

Strategic Rereading

1. Whisper read the passage, underlining all the words you're not sure of.

Note: Students need to learn to select a manageable chunk of text to use with this strategy. We suggest no more than one-two paragraphs to begin.

2. Read the passage a second time for expression, skipping the underlined words. (You can do another whisper read or read it silently.)
 - a. As you read, write the four W's (*who, what, where, when*) in the margins as you find them in the passage.
 - b. If you have identified all four Ws, skip to Step 5. If not, continue with Step 3.

3. Use the decoding strategy on words that keep you from understanding the text.

Important Note for Teachers: *If the students have a lot of words underlined, they should choose to decode just a few at a time, and repeat steps 2-5 until they can summarize the passage. Trying to take on too many words in each pass will end up discouraging them, and they will most likely quit.*

4. Whisper or silently read the passage again, including the new words you just decoded.
 - a. As you read, fill in the missing W's (*who, what, where, when*) in the margins again as you find them in the passage.
 - b. If you have identified all four Ws, skip to Step 5. If not, repeat from Step 3.

5. Record the 4 W's.

Important Note for Teachers: *Some students may be more successful just orally sharing the 4 W's from the notes in their margins. That's okay. This strategy is about reading comprehension, not writing. It's also important to understand that this is not the same as a comprehensive written summary—this is just a tool to help students identify the critical information from a difficult reading passage.*



Strategic Rereading

1. Whisper read, underlining words you're not sure of (meaning or sound).
2. Read again for expression, skipping those words. Note the four W's in the margins as you read.
 - a. *Have you found all four W's?*
 - b. *If so, skip to step 5. If not, continue with step 3.*
3. Use the decoding strategy on words that keep you from understanding the text.
4. Reread with those words.
5. Repeat steps 3, and 4 until you have found all four W's.



Directions for teachers

Overview

- In the following section we outline the process we use in the LA Intervention Project to build students' ability to read and comprehend silently. Since our program is targeted toward secondary struggling readers, it's critically important that we don't assume they have the skills they need to be able to read silently and make meaning of what they read on their own. Instead, we systematically scaffold their skills by starting with an oral reading strategy we call Strategic Rereading.
- In Strategic Rereading we directly teach the often unstated rule about reading—that we don't have to be able to read and understand every single word in a passage to understand the passage itself. Good readers learn this implicitly, but struggling readers often assume that everyone else can perfectly decode every word, and that they know the meaning of every word they decode. Feeling overwhelmed by that assumption, many struggling readers use two strategies when they come to a word they aren't sure of: they either guess at the word and move on (whether it makes sense or not), or they stop reading altogether.
- We begin teaching Strategic Rereading by having an explicit discussion about this topic, and helping our students understand that they don't need to know every single word in a piece of text in order to make meaning of it. This is often a *highly* motivating and surprising conversation for adolescent struggling readers, and for many of them it helps diminish a lifetime of stress related to reading.
- Below are the steps we teach in Strategic Rereading. It is important that the teacher explicitly models the strategy multiple times over the course of several days or weeks until the students have internalized the strategy and can use it on their own.
- Although ideally students would be able to read and understand every word in a difficult piece of text, the reality is that secondary struggling readers may never "close the gap" completely with their typical peers, so there may always be words that they have difficulty decoding and/or understanding.
- The purpose of this strategy is to teach students how to get meaning out of difficult text without giving up or guessing. They are systematically taught that they can understand the important ideas in text even when they don't understand every word embedded within it.
- As in the Decoding Strategy, avoid using the term "*words you don't know*". Students will be hesitant to admit that they "don't know" a word. Instead, use the term "*words you're not sure of.*" We have found students will be more honest when you use that term. 😊

Directions

- 1) Begin by explicitly discussing the principle behind the Strategic Rereading, and helping students understand how it will benefit them.
- 2) It is helpful if you can apply the concept to your own reading, and give students an example of a time when you skipped over some words and moved on.
- 3) Once the students have a clear understanding of *why* this strategy is so important, teachers should do a think-aloud, modeling explicitly how to use the strategy.

