



Comprehension in Secondary Classrooms

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Goals for this follow up

 Share my impressions of what the research implies about building a solid base of comprehension instruction in secondary schools.

 Use the medium of one successful program to demonstrate how research can be applied to practice

The Research Base

 Much of what we talked about this morning, but a little more

 A bit of personal history:

⇒ 1988 study of the role of text in middle school content classrooms

⇒ Common approaches

- OR-Q, OR-Q
- Omniscient paraphraser
- Socratic engager
- Strategy teacher

The goal: What do critical readers know and do?

- 📖 search for connections between known and new.
- 📖 maintain personal meanings while negotiating publicly defensible meanings
- 📖 distinguish wheat from chaff in importance to get to the big ideas
- 📖 synthesize within and across texts / experiences
- 📖 monitor and revise inadequate (do not explain the data at hand) models of text meaning
- 📖 make inferences about characters and ideas during and after reading in order to build and revise coherent models of meaning
- 📖 ask questions of themselves, the authors they encounter and the texts they read.

Context

 A study group of researchers at WestEd and teachers in the San Francisco schools

 Creators of Academic Literacy and the Strategic Literacy Network

⇒ Cynthia Greenleaf

⇒ Ruth Schoenbach

⇒ Christine Cziko

⇒ Lori Hurwitz






 Recent Book: *Reading for Understanding*
Jossey Bass, 2000

Context

The motive for their work

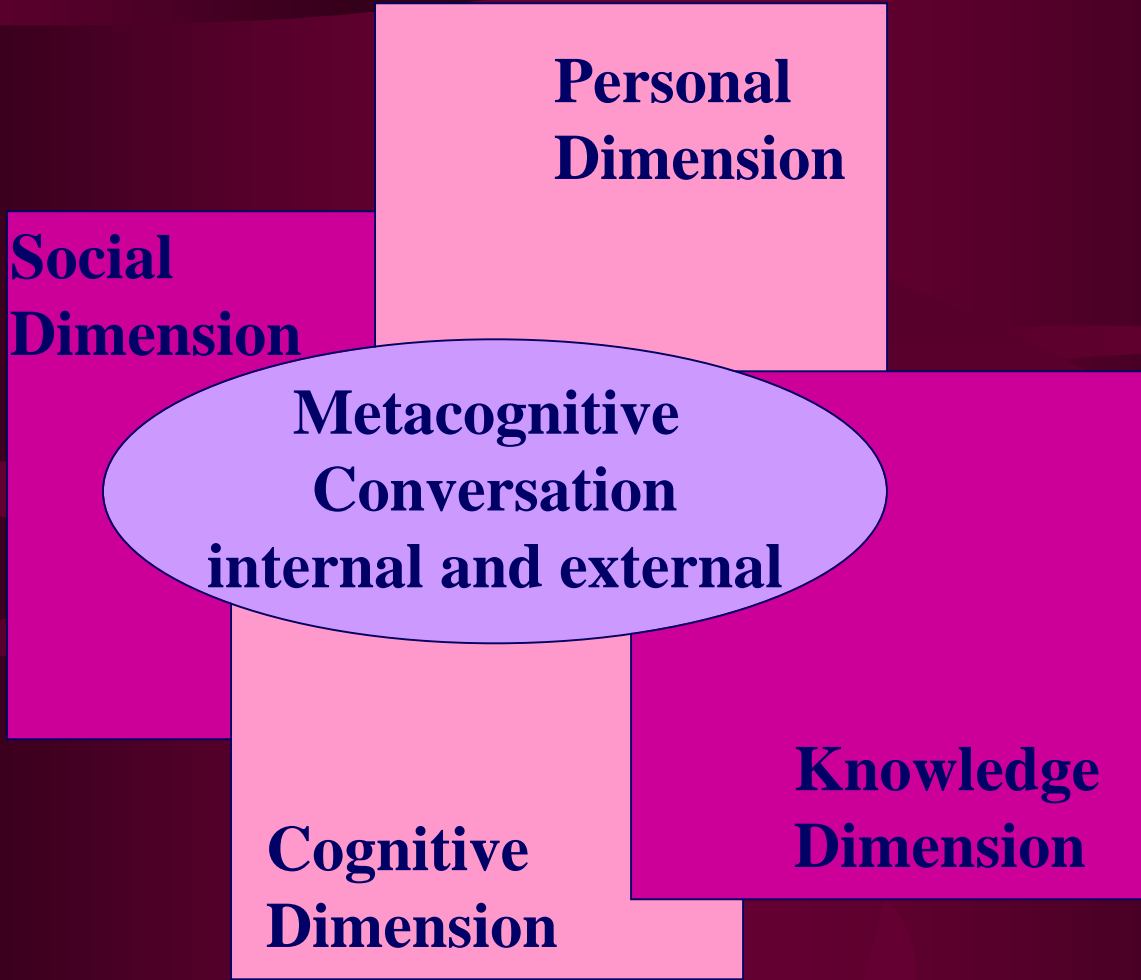
- ⇒ To attack the situation that so many of you find yourselves in: that our middle and high schools are filled with students who have all but given up on any hope of understanding the texts they are asked to read
- ⇒ How do you respond to this dilemma?

