

EMPOWERING STRUGGLING HIGH SCHOOL READERS

by

Catherine A. Yezak

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION
AT NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

APRIL 21, 2013

APPROVED BY:

DATE:

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	4
Chapter I: Introduction.....	5
Statement of Problem.....	6
Research Questions.....	7
Definition of Terms.....	7
Chapter II: Review of Literature.....	9
High School Readers' Success.....	9
Self-Evaluation as Readers.....	9
Readers' Choice.....	10
Peer Discussion Groups.....	10
Peer Tutoring.....	11
Good and Poor Reader Pairs.....	11
High School and Elementary Pairs.....	12
Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS).....	13
Strategies across the Content Areas.....	14
Beliefs versus Skills as Readers.....	14
Text Maps.....	14
Ask, Read, Tell (ART).....	16
Chapter III: Results and Analysis Relative to the Problem.....	17
High School Readers' Success.....	17
Peer Tutoring.....	19
Strategies across the Content Area.....	20
Chapter IV: Recommendations and Conclusion.....	22
Recommendation.....	22
Areas for Further Research.....	23
Summary and Conclusion.....	25

References..... 27

Abstract

High school students who struggle with reading have little self-confidence and often give up on school. They do not feel invested in the education they are receiving in the classroom. Reading strategies that are designed to fit individual styles, peer tutoring, and a sense of ownership help high school students see that there is something to reading. They find success in the classroom and in the work force. It is important to help these students find the right strategy to give them the ownership of what and when they read.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

With all of the focus on standardized tests, reading seems to be a second class citizen in schools these days. In high schools, students barely have time to fit in the core classes besides doing practice testing for standardized tests. This leaves little time for anything else, especially reading. Many schools are choosing to forego sustained silent reading time or any type of scheduled reading so that students have more time to practice for state standardized tests.

This means that students who are reluctant readers or who struggle with reading have almost no time to work on skills that are needed to succeed in classes and on tests. Technology such as phones, computers, and video games are vying for their attention. The neediest of students are being neglected as the pressure for teachers to provide proof that they are teaching increases. As a result of this, many students are choosing to read less, drop out of school, or focus their attention elsewhere because they are frustrated that their needs are not being met.

These students are the ones who are paying the price in this age of “teaching to tests.” Students who cannot read well or who are frustrated that they are not being helped are going out into the world with skills that make getting a job difficult. For students who remain in school, they are given labels such as “potential drop out,” “underachiever,” or “discipline problem” (Hoyt, 1975, p 73.). This problem has been around for many years and yet it still seems to be overlooked by educators. For struggling and reluctant readers, not being able to read affects more than their educational success: It will affect their roles in society as adults.

Statement of Problem

With the focus of today's schools being on standardized tests, reading is becoming less of a priority in the classroom. Students who need help seem to be overlooked or pushed along without addressing their needs. For high school students, especially struggling and reluctant readers, reading is important for them to understand informational texts and to be able to follow directions. Reading helps them to find a connection between school and real world concepts.

Struggling and reluctant readers need support as they struggle with reading skills across the curriculum. Practicing reading and learning or scaffolding new skills will help these students feel confident about themselves and their abilities. Teachers and school districts need to invest the time and resources to help these students find success with reading. This success will carry over into the classroom and to standardized tests.

Time needs to be built into the school day for all students, especially struggling and reluctant readers, to practice reading. Teachers need time to work with these students and help them practice the skills they have as well as work on learning new skills to improve their reading abilities. High school students need to learn strategies that will help them build the connection between school and the real world. It is important for both society and the students to find this success.

When struggling and reluctant readers become comfortable with their reading abilities, they become better employees and members of society. Technology is changing the way these students not only view the world, but how they interact with it. Reading may not seem to be as

important with the use of video calls and verbal commands, but there is still much that requires reading. Students need to understand this connection and be able to see it in action.

This means that schools need to make time for reading throughout the day. The only way for a reluctant or struggling reader to improve their reading is by practice (Wilson & Casey, 2007). It is this practice that will help them perform better in school and on the standardized tests that seem to be the focus of education today.

Research Questions

What can high school teachers do to help struggling and reluctant readers improve their background knowledge and what strategies will be beneficial in helping students to improve their comprehension skills as they learn how to choose texts that are right for them?