THINK-ALOUD

"Sometimes when I'm reading I come to words that are not familiar to me. When that happens, I have some choices. I can stop and look up the word, or ask someone about it, or I can choose to underline it and move on. I know that often I can understand what I'm reading without knowing every single word, and lots of times I just don't have the time to look up every word."

- Step 1: I can tell by looking at this passage that it's going to be challenging for me. I'm going to whisper read it to help me understand it better. If I get to a word I'm not sure of, I'm just going to underline it and keep going.
 - Teacher models whisper reading a short passage, including four words chosen to serve as the target words. (Underlined and bolded.)

*The long driveway lay ahead of me. Unfortunately, it was not as long as it seemed to be. It was a **thunderous** crash that brought everyone out as quick as lightning. My little brother, who had **witnessed** the entire disaster from two feet away, just stood in shock. My other brother came running out to see what had happened. And unfortunately, my good friend happened to be playing ball on his driveway at four that afternoon. He watched without commenting. My mother just sat in the car, speechless. As for me, I was out of the car in a dash, **cradling** my head in my hands, **uttering** the same phrase over and over-- "Why me? Why me?"*
- Okay, that's not bad. I underlined four words that I'm not sure of, and I read all the rest. Step 2: Now I'm going to read it again with expression, and I will just skip over those words. I will see if I understand it by finding the four W's.
 - Teacher models reading it again, this time with more expression. She skips over the underlined words, and notes the four W's in the margins as she reads.
 - Think Aloud during the model:
 - Who: A boy, his mom, and his brothers. Oh, and his friend next door.
 - What: It seems like he is learning to drive. I think he is maybe taking the car out of the driveway for the first time. His mom is in the car with him.
 - Where: In the driveway at his house.
 - When: It was four o'clock in the afternoon.
- I think I summarized that pretty well! I was able to answer all four Ws. That means I can move on to Step 5. I don't need to figure out the words I skipped this time. (But next time I might need to!)
- I'm going to write down my summary. I will do that now, and add some more details, such as the fact that the boy is REALLY upset, and his mom is speechless.

- 4) This would be an effective first modeling of this strategy. At this point it would be most effective if students could practice it once or twice with teacher guidance, using a passage with only a couple of difficult words that don't effect their ability to summarize.
- 5) Once you are sure students understand this very simple version of the strategy, you should model it again, this time using a passage in which they will need to decode some of the words in order to understand it.
- 6) Here is an example of the Think-Aloud using a more difficult passage:

THINK-ALLOUD (More challenging passage)

- Step 1: I can tell by looking at this passage that it's going to be challenging for me. I'm going to whisper read it to help me understand it better.
- If I get to a word I'm not sure of, I'm just going to underline it and keep going.
 - Teacher models whisper reading a short passage, including eight words chosen to serve as the target words. (Underlined and bolded.)

*In the novel Jurassic Park (1990), John **Hammond**, a rich **corporate executive**, hires a team of **scientists** to clone dinosaurs from DNA and finds bringing the giant reptiles back from **extinction** is not impossible. **Hammond** **populates** an island reserve, Jurassic Park, with his clones, letting them roam on lands surrounded by electric fences. He plans to have visitors pay to view the **monstrous** creatures, using trucks that run on electric tracks throughout the reserve. This turns out to be a mistake.*
- Wow, some of that was hard! I underlined eight words that I'm not sure of, but I read all the rest pretty easily
- Step 2: Now I'm going to read it again with expression, and I will skip over the words I underlined. I'm going to look for the four W's and write them in the margins as I read.
 - Teacher models reading it again, this time with more expression. She skips over the underlined words.
 - Think Aloud during model:
 - Who: The passage is about some guy named John, but I'm not sure who he is.
 - What: It seems like John is cloning dinosaurs.
 - Where: Jurassic Park, which is an island reserve. Like a game reserve on an island.
 - When: Well, 1990 maybe? I'm not sure if there's a time of day or not.
- Step 3: I think I need to read this again and see if I can figure out more of it. I am going to choose 3 words to decode using the Decoding Strategy. I'm pretty sure I don't need to know the guy John's last name, so I'm going to skip that. But I want to know who he is, so I'm going to choose these two words (in red) that I think will tell me that. I also want to know where he's bringing the dinosaurs back from, so I'll choose this word (in blue).
- I'm going to use the decoding strategy on those three words.
 - Teacher models decoding the words, using a Think-Aloud. (See decoding strategy for instructions.) **cor** / **por** **ate** **ex** / **ec** / **u** **tive** **ex** / **tinc** **tion**

