about authors' craft and choices
- ✓ Recording their thinking through words and pictures
- ✓ Developing theories, synthesizing information, and evaluating
- ✓ Applying "fix-up" strategies when encounter difficulties

**Challenge:** How can we teach our "dependent" readers to do what our "independent" readers do naturally and routinely?

15

All strategies are based on active engagement with text!

16



### Evident Based Practices in Reading Comprehension

17

### QAR (Question-Answer Relationship)

QAR is a reading comprehension strategy developed to "clarify how students approach the task of reading texts and answering questions" (Raphael 1986).

Students are instructed in how to identify, consider, answer and generate two types of questions: "In the Text/Book" or "In My Head".

These questions are then broken down further into four types of relationships:

In the Text/Book	In My Head
Right There (Literal)	Author and Me (Inferential)
Think and Search (Literal/Synthesis)	On My Own (Evaluative)



18

### Reasons to use QAR

- Encourages students to be critical readers by using text structure to locate information and determining when an inference is needed
- Provides students with a strategy for analyzing text based comprehension questions
- Can help them ask effective questions as they read and respond to text
- Teaching students the QAR strategy encourages **teachers** to be aware of and improve the types of questions they ask their students (ask higher level questions)
- According to research cited by National Institute for Literacy, this instruction improves comprehension



19

### How to introduce QAR

- Explicitly teach each category of questions (In the Book & In my Head)
- Teach subcategories using well known text
  - Students answer questions about the text, and then teacher guides them in figuring out where they found their answers
  - Students generate questions about a text, and teacher guides them in determining what types of questions they are asking
  - Additional instruction via think-alouds to get students to generate more Think and Search and Author and Me questions
- Reinforce this strategy whenever students are answering questions about a text, or when they need to generate questions about a text

20

### QAR – Let’s Go (pg. 7)

*How long has Tom lived in Marysville?*

Tom has lived in Marysville **his entire life**. However, tomorrow, Tom and his family would be moving 200 miles away to Grand Rapids. Tom hated the idea of having to move. He would be leaving behind his best friend, Ron, the baseball team he had played on for the last two years, and the big swing in his backyard where he liked to sit and think. And to make matters worse, he was moving on his birthday! Tom would be **thirteen tomorrow**. He was going to be a teenager! He wanted to spend the day with his friends, not watching his house being packed up and put on a truck. He thought that moving was a horrible way to spend his birthday. What about a party? What about spending the day with his friends? What about what he wanted? That was just the problem. No one ever asked Tom what he wanted.

**13 years:**  
Think and Search

21

### QAR – Let’s Go

*What is the name of the town where Tom and his family is moving?*

Tom has lived in Marysville his entire life. However, **tomorrow**, Tom and his family would be moving 200 miles away to **Grand Rapids**. Tom hated the idea of having to move. He would be leaving behind his best friend, Ron, the baseball team he had played on for the last two years, and the big swing in his backyard where he liked to sit and think. And to make matters worse, he was moving on his birthday! Tom would be thirteen tomorrow. He was going to be a teenager! He wanted to spend the day with his friends, not watching his house being packed up and put on a truck. He thought that moving was a horrible way to spend his birthday. What about a party? What about spending the day with his friends? What about what he wanted? That was just the problem. No one ever asked Tom what he wanted.

**Grand Rapids:**  
Right There

22

### QAR – Let’s Go

*What might Tom do to make moving to a new town easier for him?*

Tom has lived in Marysville his entire life. However, tomorrow, Tom and his family would be moving 200 miles away to Grand Rapids. Tom **hated the idea of having to move**. He would be leaving behind his best friend, Ron, the baseball team he had played on for the last two years, and the big swing in his backyard where he liked to sit and think. And to make matters worse, he was moving on his birthday! Tom would be thirteen tomorrow. He was going to be a teenager! He wanted to spend the day with his friends, not watching his house being packed up and put on a truck. He thought that moving was a horrible way to spend his birthday. What about a party? What about spending the day with his friends? What about what he wanted? That was just the problem. No one ever asked Tom what he wanted.

**He could invite his friend Ron to visit, join a baseball team, and put up a big swing in his new yard.**  
Author and Me

23

### QAR – Let’s Go

*Does Tom like playing on the baseball team he has played on for the last two years?*

Tom has lived in Marysville his entire life. However, tomorrow, Tom and his family would be moving 200 miles away to Grand Rapids. Tom **hated the idea of having to move**. He would be leaving behind his best friend, Ron, the baseball team he had played on for the last two years, and the big swing in his backyard where he liked to sit and think. And to make matters worse, he was moving on his birthday! Tom would be thirteen tomorrow. He was going to be a teenager! He wanted to spend the day with his friends, not watching his house being packed up and put on a truck. He thought that moving was a horrible way to spend his birthday. What about a party? What about spending the day with his friends? What about what he wanted? That was just the problem. No one ever asked Tom what he wanted.