Definition of Terms

Reluctant reader: students who are often designated as being “problems” due to their difficulty with reading. Sometimes referred to as “the underachiever” or “discipline problem,” they can have a high or low intelligence. They have a reluctance to read, regardless of their abilities (Hoyt, 1975).

Struggling reader: have difficulty comprehending texts, especially informational texts in content areas. They often struggle with decoding, poor metacognitive skills, not being able to comprehend what they read, and struggle with applying comprehension skills (Hough, 2005).

Standardized tests: tests used to measure a student’s understanding of material compared to others of the same age and grade elsewhere in the country. These tests are administered and scored under uniformed conditions (“Education.com”, 2012).

Reading strategies: skills or methods used to teach or facilitate reading proficiency (“Glossary of education,” 2012).

Learning disabilities: A neurological condition that interferes with the way a person stores, processes, and produces information. It affects the ability to read, write, spell, speak, computes math, reason as well as affecting a person’s attention, memory, coordination, social skills, and emotional maturity (“Learning disabilities association,” 2011).

In order to assist struggling high school students with reading, it is important to know how they learn, what students can do to help themselves, and provide strategies and support to build their confidence. The following chapters evaluate ways to help students become better readers and successful adults.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

High School Readers' Success

High school students have many requirements to meet before they graduate. There are assignments, standardized tests, after school activities, friends, family, and making sure that they have enough credits to graduate. For students who struggle with reading, this is an overwhelming combination. Many students give up and drop out rather than try to find help to be successful. Students should have a say in how and what they read. Teachers may have to look at the big picture in order to help students find their place.

Self-Evaluation as Readers

Capella & Weinstein (2001) examine how students perceive themselves as readers and how well they will succeed across the curriculum. Their quantitative study looked at an urban district of 24, 599 students from the 8th, 10th, and 12th grades using reading achievement scores, administrator surveys, and high school transcripts. Students were evaluated as to the possibility of improving their reading skills by graduation, based on factors from their childhood. Reading achievement tests were used to identify students at risk of failing or not graduating due to poor reading proficiency. Tests included short reading passages with comprehension questions to determine skills in defining words in context, understanding author perspective, recognizing figures of speech, and interpreting meaning.

Participants who did the best and improved their reading scores were predominantly students who were white, female, transitioned well into high school, and took mainly academic classes. These students did well because it was believed they had more control over their futures.

The result of this study is crucial in developing preventative interventions to help young people who are currently on a path to failure find success (Capella & Weinstein ,2001).

Readers' Choice

Wilson and Chase (2007) looked at students recreational reading habits. By examining students reading patterns, it was noted that students need to have desire to read if they are to be successful in improving reading skills. Many students have a strong motivation to read during the elementary years, but this motivation decreases as they get older and their reading material transitions to factual text books. This study evaluated the importance of students being able to choose their own reading material, using Silent Sustained Reading (SSR) effectively, and establishing a routine time for reading. Recreational reading improves reading programs and student participation. This information has been important in other studies providing strategies for high school students.

Peer Discussion Groups

One such strategy is group discussions to build comprehension in the classroom. Alvermann, Young, Weaver, Hinchman, Moore, Phelps, Thrash, & Zalewski (1996) looked at five culturally diverse schools within the United States. This qualitative study was conducted over one school year, utilizing four focal students per school, for a total of five groups. Three groups were teacher directed and two were student led.

The purpose of this study was to see how students perceive discussions as the better way to build comprehension skills. Researchers noted how the students reacted to the teacher vs. student led groups. The student led groups were more focused on the relationship within the group rather than on discussing the material in general. Students were able to delegate roles,

valued listening to each other, and held themselves accountable for their roles in the group.

Further research has been suggested to see if discussion groups are more beneficial than teacher led discussions within the classroom (Alvermann, et. al, 1996).

Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring seems to be the most effective strategy. Students can focus on what they do well when they read, see good readers' model appropriate reading strategies, and are able to help others find their way through the reading maze. Students working with students to build skills help to overcome fear of ridicule and allow them to build confidence in how they read. Finding success helps students to become good readers.

Good and Poor Reader Pairs

Students working with peers provided the support struggling readers needed and helped them build confidence in their reading skills. Mastropieri, Scruggs, & Graetz (2003) conducted studies in a remedial reading, English, social studies, and chemistry classes. The strategy that appeared to be the most effective was pairing a good reader with a poor reader. The poor readers were able to see and mimic what a good reader does while reading. These readers were able to build their confidence and improve their comprehensive skills.

