

HIAS OPEN RESOURCE

Reciprocal reading strategies

Supporting all readers in secondary schools

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Final version

Overview

This document contains...

Slides that could be used as part of a CPD sequence for teachers in school, supporting understanding of reading in secondary schools

Points to consider when using this resource

The resources in this series are intended as a companion piece to the DfE's series of training videos and guidance [*Supporting all readers in secondary school*](#), providing additional detail. This resource expands on ideas shared in video 8, [*Teaching reading comprehension*](#) and provides links to research.

Reciprocal reading

- Reciprocal reading is an approach that involves giving students individual roles within a small group working together towards comprehension of a given piece of text
- This approach allows teachers to focus on one particular reading strategy at a time, and gives all members of the group a role and a focus.
- The strategies used within reciprocal reading may be developed and practised independently, but an effective reader will need to use them in combination in order to comprehend challenging texts, and the approach should be considered a stepping-stone towards a holistic approach to reading rather than a long-term strategy.
- [Palincsar, A.S., & Brown, A.L. \(1986\). Reciprocal teaching: Teaching reading as thinking. Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.](#)
- [Cockerill, M., O'Keeffe, J., Thurston, A., & Taylor, A. \(2022\). Reciprocal Reading for struggling readers: An exemplar of evidence implementation in schools. Review of Education, 10, e3332](#)

Roles within reciprocal reading

Role	Strategies
<p>Prediction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to reading, use the easily accessible information (eg images, headings, subheadings, boxed content) to predict the content, tone and purpose of the writing. • Make connections with background knowledge of the topic to add depth to predictions about the text. • Give reasons for ideas about what the text will cover and the perspective of the author. • During reading, notice details and make suggestions about what will come about as a result of these details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eg, in fiction, based on characters' behaviour or details about their situation, predict what they may do next • eg, in non-fiction, based on information provided, predict what conclusions and recommendations the author will make.

Roles within reciprocal reading

Role	Strategies
<p>Questioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to reading, ask big questions that will provide a goal within the reading of the text, eg in a non-fiction text about the impact of climate change in different areas of the world, ask a question such as ‘Which part of the world will be most seriously affected by climate change?’ • During reading, pose questions about the information given within the text, especially ‘why?’ questions. Try to work out the answers to these questions using information from the text. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eg, in fiction, ask ‘Why did the character do X?’ or ‘Why did the writer include this detail? How might it be important later?’ • eg, in non-fiction, when reading a statement, ask why this might be the case, or ask how details given in different paragraphs might fit together • eg, in any text, ask ‘Why does this matter?’ and make attempts to find answers in the text.

Roles within reciprocal reading

Role	Strategies
<p>Clarifying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to reading, skim and scan for unfamiliar vocabulary. Clarify the meaning of key words either using a dictionary or online tool, or using knowledge of root words and affixes. • During reading, pay close attention to the language of the text. Note any terms that are unfamiliar and work out the meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • look within the word for elements that are familiar, eg root words and affixes • use the sentence to work out what kind of word is required and the type of idea that might fit • read on to see whether the word is defined or the meaning is revealed in the next couple of sentences • if impossible to work out the meaning of the word from the word itself and the context, look the word up • Pay attention to sentence length and complexity and re-read longer sentences to clarify the meaning. • Clarify the meaning of any idioms or images that are used in the text.

Roles within reciprocal reading

Role	Strategies
<p>Summarising</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to reading, look at the text and identify key sections. This might be based on features such as headings and subheadings, or chapter boundaries, or paragraphs. Plan for pause points to review the content of each section. • During reading, pause at the end of a section and recite the content of the text as if explaining it to someone who has not read the text. Include key details and ensure that the order of information is clear. Use discourse markers to keep the summary clear: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eg, in fiction, ‘In this part of the chapter, we’re introduced to character X. At first glance, he appears to be... It describes his appearance, and we find out that he is wearing... and has X unusual feature. We learn that he comes from Y and knows Z character from...’ • eg, in non-fiction, ‘This section is about X. X has three key features: W, Y and Z. W means that ... Y means that... and Z means that...’ • Notice any key terms that come up in each section and ensure that these are clearly understood (link to clarifying)

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Please contact Joanna Kenyon Joanna.Kenyon@hants.gov.uk for support with secondary reading, whole school literacy and English.

For further details on the full range of services available please contact us using the following email: htlcdev@hants.gov.uk

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