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Using Reading Comprehension Strategy Plus Attribution Retraining Concepts and Strategies to Teach Reading Comprehension Skills

What is the evidence base?
- This is a research-based practice for students with disabilities (SLD, ED, LD) based on three methodologically sound group experimental studies across
  - 74 students with SLD
  - 3 students with ED
  - 182 students with disabilities (not specified)
  - 135 students with LD

Where is the best place to find out how to do this practice?

The best place to find out how to implement REWARDS Program is through the following research to practice lesson plan starters:

- [Using Reading Comprehension Strategy Plus Attribution Retraining Concepts and Strategies to Teach Reading Comprehension Skills (Berkeley et al., 2011).](#)

With whom was it implemented?
- Middle and high school students with disabilities (n = 59)
- Males (n=40), females (n=19)
- Disability:
  - Learning Disabilities (n=45)
  - Other Health Impairment (n=14)
- Ethnicity
  - African American (n=29)
  - Caucasian (n=7)
  - Hispanic (n=23)

What is the practice?

Cognitive strategy instruction is defined as methods and procedures that enable students to learn to solve problems and complete tasks independently by teaching students to use more effective strategies than they apply on their own (Johnson, Graham, & Harris, 1997). Mastropieri et al. (2003) delineated the framework of Reading Comprehension Strategy (RCS):
- clearly state objectives;

- follow a specific sequence for teaching (state the purpose of the lesson and provide instruction with modeling, guided practice, corrective feedback, independent practice, and generalization practice);
- inform the students of the purpose of the strategy;
- monitor student progress;
- encourage students to think about the text and the strategies;
- encourage appropriate attributions; and
- teach for generalized use of the strategies

Attribution retraining is defined as explanations for learning barriers or reasons students believe they succeed or fail in school (e.g., minimal effort put forth indicates high levels of ability; others are luckier thus they are more successful). This is problematic because research suggests that the role of task persistence may be at least as important as knowledge of the strategies (Gersten et al., 2001). Research supports attribution retraining (AR) to highlight positive attributions regarding effort can increase motivation and persistence in using strategies.

In the study used to establish the evidence base for RCS+AR to teach reading comprehension included using a six-component reading comprehension package for approximately 30 minutes across 12 sessions.

- Six components include: (a) setting a purpose, (b) previewing, (c) activating background knowledge, (d) self-questioning, (e) summarizing, (f) strategy monitoring
- A set of four Strategy Sheets was used to facilitate instruction according the the six components (previewing, activating background, and self-questioning with summarizing), short reading sections (e.g., from *Junior Scholastic*), corresponding comprehension questions, and a self-monitoring worksheet.
- Lessons followed the format: (a) teacher modeling, (b) guided practice, and (c) independent practice.
- Lessons 1-3:
    - Setting a purpose: Students were explicitly taught how to create reading objectives by reading questions at the end of the passage to focus their reading.
    - Previewing: Students were taught how to preview the format of the chapter (title, headings, subheadings, bolded vocabulary, maps, timelines, charts, pictures).

    - ☐ Positive vs. negative thoughts: Students were taught how to recognize that positive thoughts can be self-promoting and how negative thoughts can be self-defeating.
- Lessons 4-6:
    - Activating background knowledge: Students were explicitly taught how to brainstorm information related to a passage using "w" questions (who, what,

where, when, and why) to help themselves remember things they already know about the topic.
- o Self-questioning: Students were trained to turn headings and subheadings into questions and to answer those questions after they read each section.

- ☐ Using self-talk (simple scenarios): Students were taught to develop self-talk statements that reinforced strategy use when presented with simple positive and negative scenarios
- Lessons 7-9:
  - o Summarizing: Students were taught to summarize using four steps: (1) Who (or what) is this section of the article about? (2) What are we supposed to learn from this section? (3) List most important words from this section (goal: not more than 10!), and (4) Write the summary of the text (goal: not more than 2 sentences!).

  - ☐ Using self-talk (complex scenarios): Students were taught to develop self-talk statements that reinforced strategy use when presented with complex positive and negative scenarios.
- Lessons 10-12:
  - o Strategy monitoring: Students were taught how to integrate all of the strategies that they had learned in the preceding lessons in order to promote applying strategies in a flexible manner.

  - ☐ Using self-talk (Promoting persistence and flexible strategy use): Students were prompted to use self-talk during lessons where they needed to monitor their own reading comprehension strategy use.
  - ☐ Attribution feedback (*ongoing in Lessons 1-12*): After students answered comprehension questions about a passage, teachers provided attribution feedback designed to help students make direct connections between the use of strategies and academic outcomes.

Where has it been implemented?

- General education English classes (about 20 students per group)

How does this practice relate to Common Core Standards?

- Broad standard from www.corestandards.org ELA Grades
  - o CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.1/8.1
    Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
  - o CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.4/8.4
    Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text,

including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

- o CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.1
  Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- o CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.2
  Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
- o CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.3
  Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

How does this practice relate to the Common Career Technical Core?

- List Career Ready Skills addressed (broad) and/ or Specific Career Clusters at www.careertech.org/CCTC
    - o 2. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills. Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.

References used to establish this evidence base:

Berkeley, S., Mastropieri, M. A., & Scruggs, T. E., (2011). Reading comprehension strategy instruction and attribution retraining for secondary students with learning and other mild disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 44*, 18-32.

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