Unproductive Responses to the Dilemma

-  **It's too late (based on the erroneous assumption that if you do not get the basics in elementary, there is little hope)**
-  **Back to the Beginning (classic remediation)**
-  **Skills in the box (special programs)**
-  **Talking the text**
-  **Protecting students from boredom**

Why we should be optimistic

- 📖 Professional communities help
- 📖 Teachers have untapped resources (as readers and as master readers in their subject matters)
- 📖 Students have untapped resources (knowledge, hidden optimism)
- 📖 Evidence that a frontal attack can be effective
 - ⇒ Academic Literacy course
 - ⇒ Reading Apprenticeship Model



Dimensions of Classroom Life Supporting the Reading Apprenticeship



**Metacognitive
Conversation
internal and external**

Metacognitive conversation as the centerpiece



Social Dimension

- +Creating Safety**
- +Literacy and Power**
- +Sharing Book Talk**
- +Sharing reading strategies**
- +Appropriating others' ways of reading**

The Social Dimension of Reading Apprenticeship



Personal Dimension

.....Developing

+Identity as a reader

+Metacognition

**+Reader fluency and
stamina**

**+Confidence and
range**

Reading Apprenticeship: The Personal Dimension



Cognitive Dimension

- +Get the big picture**
- +Breaking it down**
- +Monitoring
Comprehension**
- +Fixing things up**
- +Setting purposes and
adjusting strategies**

Reading Apprenticeship: Cognitive Dimension



Knowledge Dimension

- +Building and Mobilizing Knowledge**
- +Developing content knowledge**
- +Developing text structure knowledge**
- +Developing disciplinary knowledge**

Reading Apprenticeship: Knowledge Dimension

Academic Literacy course

 A year long high school course designed to promote the apprenticeship model

 Four basic units

⇒ Reading self and society

⇒ Reading media

⇒ Reading history

⇒ Reading science and technology


Features of the Academic Literacy Course

 **Embracing the complexities**

⇒ **Confusion is our friend!**

⇒ **Reading happens in our minds not on the page**

 **Modeling the complexities and the solutions of reading (the think aloud procedure)**

 **Assembling a mental tool belt to cope with complexities (used Reciprocal Teaching as a departure point)**

Unpacking Academic Literacy

Reading Self and Society

 Get to know themselves as readers and read personal narratives

⇒ What are my characteristics as a reader?

⇒ What strategies do I use?

⇒ What roles does reading serve in the people's personal and public lives?

⇒ What role will reading play in my future education and career goals?

⇒ What goals do I want to set as a reader?

Key instructional strategies: building the mental tool belt

 Sustained Silent Reading

 Reciprocal Teaching and its four components

 Explicit instruction in self-monitoring

⇒ How do you know when your understanding is breaking down?

⇒ Can you point to certain places in the text?

⇒ How do you get back on track?

Engaging your staff in Reading Apprenticeships

An activity: As you read, note any processes or strategies you used and sort them into...

