

Reciprocal teaching

What is Reciprocal Teaching?

- Reciprocal teaching was developed by Palinscar and Ann Brown for the purpose of helping students improve their understanding when reading.
- It is interactive, supported instruction in which the teacher or peer leads group of students as they talk their way through a text to understand it.
- A discussion technique based on 4 strategies good readers should use to comprehend text: Predicting, Questioning, Clarifying, and Summarizing
- The Reciprocal Teaching strategy involves a role reversal: students "become" teachers of reading strategies. After training students in specific reading strategies and modeling these strategies when analyzing texts, teachers divide classes into small groups and assign individual students to take turns "teaching" and "modeling" the strategies in their small group. This metacognitive exercise encourages students to think about their own thought processes when using reading strategies.
- Reciprocal teaching is a cooperative learning instructional method in which natural dialogue models and reveals learners' thinking processes about a shared learning experience. Teachers foster reciprocal teaching through their belief that collaborative construction of meaning between themselves and students leads to a higher quality of learning .
- Students become the teacher
- Based on gradual release of responsibility
- Throughout the process, the teacher's role is to guide and nurture the students' ability to use the four strategies successfully within the small group. The teacher's role is lessened as students develop skill.
- **Research Based:** For the past five years, Palinscar and Brown (1985) have conducted a series of studies to determine the effectiveness of reciprocal teaching.
- The reciprocal teaching model has been adopted by a number of school districts and reading intervention programs across the United States and Canada. It has also been used as the model for a number of commercially produced reading programs such as Soar to Success.

Why use reciprocal teaching?

- It encourages students to think about their own thought process during reading.
- It helps students learn to be actively involved and monitor their comprehension as they read.
- It teaches students to ask questions during reading and helps make the text more comprehensible.
- Can use with any grade level for fiction or non-fiction
- This instructional activity is used **Before, During, and After Reading**
- This instructional activity is appropriate for all text material. A teacher can use Reciprocal Teaching as a whole class, guided reading, and/or literature circles activity to increase a deeper understanding of text.

- The purpose of Reciprocal Teaching is to help students, with or without a teacher present, actively bring meaning to the written word. The strategies chosen not only promote reading comprehension but also provide opportunities for students to learn to monitor their own learning and thinking.

How to begin?

- Good starting point is a read-aloud. Use an article, part of a chapter, newspaper and model the strategies with the students

Before Reciprocal Teaching can be used successfully by your students, they need to have been taught and had time to practice the four strategies that are used in reciprocal teaching (summarizing, questioning, predicting, clarifying).

One way to get students prepared to use reciprocal teaching: Put students in groups of four.

- Distribute one note card to each member of the group identifying each person's unique role:
 - Summarizer
 - Questioner
 - Clarifier
 - Predictor
- Have students read a few paragraphs of the assigned text selection. Encourage them to use note-taking strategies such as selective underlining or sticky-notes to help them better prepare for their role in the discussion.
- At the given stopping point, the Summarizer will highlight the key ideas up to this point in the reading.
- The Questioner will then pose questions about the selection:
 - Unclear parts
 - Puzzling information
 - Connections to other concepts already learned
- The *Clarifier* will address confusing parts and attempt to answer the questions that were just posed.
- The *Predictor* can offer predictions about what the author will tell the group next or, if it's a literary selection, the predictor might suggest what the next events in the story will be.
- The roles in the group then switch one person to the right, and the next selection is read. Students repeat the process using their new roles. This continues until the entire selection is read.