Another strategy researchers suggested was to pair summarization strategies with peer tutoring as a way to help struggling readers see what they were supposed to do with the text and help students become comfortable challenging themselves. The researchers determined that using and teaching these strategies takes up a great deal of classroom time; intensive interaction with the text helps students become comfortable with figuring out the material; combine summarization strategies with peer-tutoring to help students see what they are supposed to do

with the text; and peer-tutoring helps students become more comfortable with challenging themselves. These strategies seem particularly helpful for students with LD but require further assistance in building their skills (Mastropieri, Scruggs, & Graetz, 2003).

High School and Elementary Pairs

To help readers at both the secondary and elementary levels, Paterson & Elliott (2006) paired high school students with elementary students as a way to improve reading skills for both age groups. This study examines the pairing of 9th grade struggling readers with 2nd and 3rd grade struggling readers. The idea was to use students' strengths to emphasize skills and abilities during a tutoring session. Participants were 9th and 10th grade struggling readers who were placed in to two Remedial Education Program classes. One group would work with 2nd grade students and the other would work with 3rd grade students.

The high school students received ongoing instruction regarding reading strategies throughout the year, which they in turn used with their reading partners. Students eventually created their own reading lessons to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of these strategies. The results showed that the high school tutors developed pedagogical skills shaped by their sensitivity to how their partners read. The students became comfortable with the language of reading to explain not only the strategies they chose to use when tutoring, but also how to articulate their own reading issues and identify specific strategies that helped their reading. Most of the students saw a dramatic rise on their reading assessment at the end of the project (Paterson & Elliott, 2006).

Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS)

Peer-assisted learning strategy (PALS) examined the effect of peer tutoring on students' literacy development. Fuchs, Fuchs, & Kazdan (1999) conducted their study to see if peer-assisted learning strategies would help students in remedial reading and special education classes. The program was administered five times, every two weeks for 16 weeks. Participants were 18 special education and remedial reading classrooms in ten high schools in the south. There were two programs: PALS in which nine teachers had one class that participated in the program, and a contrast group, which there were no peer-mediated reading activities for the nine teachers participating.

The program used the Comprehensive Reading Assessment Battery Test, which used four 400-word traditional folktales to test students' literacy development. Students read two passages for three minutes and then answered ten short comprehension questions. This test was administered pre and post-test, with students reading all four passages. Students also read aloud to examiners who scored incorrect answers, using the combined higher scores of the answers for their results. Students were also required to give verbal responses to verbal questions. The results of this study showed that there was a slight increase in reading skills in the PALS group. It is believed that the program provided students with strategic reading behaviors, such as practicing retelling, summarizing, and predicting as they. The PALS program did demonstrate that while it enhances reading comprehension growth and encourages students to work on their reading performance, more research needs to be done to determine how best to utilize the program with high school students (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Kazdan, 1999).

Strategies across the Content Areas

One area where students struggle to understand the material they are given is in content area classes. Reading for comprehension is a critical skill that is used across the curriculum. Strategies should be taught to students to help them understand multiple texts and to adapt to changing texts, whether in print or multimedia.

Beliefs versus Skills as Readers

Hall (2005) examined how three students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade dealt with reading in their core subjects. All three students were female and each one was studied in a particular content area. The study looked at the connection between how well students comprehend material and how difficult they believe it to be. A student's ideas, beliefs, and personal goals as readers often influence how they interact with it.

The results showed how each student saw herself as a reader which would dictate how well she read. If the student felt like she knew the material, she did not ask for help from others. If she felt the information was confusing, she would sometimes ask for help. In the case of the science labs, she would copy down the answers from her group. Struggling readers not only have problems with the difficulty of the text and their cognitive abilities as a reader, but how the student perceives her reading skills to help her figure out the text. It is their identities as readers that seem to be the key as to how well a student will read and comprehend a text (Hall, 2005).

Text Maps

Store, Boon, Fore, Bend, & Spencer (2008) studied the use of text maps as a way to improve reading comprehension skills was studied. This qualitative study was used to assess four, 9th grade students who were diagnosed as having emotional and behavioral disorders

(EBD) to improve their reading skills, especially across the content areas. Students listened to a passage read aloud by their teacher and then answered a series of comprehension questions. The teacher did not give the answers, but redirected them to the passage. The teacher then demonstrated how to use a text map to demonstrate to students how to locate the information. The teacher would pause and provide attention clues for the students to look for.