 **Fluency (using automatic lower level processes)**

 **Motivation (setting goals or purposes, taking a stance, responding affectively)**

 **Cognition (monitoring attention and comprehension, using specific strategies)**

 **Knowledge (focusing on world knowledge or text structure knowledge)**

 **WWII knowledge, what I would do?**
Knowledge or Personal

 **Read paragraph aloud: Cognitive or Fl**

 **Skip words Fluency**

 **Purpose: Motivation**

 **Oppressed, identification: Motivational,
cognitive**


 **One day in the life... intertextual:**


Throughout history, conquerors have burnt towns and killed their inhabitants or sent them into slavery. Prisoners have been tortured and confined in dungeons for religious or political reasons. Organizations such as the Inquisition developed interrogation and torture into a science. In particular Jewish people have suffered outbreak after outbreak of persecution and violence.

But while there have been many tyrants and persecutions in past centuries, mass murder was difficult. It took time to kill people one by one with sword or axe. Modern weapons such as the machine gun or poison gas vastly increased the destructive potential of war. Turned against a particular group of people within a country, these weapons could become tools of genocide.

War and genocide require social organization on a large scale. As the 1900s began, tyrants not only acquired new weapons, they also seized control of new tools for social organization and control. Radio could carry the leader's voice into every home and school. High capacity printing presses could produce propaganda leaflets...

Close reading: as you read the following text, keep a 2 column chart:

 **What you think you know**

 **What in the text makes you think so**

Mr. Martin bought a pack of Camels on Monday night in the most crowded cigar store on Broadway. It was theatre time and seven or ten men were buying cigarettes. The clerk didn't even glance at Mr. Martin, who put the pack in his overcoat pocket and went out. If any of the staff at F&S had seen him buy cigarettes, they would have been astonished, for it was generally known that Mr. Martin did not smoke, and never had. No one saw him.

What you think you know

What in the text makes you think so?

Try this activity with your staff to uncover disciplinary ways of reading

 Distribute a subject matter specific article to staff members (e.g., something from *Scientific American, American Heritage*)*


 Before reading, record answers to two questions:

⇒ What expectations do you have about the text?

⇒ What predictions do you have about what you will be reading?

*Can be a common article or a marked article for each content area group

Disciplinary Reading, cont






 As they read (about 10 minutes), they make marginal notes, etc. Afterwards they write journal responses to 4 questions:

- ⇒ What parts of this section of the text did you pay particular attention to? Why?
- ⇒ What questions, if any, were you asking as you read?
- ⇒ What images, if any, were you forming?
- ⇒ What predictions do you have about the remainder of the text, having read this much

Disciplinary reading, cont.

- 📖 Repeat the cycle two more times
- 📖 Review notes and try to draw some generalizations for themselves about
 - ⇒ Attention
 - ⇒ Questions they asked themselves
 - ⇒ Images they formed
 - ⇒ Predictions they made

Disciplinary reading, cont.

-  **Share individual thoughts with a group and make a chart**
-  **Look for common patterns as well as differences**
-  **Over time, compare across subject matter texts**
-  **Speculate about both general and discipline specific processes and strategies.**
-  **Goal: help us all understand that in our own discipline, we are master readers.**

What we might hope comes of all this

 Teachers (and then students) will come
to see reading differently

⇒ Complexity of reading

⇒ Flexibility in reading

⇒ Respect for our accomplishments as
readers

What we might hope comes of all this

 Teachers will come to see students
differently

- ⇒ Move from *if only they had tried harder* or *if only they knew more* to
- ⇒ What sorts of assistance can I provide in order to help students make it in my class?
- ⇒ Build on what they do know, what they do bring

What we might hope comes of all this

 Teachers will come to see their jobs
differently

- ⇒ Demystifying the reading process in their
subject matter
- ⇒ A master reader of their own content who
views students as apprentices who want to
develop similar expertise

What we might hope comes of all this

 Teachers will discover something about
their own reading

⇒ By analogy with what happens to teachers
who go through writing project training,

⇒ Teachers who engage in a metacognitive
journey about their own reading learn to
appreciate and embrace the agonies and
ecstasies of their own reading.