- Step 4: Now I'll read it again with those words. (Teacher models.)
- I think I can summarize more now. I'm still not totally sure what the word *corporate* means, but I think I have enough. Let me see...
 - I already found the What and the Where, so I don't have to worry about those two in this read. I need to think about When is this happening, and Who is it happening to.
 - Who: The passage is about the guy named John. He's a rich executive. I think he's in charge of the island.
 - When: It doesn't seem like there's a date, and this isn't a passage that has a time of day. But it's modern times for sure.
- Okay, that's pretty good! I'm going to raise my hand to orally summarize my passage to the teacher.



Coaches: What to Look For

Quality Indicators

A teacher using Strategic Rereading effectively will do the following things:

- Talk to students about the purpose and importance of this strategy. Motivate them to use it.
 - *It seems like you don't really need to know that word to understand this passage. You can move on and read something else. That's GREAT.*
 - *The more you read, the fewer words you will have to skip. But for now this is a really good strategy!*
- Strategically choose short passages for the students to practice with.
- Model multiple times until it's clear that all the students understand how to use the strategy.
- Scaffold the students' efforts in choosing which words to decode as they try the strategy themselves.

- *Do you really need to know that word? Why or why not?*
- *Which word might help you find the missing information? How do you know?*
- Whenever possible prompt students to think rather than giving them corrections:
 - *What is the next step in the strategy?*
 - *Can you summarize effectively? Why or why not?*
- Refer students back to the Strategic Rereading poster.
 - *Where can you look for reminders of what to do next?*

Common Pitfalls

Some common mistakes teachers will make with this strategy are:

- Allowing students to do this on their own too early—before they have shown mastery of the strategy.
- Encouraging students to decode too many words on their second read. Even though we want them to be able to read all the words, this strategy is designed to help them learn to skip words they don't need so they can independently read difficult text without giving up.
- Not providing enough Think Time for students. Give them time to look carefully at the passage and think about which words they want to decode. Prompting is important, but prompting *too quickly* will make students dependent on teacher support.
- Correcting students instead of prompting them.
 - *You should choose that word.*
 - *I don't think that's a good choice. Choose another one.*
 - The goal is to prompt THEM to do the thinking. E.G. *"Why did you choose that word? How do you think it's going to help you?"* or *"Which underlined word will give you the missing information about the setting?"*
- Allowing students to omit steps.
 - We need them to work through ALL the steps so they internalize the entire strategy.
- Not reinforcing the strategy long enough.
 - In order for students to establish this strategy as a permanent tool that they can apply on their own, teachers must make a long-term commitment to teaching and reinforcing it. The teacher must consistently model the use of the strategy, refer students back to the strategy, and hold them accountable for its use over a long period of time, probably the entire school year! *You will most likely have to provide more support every time students generalize the strategy to more difficult materials.*



Moving on to Silent Reading

Once students have mastered Strategic Rereading using whisper reading, they are probably ready to move on to silent reading. Obviously, it's critically important that students learn to read and comprehend silently, as this is the way they will do most of their reading throughout their life. Knowing the Strategic Rereading protocol gives struggling readers the confidence to silently read silent difficult text and make meaning of it, even if they can't decode every single word.

In the LA Intervention Program we move students into silent reading halfway through the year. This gives the teacher plenty of opportunities to hear the students read aloud, give them support and guidance, and help them master the underlying strategies they need to comprehend silently.

Below are the steps we use in the Silent Reading Routine. This classroom routine is designed to support students in reading and comprehending silently, while setting a purpose and holding them accountable for the reading. The routine is also designed to give them meaningful opportunities to talk about the text with their peers. This routine is designed to be used in conjunction with the Decoding Strategy, and to take place over the course of four days.

Students use the four-square boxes (at the end of this document) to complete their work each day during the routine, and the completion of that work is recorded by the teacher to ensure accountability.



Silent Reading Routine

Day 1

1. Silently read your article and underline words you're not sure of.
2. Complete one comprehension strategy on computer in the four-square boxes (summarize, clarify, or question.)