Teachers first read a comprehension passage from the literature books. Students were then expected to answer a series of comprehension questions. The answers were found in the teacher's edition of the textbook. The teacher did not give the students the answers, but redirected the students to the passage. This baseline study was conducted until the students' data were stable for three consecutive sessions (Store, et. al., 2008).

The second phase dealt with teacher generated text maps. These sessions were conducted one-on-one with the teacher. A para-pro worked with the other three students in another part of the classroom. The teacher introduced the activity and explained the function and importance of each part of the text map. Together, the teacher and student discussed possible questions that needed to be answered. The teacher and student took turns reading passages. At certain points in the reading, the teacher stopped and gave attention clues for the student to look for. The student then filled in the answers to the questions discussed earlier (Store, et. al., 2008).

The third phase was the student generated maps. The teacher reviewed the major components that needed to be included on the text map as well as their importance and function. The teacher then sat and listened as the student read the story and generated questions. The teacher answered questions when necessary, but did not assist the student in coming up with the questions. The student would then re-read the passage and answer the text map questions during and after the reading (Store, et. al., 2008).

The results showed significant improvement for all four students. An increase in comprehensive scores was also noted after the first session of text mapping. A larger sample size should be used to determine how effective text mapping is for EBD students (Store, et. al., 2008).

Ask, Read, Tell (ART)

The ART (Ask, Read, Tell) program is a qualitative study that examined how 115 low socioeconomic inner city high school students improved their reading. McCallum, Krohn, Skinner, Hilton-Prillhart, Hopkins, Waller, & Polite (2011) conducted a short, two week summer enrichment program held on a college campus. The participants were 10th and 11th grade students, aged 15 – 18 years. Students were tested on 400 words, 4th grade level passages over a six day period. Students attended for one hour a day for eight days. Students were put into one of three groups: ART (Ask, Read, Tell), ART+PD (Ask, Read, Tell + Peer Discussion), or a control group.

The control group read for a designated time and then was immediately given 10 multiple choice questions to answer. The ART and ART+PD were first given 10 minutes to read and three minutes to answer the questions. The following sessions were shortened to six minutes to read and four minutes to answer the questions (McCallum et. al., 2011).

At the end of the program, the ART+PD produced the higher scores, followed by ART and the control group. There was little difference between the scores for the ART and control groups. The 400 word passages written at the 4th grade level may have been too easy for many of the participants. A longer testing period with a wider variety of participants may provide different results in the future (McCallum et. al., 2011).

These studies have demonstrated the need to teach a wide variety of strategies to provide support for struggling readers. Students do better when they have an invested interest in what they read and for how long. By providing the right strategies to students, they discover that reading is more than just words on the page.

As students begin to understand what they read, they begin to figure out what strategies work for them. They begin to enjoy the process of reading and choosing books. Students begin to help each other navigate the web of reading.

Chapter Three: Results and Analysis Relative to the Problem

High School Readers' Success

For students to be successful as readers, it is important for them to feel that they have control over what they read. Students in high school should be able to choose their own reading material, have scheduled time to read, and use that time effectively. This feeling of control provides motivation for them read which they lose as they start to read more informational texts instead of literature texts (Wilson & Chase, 2001).

Students who have a sense of control over their futures do better in school. Those students take more academic classes and transition better to high school. When these students are studied, preventative interventions can be developed to help struggling students find success (Capella & Weinstein, 2001).

Students, when given the opportunity, can use each other to help build reading skills. Group discussions allow students to generate ideas and thoughts in a "safe" environment. Student discussion groups allow opportunities for students to explore ideas and ask questions that may not be brought up in classroom. These groups focus on social interaction rather than the text material, though some of the discussions provide more thought and comprehension reflection than teacher led discussion (Alvermann, et. al, 1996).

When students have a say in reading assignments, they have an opportunity to invest in themselves. This interest encourages students to take risks with discussions or material. Students are more willing to try new things. This investment in themselves helps them to see success, which encourages them to keep trying. As students begin to see that reading is not a chore that they have to do, they start to explore texts and ideas that may have been too difficult for them previously. Students who believe that they have a say in what they read and respond to the

material, will find reading to be enjoyable and try new strategies to become better readers.

