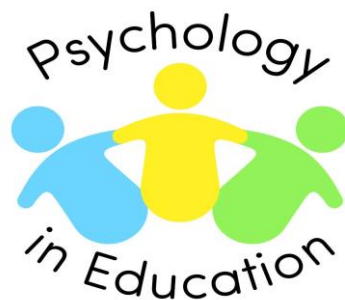


RECIPROCAL TEACHING

Hand Out 1

Aide Memoire for Class Teachers



HAND OUT 1:

Reciprocal Teaching; Aide Memoire for Class Teachers

- This method works best if you can have 4 children at each table but if this is not possible, you can pair up some children to share a specific role. It is very important to have the tables set up into mixed abilities. The struggling readers cannot all sit at one table and need to be included at tables with more able peers who can read the text aloud on the table and the struggling reader (and others at the table) can follow along.
- Remember that one of the theoretical bases of RT is Collaborative Learning or Peer Assisted Learning and each group should have people responsible for leading on each of the 4 processes. If there are more than 4 students, they can work in pairs, but each person/pair takes on one of the processes, so we will have a Predictor, a Clarifier, a Questioner and a Summariser at each table.
- Start by introducing the notion that the purpose of reading is to understand what message the author is trying to get across to us. It's not just to get to the end of the page. This may be obvious to most older children but many younger children and struggling readers do not always see this point. The purpose of reading it is to **THINK** about what we have read and what it might mean. What message is the writer trying to get across to us?
- Use **Think Alouds** to demonstrate how good readers are constantly monitoring their reading and become aware when they have got lost. For example, you might want to demonstrate how you are reading along and suddenly realise that you're thinking about something exciting you're going to do after school and you have read a whole paragraph without actually taking anything in. This 'mind wandering' is something totally normal and something that happens to us all. The trick is to become aware of when it happens and then do something about it. This **Comprehension Monitoring** is the key to reading comprehension strategies and something that most good readers do automatically but many of us don't do consistently. It is a metacognitive strategy that we should all use in order to read more effectively.
- Reciprocal Teaching is a staged process that breaks down Comprehension Monitoring into 4 distinct strategies and helps us to become aware of what good readers do automatically and gradually internalise these processes into how we read independently. This will help most children (and adults too) become more effective readers.

The 4 processes are as below:



Predicting



Clarifying



Questioning



Summarising

1. PREDICTING

This takes place before reading starts but can also be done after a paragraph or section to discuss or question and we can then predict what we think will happen next. This process may include questions like:

- What do you think this book is about?
- What do we already know about this subject that might link to it?
- What can we see from the cover/pictures?
- Do we think we will like it or not? Why not?
- I think I will learn.....because.....
- I think will happen... because.....

It is good to provide sentence stems with the 'because' bit added as it is good practice to always think about justifications for why we believe certain things will or will not happen.

2. QUESTIONING

This can take place at various points in the text. Advanced readers tend to do this throughout the reading but many other readers may need explicit tuition in adopting this strategy. Students can also be given questions in advance in order to read more actively as once they have learnt the technique of having to generate questions, this too becomes a habit and they tend to read with a mind to look for ways to create questions. For younger readers, we might want to stop after each paragraph and think about some questions but for more advanced readers it may be enough to stop after a longer section or even a complete chapter. Questions may include:

- Who?
- What?

- When?
- Why?
- Where?

Although the 'Who' and 'What' questions may be easier to answer than 'Why do you think...' questions, students quickly get used to asking these more sophisticated questions and to go beyond the very fact-based questions and move into predictions and making inferences from the texts.

3. CLARIFYING

Clarifying can be seen as the very essence of comprehension monitoring as it is through constantly self-checking and clarifying our own understanding of the material that we become aware of any uncertainties or aspects that may need further elaboration. At the very basic level it may simply be to clarify which words are not understood and need clarification but it can also mean that we are honest with ourselves and are clear about where we got lost in the text or what idea we don't quite get the gist of.

Clarifying can be thought of as involving two steps;

1. Is to identify where one is stuck (or where one lost concentration)
2. Is to know how to fix it and what we can do about it.

'Fix it' strategies are usually related to either finding out the meaning of specific words from the peer group or teacher or re-reading a text much more slowly. One can visualise the text as one reads or re-reads again aloud, saying it out loud as we read again together with a peer, and hopefully discuss it at the table, and come up with some solutions.

4. SUMMARISING

This is often seen as the most difficult task but also the most important out of the 4 processes as it is really getting to the gist of the text. It should ideally involve everyone at the table, chipping in their own ideas. Sentence stems can again be given in advance and depending on the type of material they may include:

- The most important idea was.....
- The author was trying to suggest that....
- The book/chapter/paragraph was really about.....
- First – Then – and Finally
- The main character was trying to....
- Clarifying
- The conclusion suggested that.....

Have fun and experiment. Don't always feel you have to use the processes as outlined. They are all useful in isolation but as suggested the magic may happen when used together but don't feel it's too restricted. RT is a very flexible, broadly applicable, set of principles.