**Yes, I can infer he likes it because he is sad to leave it, and he played on it for two years.**  
Author and Me

24

## QAR – Let’s Go

In what ways  
would moving to  
a new city be  
exciting?

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Ron:  
Right There

On My Own

25

## QAR – Wrap Up

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XekLk5CAV6g>)



26

## Reciprocal Teaching



- Students become the teacher/leader in small group reading sessions
- Students learn to guide group *discussions* using four skills:
  - Summarizing
  - Question generating
  - Clarifying (Monitoring Comprehension)
  - Predicting
- Each student has the opportunity to fill each role within one text (< 4 paragraphs).

27

## Reasons to Use Reciprocal Teaching

- Promotes self-directed, content area learning
- Explicitly teaches four of the strategies independent readers do automatically
- Uses the four roles as a foundation for higher level conversations about the text
- Encourages students to be actively involved and monitor their comprehension as they read
- John Hattie ranks this as one of the most effective teaching strategies with an effective size of .74

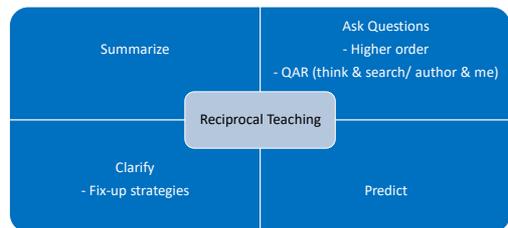
28

## How to introduce Reciprocal Teaching

1. Teach students through explicit instruction using think-alouds and modeling, how to use each of the four strategies (predicting, generating questions, clarifying information or using “fix up” strategies, and summarizing) one at a time
2. Once they are proficient in at least two, students practice working in groups using these strategies with familiar text
3. Eventually, students are running their own discussions with students rotating roles within a single text, monitoring their comprehension and their ability to work as a group
4. *Remember:* Students should be explicitly taught HOW to work in groups

29

Reciprocal Teaching Packet – 3<sup>rd</sup> Page



30

## Reciprocal Teaching: Model

### Hydro Thermal Vents

1. Get into groups of 4 & take out recording sheet
2. Each of you pick a role
3. Predictor predicts what the passage will be about given the text features (title, photograph) writes it down and shares with others
4. Each person reads the passage (in your folder) and jots down thoughts (predictor checks prediction)
5. Group shares with one another, predictor goes first.



Predictor/Prediction Verifier  
Summarizer  
Questioner  
Clarifier

31

## Reciprocal Teaching: Model



### Hydro Thermal Vents

Deep, deep under the ocean, there is a place unlike anywhere else on earth. In a place so deep that it's impossible for sunlight to reach it, great rocky tubes shoot up from the sea floor. These tubes, or chimneys, belch out what looks like black smoke, all day and all night. The "smoke" is in fact a mixture of minerals from deep within the earth, which shoot out of the chimneys at extremely hot temperatures. For many years after these things (which scientists now call "hydrothermal vents") were discovered, scientists were sure that nothing could live anywhere near them. However, they now know that these zones sustain huge communities of organisms.

**Prediction:** I think this is going to describe hydrothermal vents and I think that they are something in the sea.

**Summary:** Hydrothermal vents, rocky tubes that shoot out hot minerals, exist at the bottom of the sea and support other organisms.

**Questions:** What does belch mean? How do organisms survive in these places?

**Clarifications:** "hydro" is a prefix meaning water (like keep hydrated when I play tennis) and "thermal" means hot (like a thermal blanket on my bed), so these vents must have hot water in them.

**Prediction Verification:** I was right!

32

## Reciprocal Teaching – Wrap Up

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tC032EkLC3A>)



33

## Big Ideas for Teachers / Administrators

1. Reading comprehension requires active engagement with text
2. Teachers must explicitly teach students to use the strategies & habits independent readers use (summarizing, predicting, answering/generating questions, utilizing text structure, etc.)
  - Model
  - Think aloud
3. Protocols such as QAR and Reciprocal Teaching are scaffolds to guide students to use the strategies independently – they are not the goal!
4. Students need time to READ meaningful texts and practice these strategies across all content areas

34



35