Peer Tutoring

Students who help other students to learn encourage readers to support each other and improve their reading skills. This proves to be true across the curriculum, not only in remedial reading or English classes. The results of one study show that poor readers increased their confidence while improving their comprehension skills. This pairing of students worked with summarization strategies since struggling readers can see what they are supposed to do with the text (Mastropieri, Scruggs, & Graetz, 2003).

The pairing of high school students with elementary students shows improved reading skills for all students involved. Students used their strengths to emphasize skills and abilities while tutoring their young partners. Students received instruction in the use of reading strategies before, during, and after their tutoring sessions (Paterson & Elliott, 2006).

This intense work helped the high school students learn, understand, and use the language of reading. As a result, students created their own lesson plans, developed pedagogical skills from working and understanding how their young partners read, and articulate their own reading issues and strategies that improved their own skills. The students who participated improved their reading assessment scores at the end of the project (Paterson & Elliott, 2006).

The use of peer-assisted learning strategy (PALS) was used to see if these strategies would benefit students in remedial reading or special education classes. Students often struggle with more than word pronunciation or comprehension. The PALS program focuses on how students read and comprehend, either by themselves or with an examiner, however there was not much interaction between students. The results provided little information on how well this program should be used in the class room (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Kazdan, 1999).

The outcome of these studies shows that partnering or tutoring other students is helpful in building confidence and skills in struggling readers. It is important to note that pairing good students with poor students or older students with younger students provides a model for all students to learn from. When students are paired up, they become comfortable trying new strategies or are willing to make mistakes. It removes the fear of how the whole class may react to their mistakes and allows students to work independently. They can learn as fast or practice as often as needed to become comfortable with their new strategies.

Strategies across the Content Areas

Students need to be able to read all types of material, not just literature books. It is important that they comprehend it as well. In high school, students are exposed to informational texts and struggling readers have difficulty reading the text, their cognitive abilities as readers, and how to use reading skills to figure out the meaning of the text (Hall, 2005).

The use of graphic organizers, especially text maps, help students to visually put together comprehensive pieces of what they are reading. Text maps are useful in all content areas and help students with emotional and behavioral problems (EDD) improve their reading skills. This strategy is repetitious as students practice using text maps. Students build confidence in locating information within the text. The teacher provides attention clues for students to look for within the text. Teachers act as moderators while the students discuss the information located in the text maps. Students who used this strategy showed an increase in comprehension scores after the first session of text mapping (Store, et al. 2008).

The ART (Ask, Read, Tell) program has students reading 400-word passages at the 4th grade level. Students read the passages and then answered a series of comprehension questions. The results of this program did not show much improvement in the students reading skills

(McCallum et al., 2011).

One noteworthy fact was the pairing of groups who did the ART program with group discussion, which showed that there was some improvement in some students' scores. These results may have more to do with the pairing of good readers with poor readers, or students feeling more comfortable talking with each other. The researchers believe that the lack of information may come from using passages that were too easy for the students (McCallum et al., 2011).

The use of reading strategies provides students with choices to work from. Students had success using simpler strategies and then gradually add strategies as they become more confident. This need for appropriate strategies is especially important in content areas as schools increase the number of credits students are required to complete. It is important to pair the right strategies to meet individual student needs.

Teachers need to know how to evaluate texts and the strategies for students to use. By matching the right strategy to each student, students learn to own their skills and invest in themselves as readers. Students learn a great deal from each other, so pairing them up allows them to show off their skill and possibly teach their partner a new reading technique. Students are encouraged to invest in themselves and each other. They begin to believe that reading may be enjoyable and start to choose books that they want to read.

Chapter 4: Recommendation and Conclusion Recommendation

Recommendation

To help secondary students improve their reading skills, it is important that they have some say over what they read. Classroom libraries should include materials that fit all reading levels, including non-fiction as well as fiction, magazines, and graphic novels. Student should have a wide variety of materials to choose from and explore.

Teachers should include various types of graphic organizers to help struggling readers focus on what they are reading and how to locate information. Graphic organizers help students to access background knowledge, a skill in which many students struggle. Graphic organizers such as text maps, Venn diagrams, and simple shapes that can be filled in and moved around will help students "see" what is going on in the text. These tools should be used in content area classes where information may not be straight forward and requires some searching to find the correct responses.

