

Up to the Moment Thinking about Strategy Instruction

{
Ellin Oliver Keene
ellin@mosaicliteracy.com
www.mosaicliteracy.com

- ⌘ Do the concepts we teach and the insights children have from reading outlast the intervals?
- ⌘ Do students retain and reapply in six days, six weeks, six months?

The conversation now...

Research in comprehension (thinking) strategy instruction was most recently synthesized in:

- ⌘ Essential Elements of Fostering and Teaching Reading Comprehension Nell K. Duke, P. David Pearson, Stephanie L. Strachan, and Alison K. Billman in What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction (4th ed.) edited by S. Jay Samuels and Alan E. Farstrup. 2011 by the International Reading Association.
- ⌘ Pearson has a power point that highlights this article

Up to the minute

- ⌘ They are tools to help learners remember and reapply what they have learned
- ⌘ They provide the connective tissue in conversations about texts and topics
- ⌘ They are problem solving tools that help kids become more independent

Thinking Strategies help beat the odds...

⌘ Thinking strategy instruction is supported by decades of research

⌘ Children should be involved in strategy learning from the earliest grades through high school

Up to the minute...

- ⌘ Strategies are the “means to the end”, not the standard, the outcome or the objective. Strategies are tools to deepen understanding
- ⌘ Students learn thinking strategies through the gradual release of responsibility model

Up to the minute

- ⌘ Comprehension in narrative and informational texts are fundamentally different processes
- ⌘ Narrative text elements and informational text features AND structures help students predict effectively

Up to the minute

- ⌘ Students need to be engaged in a wide variety of texts and media including text that builds world knowledge
- ⌘ The single most important thing we can do is to provide students with long and growing periods of time to read independently, focused on clear and describable goals

Up to the minute

- ⌘ It is unlikely we'll see another synthesis of this kind
- ⌘ Issues around study of strategies in workshop classrooms
- ⌘ Issue around a number of studies that looked at less proficient or early-career teachers
- ⌘ Issues around “popular writing about strategies”

Some issues to mention...

⌘ One strategy at a time vs. integration
– the million dollar question that
isn't...

⌘ We know that integration is how
proficient readers use strategies *in familiar
genre and when they have schema.*
However...

⌘ We know that developing readers need to
develop knowledge of individual
strategies *in order* to integrate them.

Individual vs. integration

- ∅ They need individual strategies in order to learn to articulate thinking.
- ∅ They need individual strategies in unfamiliar genres and tougher text.

Individual vs. Integration

- ⌘ The answer to the question is....
 - ⌘ Both!
 - ⌘ Consider thinking aloud at the beginning and end of the year to show integration of the strategies in familiar types of text.
 - ⌘ Consider more focused study of a strategy during the year as students delve into more challenging text.
 - ⌘ Consider integrating strategies you've already taught as you move into new strategy instruction.

Individual vs. integration

⌘ Let's examine our own thinking
first

⌘ Listen as I read Mother #5

⌘ Pay attention to your thinking as I
read

Thinking Strategies for Ourselves

- ⌘ Select one thinking strategy from the key ideas list
- ⌘ Study it carefully
- ⌘ Meet with a partner – make sure your partner was reading about a different strategy
- ⌘ Do a think aloud for one portion of Mother #5 – focus on one strategy.
- ⌘ What do you notice? What are the implications for students?

Focus and think aloud

- ⌘ Thinking aloud and modeling are the tools of the trade – and they're different!
- ⌘ Great comprehension instruction is based on the Gradual Release of Responsibility model (Pearson/Gallagher)

Best approaches to comprehension instruction

- ⌘ What are the markers or indicators of deeper understanding?
- ⌘ How can we know, at the point of instruction, whether students will retain and reapply what they learn?

What does deeper understanding look/sound like?

& **Empathy** -- a belief that the reader is actually a part of the setting, knows the characters, stands alongside them in their trials, brings something of himself to the events and resolution -- emotions are aroused

What engagement and understanding looks like

↳ **Experience a memorable emotional response** – the sense that what the reader feels may be part of his/her emotional life for a long time

What engagement and understanding looks like

⌘ **A sense of the aesthetic** – a desire to linger with portions of the text or linger with the events the reader finds beautiful, original, funny or moving – the desire to experience the text again

What engagement and understanding look like

A **desire to act** – children may act in some way to mitigate or resolve related conflicts in the world

{ What engagement and understanding look like

- ⌘ If we want students to retain and reapply, we need to focus on fewer concepts in much greater depth, over a longer period of time with ample opportunities to apply
- ⌘ Thinking strategy instruction helps students think more deeply
- ⌘ Thinking aloud and modeling are our instructional staples
- ⌘ We can describe deeper understanding for students – we need to watch for those outcomes

What are your takeaways?