LANGUAGE IN INDIA

Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow

Volume 7 : 10 October 2007

"Teaching Reading??? Why Me?!?!" Content Area Teacher's Question Answered!

Michelle Pandian, M.S.

"TEACH READING??? WHY ME?!?!"
Content Area Teacher's Question Answered!

Michelle Pandian, M.S.

General Education Objective:

"Students will be able to demonstrate their general education literacy skills by reading about, and intelligently discussing and writing about science, math, social studies, art, language, and other areas in the primary and secondary curriculum."

The goal of a child's education is to foster the development of literacy across all content areas. Therefore the content area teacher's job doesn't stop at teaching content. They must also teach dynamic literacy skills within their content area. (Yore, 2000)

A successful reader:

realizes that science, (social studies, and English) reading is an interactive constructive process involving the reader, the text, and the context and is designed to make meaning of print rather than take meaning from text by integrating prior knowledge, concurrent experience, and text based information.

has the ability, self-confidence, and self efficacy necessary for science, (social studies etc.) reading as an assigned task and for personal pleasure.

operates at the automatic level when science, (social studies, English etc.) reading is proceeding successfully, but shifts to conscious, deliberate approaches when reading comprehension is difficult or the task's demands dictate

realizes that science, social studies etc. words are labels for ideas, science ideas are based in experiences, and science text is stored descriptions and explanations of ideas, events, or patterns

evaluates science, (social studies, English etc.) text for plausibility, completeness, and interconnectedness by verifying the textual message against prior knowledge, evidence, and observed reality and by assessing the logic and plausible reasoning of the text's patterns of argumentation

identifies purpose of science (social studies, English, math, etc.) reading accesses prior knowledge, plans heuristics, and selects appropriate strategies

uses specific knowledge-retrieval strategies to access prior domain and topical knowledge from long term memory

uses specific knowledge input strategies to access text-based information from print and visual adjuncts and to access information from the context

uses knowledge-constructing strategies to integrate new information and established knowledge structures, to recognize knowledge structures to accommodate discrepant information, to negotiate understanding, and to establish importance

applies critical thinking strategies to assess validity of information and to verify constructed understanding
uses monitoring strategies to assess comprehension; and
uses strategies to regulate effort, actions, and approaches to fix comprehension failure as required.

Often students struggle with:

having limited strategies to address comprehension failure, with re-reading being the most common strategy used,
lacking judgment of importance,
lacking procedural and conditional knowledge and astuteness application of strategy,
lacking appropriate scientific knowledge to interpret text.

How?

(See Chapter 7, the NTID [National Technical Institute for the Deaf] website listed at the end of this worksheet and other references for clarification on any of these points.)

Start by:

Valuing Reading

Show the students by example-allow students to "catch" you reading.

Have lots of books available in your classroom related to topics you will discuss during the unit or semester.

Briefly discuss these books and give intriguing introductions to them to encourage students to read them on their own.

Refer to these books (not just the textbook) during your lessons

Label things around your classroom with the terminology they will be discussing during the semester (Bunsen burners, Scientific Table of the Elements, Pythagorean Theorem, Quotes from Sophocles, Art of the Elizabethan Era, etc.)

Make time for students to read in class-Note the "unwritten curriculum"-what you spend time on during class is what you value

Require out of class readings from other sources than just the textbook

Implement a content reading program where students are required to read 10-15 minutes a day (M-F) and use reading logs signed by parents as documentation for their reading.

Take your students to the school library to find books related to the topic you are discussing. If you can't find many, encourage a group research projects to find all the books related to that topic with the end goal to be to ask the school board to apportion money for more books related to science or math, etc. in the school library.

Pre-Reading Activities-engage the students in the reading activity

Motivate the students to read about the topic you will be presenting.

Read aloud/Sign to class (teacher, another student, or outside guest)
Charts with stickers
Journals that document progress in amount of reading
Get a reading buddy who is younger to pair with the student and share reading
Show movies or videos related to the topic

Activate Students' Background Knowledge

Free writing about what they know about the topic
KWL Worksheets
Graphic Organizers
Concept Maps/ Semantic Webs
Student Generated Questions
Visualization of scenarios or memories of something related to the topic
Journal Entries
Word Association
Anticipation guides
Make predictions based on the cover of the book or a picture in the chapter
Card Arrangement (main events on index cards-students must put in order of events)
Semantic Feature analysis
Pre-teach Vocabulary in context

During Reading-teach students strategies on how to attack difficult text

Students use their sight word knowledge
Re-read or read ahead for context clues
Use structural analysis-break down words into affixes and root words, watch for inflectional endings
Implement think aloud strategies as students read with partners
Use Collaborative Strategic Reading groups
Use Prediction logs
Directed Reading-Thinking activities
Question-Answer relationships (QAR)
Reciprocal Questioning
Coding
Story Retelling
Cloze Instruction
Look at pictures and graphics for clues
Story Maps
Pattern Guides such as Timelines
Graphic Organizers
Fact or Opinion worksheets
Comprehension Rating
Marginal Notes
Role Play text segments

After Reading-help students process what they read and apply it

Use the "Ways to Respond" sheet
Summarize the passage (this skill needs to be taught well!)
Graphic organizers for comparing two texts or ideas within one text
Student developed quiz questions
Journal response
Dramatization and script writing
Outline the material
Offer resources to research the topic further
Look for related news and magazine articles
Respond to their predictions-right and wrong ones
Write an alternative ending
Write a letter to the author describing your experiences with reading the material
Concept maps
Students generated vocabulary lists
CD Word maps
Reader's Workshop
Creative writing-become part of the topic, become a character, etc.
Make graphs
Use Debates
Double Entry journals
Explain to a friend

Free Concept Map Software-http://cmap.ihmc.us/

REFERENCES

Chapter 7. Reading Strategies. From Reading Practices with Deaf Learners. 187-236.

Humphrey, Jack. (2002). There Is No Simple Way to Build a Middle School Reading Program. In Phi Delta Kappan, June 2002, 754-757.

Klingner, J. and S. Vaughn. (1998) Using Collaborative Strategic Reading. In Teaching Exceptional Children 30: 32-37.

Snow, Marguerite Ann. (2003) A Model of Academic Literacy for Integrated Language And Content Instruction.

Varone, Kathy. NTID English Department Website
http://www.rit.edu/~seawww/readingwritingcontent/rwIntroduction.html

Yore, Larry D. (2000) Enhancing Science Literacy for all Students with Embedded Reading Instruction and Writing-to-Learn Activities. In Journal of Deaf Studies and

Deaf Education 5:1. Oxford UP, Winter 2000.

Michelle Pandian, M.Sc.
Deaf Education Specialist
jmpandian@yahoo.com