To help students become comfortable with graphic organizers, it may help to have them practice using graphic organizers in groups, where everyone has to locate a "piece" of the organizer. Teachers should try to create groups that have both good and poor readers in them. The students would be able to help each other by demonstrating how good readers read and to ask questions that may not be comfortable mention in a larger group.

Another strategy is to have students work with a partner while reading. Two such pairings should be a good reader with a poor reader or a high school reader with an elementary partner. By working in pairs, high school students work on their reading skills, learn new ones, and are able to connect to a real world activity.

Teachers should model reading strategies for students. Struggling readers, even at the high school level, need to see how a good reader goes through the process. Scheduled reading time allows students to practice skills and explore texts. Students should be allowed to change their materials if they do not like what they have chosen or struggle with the one they are reading. Scheduled time for reading allows teachers to monitor student skills and reading habits, make suggestions for books to read, and explain anything that may be confusing to the reader.

It is important to provide a variety of strategies for students to use. Many students need several strategies to help them understand what they are reading, especially in the content areas. By providing examples of different strategies, either as mini lessons or as handouts/posters, students and teacher can decide which strategies work best for each student. Strategies can be as simple as utilizing a KWL chart or as challenging as completing a text map. These strategies help students understand materials in their content area classes as well as their literature classes.

Areas for Further Research

Further research needs to be conducted in helping students in grades 10-12 improve their reading skills. With the continuing reliance on standardized tests, reading is playing an important part in the curriculum. Students have to read material that is often more challenging than what they are used to.

In order to understand what 10th through 12th grade students need to do to read well across the curriculum, researchers need to study approximately 100 students from various ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. These students should be recommended either by their English Language Arts Teachers or through referrals due to problems with reading, using low scores on standardized tests or reading assessments.

The method of study would use four content area texts, 400 word passages, written at the

students' grade level. The students should be given two tests to read and then answer ten comprehension questions from each passage. One group would be taught how to use a graphic organizer to locate important information. Another group should reread the paragraphs and discuss their answers with either an examiner or in a small group. This group should have the comprehension questions available to them and, as a group, locate the correct answers. A third group needs to be a control group. This group would be given the paragraphs and questions, but provided no strategies to help with their reading.

All students are then given the last two paragraph and comprehension questions. Students should use the strategies that they practiced with the first set of questions. The results should be compared to the previous results to determine if there was an improvement in reading scores or abilities.

The data should show that students improved their comprehension of the materials. Since students learn differently, by using two groups who used two different strategies, there should be some improvement in scores. To make sure that the results are true findings, the control group who received no strategy assistance, should have no to little change in their scores. This would demonstrate that the strategies are what are helping students.

The data should be analyzed with the idea that improvement has been made. The original test scores should be compared to the post test scenes. Researchers should also examine how the students did in regards to the two strategies that were taught keeping these questions in mind: Did students seem engaged with the reading? Were they able to comprehend complex themes, meaning and/or details? This analysis would help to show that reading strategies are just as important for 10th through 12th grade students as they do for K-9 students.

Summary and conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to examine the need for reading strategies in the 10th through 12th grades. Students are struggling with strategies and concepts across the curriculum. Students have difficulty completing assignments and with the changing graduation requirements, including completing standardized tests, many students feel overwhelmed and struggle with the minimum of requirements.

Students need to know different strategies that reflect their personal reading difficulty and interests. The use of KWL charts is always helpful, but is not very practical when a student is struggling with decoding or locating information. In order for students to see success with their reading, they need to learn strategies that will enable them to read and understand texts from all levels and content areas.

Students should be able to practice their skills a real world setting. This can be accomplished by having them work with a partner, preferably a younger one, whom they can model the use of the strategies. When students work with a partner, they become comfortable discussing problems and asking questions.

Reading strategies need to be taught to all students, regardless of their age, grade, or reading ability. With the continued reliance of standardized tests, it is even more important for students to read many kinds of texts. Students need time to read, learn strategies, and practice the strategies. For older students, they should feel like they have a say in what they read, which will provide them with the incentive to keep reading.

The increasing reliance on technology means that reading is no longer a luxury. Students must be able to read and comprehend informational and directional texts besides reading for enjoyment. This skill is necessary if they hope to compete in the job market and in college. High

school students have many challenges in their futures. Reading should not be one of them. If we are willing to work with these students and give them the support they need now, then we will see the benefits in the future. This investing in students now means we are investing in our future.