Day 2

1. Use the Decoding Strategy to break down underlined words.
2. Read again silently, adding in the words that you used the Decoding Strategy on.
3. Complete another comprehension strategy on computer in the four-square boxes (summarize, clarify, or question.)

Day 3

1. Read article out loud with a partner (take turns reading)
2. Complete the final comprehension strategy on computer in the four-square boxes (summarize, clarify, or question.)

Day 4

1. Silently read article to prepare for retelling it to a partner. Challenge: Use cue words: first, next, then, last.
2. Ask a partner who has a different article than you the title of his/her article and make a prediction what it will be about.
3. Share your predictions with your partner.
4. You must either confirm or deny your partner's prediction, and...
 - a. Challenge: retell them the story using cue words: first, next, then, last, OR
 - b. Read your summary to them.

Strategy Instruction for Silent Reading

<p>1. Clarify</p> <p>Word: “I don’t quite understand_____.”</p> <p>Idea: “I don’t quite understand_____.”</p>	<p>2. Question-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generate 1 literal question (who, what, when, where)• Generate 1 inferential question (why, could, would, should)
<p>4. Summarize- Decide what information is important and state it clearly.</p> <p>What is happening?</p> <p>Who is it happening to?</p> <p>When is it happening?</p> <p>Where is it happening?</p> <p>Complete Sentence:</p>	<p>Predict: Your classmate is also reading an unusual news article. Look at your partner below and predict what their story will be about based on the title.</p>



Silent Reading

Older students are expected to be able to read text silently for their daily schoolwork and on standardized assessments, many of which now use primarily digital text. Silent reading isn't just a school skill though; as students transition into post-secondary settings, including college and the workplace, it is critical that they are able to understand what they read silently. Many schools have incorporated silent reading into the school day through periods of independent silent reading, sometimes called Sustained Silent Reading or SSR. During SSR, kids are asked to read for a short period of time each day from a book of their choosing.

However, the National Reading Panel reported that SSR, in itself, didn't necessarily show gains in students' reading abilities. Research indicates four practices that teachers need to do to help kids learn to read silently for meaning (Reutzel, Jones, Newman, 2010). Below we discuss each one, and how our intervention program addresses each.

- 1) **Materials need to be high interest and at an appropriate reading level.** Often students will choose a high interest book, but one that is well over their reading level. Teachers might choose a book at an appropriate reading level, but that isn't a topic of interest for the student. Whether the teacher or the student selects reading material, both of these conditions are necessary for effective silent reading. In our reading program, the intervention teacher worked with students to select high-interest material, but we also carefully reviewed texts for syntax, word and sentence complexity, paragraph and chapter length, and vocabulary, to ensure that the books were accessible to our struggling readers.
- 2) **Give students a purpose for reading.** Students should read deliberately knowing that they have to use the information they are gaining in some way. Students in the LA Intervention Project were explicitly taught reading comprehension strategies (summarization, clarification, prediction, and question generating). Students read the same text multiple times over several days (including silently, and also aloud to a partner), each time applying a different comprehension strategy.
- 3) **Teachers need to incorporate systematic accountability for silent reading.** Once you have given your students a purpose for reading, make sure that they follow-through with a task that evaluates the completion of that purpose. For example, as noted above, in the LA Intervention Project our students read the same text multiple times, and each day they are asked to apply a different comprehension strategy after they read. They are held accountable for completing one part of a four-square graphic organizer each day, on which they record their comprehension strategy work.
- 4) **Design opportunities for students to discuss what they are reading in meaningful dialogue.** These discussions can be with peers or the teacher. In the LA Intervention Project, our students participate in reciprocal teaching at the conclusion of the silent reading procedures, giving them the opportunity to have a meaningful discussion with peers through the lens of the comprehension strategies they practiced that week.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (NIH Publication No. 00-4769). Washington, DC: US. Government Printing Office.

Reutzel, D.R., Jones, C.D., & Newman, T.H. (2010). Scaffolded Silent Reading: Improving the conditions of silent reading practice in classrooms. In *Revisiting silent reading: New directions for teachers and researchers* (Eds. E. H. Hiebert and D. R. Reutzel). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