References

- Alfassi, M. (2004) Reading to learn: Effects on combined strategy instruction on high school students. *The Journal of Educational Research*. 97 (4), 171-184.
- Alvermann, D.E., Young, J.P., Weaver, D., Hinchman, K. A., Moore, D. W., Phelps, S. F., Thrash, E. C., & Zalewski, P. (1996, July/August/September). Middle and high school students' perceptions of how they experience text-based discussions: A multi-case study. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 5(31), 244-267. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/748276>.
- Barry, A.L., Huebsch, W. R., & Burhop, J. (2008). Getting teens to read. *Literacy Learning: The Middle Years*. 16(3), 57-64.
- Brozo, W, G. & Hargis, C.H. (2003). Taking seriously the idea of reform: One high school's efforts to make reading more responsive to all students. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*. 47(1), 14-23.
- Capella, E., & Weinstein, R.S. (2001). Turning around reading achievement: Predictors of high school students' academic resilience. *The American Psychological Association, Inc*. 4(93), 758-771. DOI 10.1037//0022-0663.93.4.758
- Defining learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Association of America*.
http://www.ldanatl.org/new_to_ld/defining.asp. 1/29/2013
- Dennis, D. V. (2010). "I'm not stupid": How assessment drive (in) appropriate reading instruction. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. 53 (4), 283-290.
- Fuchs, L.S., Fuchs, D., & Kazdan, S. (1999). Effects of peer-assisted learning strategies on high school students with serious reading problems. *Remedial and Special Education*. 20(5), 309-318.
- Hall, L. A. (2005). Struggling readers and content area text: Interactions with and perceptions of comprehension, self, and success. *Research in Middle Level Education (RMLE) Online*. 9(4), 1-19.

- Harmon, J. M., Hendrick, W. B., Wood, K. D., & Vintinner, J. (2011). An investigation of current secondary reading programs. *Literacy Research and Instruction*. 50, 105-119
DOI: 10.180/19388071003611152.
- Holden, T. S. (2012). Using art to assess reading comprehension and critical thinking in adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*. 55(8), 692-703.
doi:10.1002/JAAL.0008
- Hoyt, J. R. (1975). From reluctance to renaissance. *NASSP Bulletin*. 59, 73-78.
DOI: 10.1177/019263657505938713.
- Jolley, K. (2008). Video games to reading: Reaching out to reluctant readers. *English Journal*. 97(4), 81-86.
- Learning Disabilities (2012). In *Learning Disabilities Association of America*. Retrieved from http://www.ldanatl.org/new_to_ld/defining.asp
- Lebzelter, S. & Nowacek, E. J. (1999). Reading strategies for secondary students with mild disabilities. *Intervention in School and Clinic*. 34(4), 212-219.
DOI: 10.1177/1105345129903400403.
- Mastropieri, M. A., Scruggs, T.E., Graetz, J. E. (2003). Reading comprehension instruction for secondary students: Challenges for struggling students and teachers. *Learning Disability Quarterly*. 2 (26), 103-116.
- McCallum, R.S., Krohn, K. R., Skinner, C.H., Hilton-Prillhart, A., Hopkins, M., Waller, S.T., & Polite, F. (2011). Improving reading comprehension of at-risk high-school students: The art of reading program. *Psychology in the Schools*. 48(1), 78-86. DOI: 10.1002/ pits.20541

- Paterson, P. O. & Elliott, L. N. (2006). Struggling reader to struggling reader: High school students' responses to a cross-age tutoring program. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*. 49(5), 378-389.
- Quinn, A. (2005) Reading between the lines: Strategies to discover meaning from a text. *English Journal*. 1(95), 47-57.
- Reading strategies (2012). In *Glossary of Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.education.com/definition/reading-strategies/>.
- Standardized tests (2012). In *Glossary of Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.education.com/definition/standardized-tests/>.
- Store, R. H., Boon, R.T, Fore, C., Bend, W. N., & Spencer, V. G. (2008). Use of text maps to improve reading comprehension skills among students in High school with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*. 33(2), 87-95.
- Stone, N.R. (1984). Accentuate the positive: Motivation and reading for secondary students. *Journal of Reading*. 8(27), 684-690. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40032621>.
- Wilson, J.D., & Case, L.H. (2007). Understanding the recreational reading patterns of secondary students. *Reading Improvement*. 1(44), 40-49.