Chapter 1

Introduction

Mr. Foster has been teaching ninth-grade science for 5 years in a low socioeconomic urban setting. He has just learned that next year the school's model of providing instruction to struggling learners will change; he has been assigned to teach two biology classes for the lowest achieving students. He has been told that in the past teachers have not used biology text material, writing assignments, or given homework for this group of students. However, Mr. Foster is aware that the school's science assessment scores need improvement. It is critical that he include both reading to learn and writing to learn activities in his classes and that he provide students homework for practicing science objectives. Mr. Foster hopes that by teaching his students to self-regulate use of evidence-based strategies, students will demonstrate improved performance in learning biology concepts.

Given the complexity of content (e.g., science, social studies, health) text-based material, many teachers avoid reading and writing to learn text-based activities in content classes (Mason, Hickey Snyder, Suhkram, & Kedem, 2006). This lack of explicit instruction with authentic content text for reading comprehension and written expression is especially problematic for low-achieving adolescents. For low-achieving students, difficulties in self-regulating learning and motivation further impact comprehending content text and developing written text about concepts learned (Boscolo & Gelati, 2007).

In this book, we provide validated lesson plans designed to help teachers integrate reading and writing to learn in their classroom. We have included suggestions for how to effectively embed reading and writing strategies, separately or in combination, into content curriculum. Vignettes illustrating these applications in content-specific classes (e.g., middle and high school science, and social studies classes) are included. Detailed lesson plans and instructional support materials for students are provided for a number of selected evidence-based interventions. The content literacy strategies are described and introduced in four sections: 1) developing strategy acquisition and self-regulation, 2) reading to learn, 3) writing to learn, and 4) homework. References for research that supports evidence-based interventions for instructional approaches are listed at the end of each chapter.

CHAPTER REVIEWS

The next two chapters provide background information critical for understanding subsequent chapters and for effective strategy instruction, and steps of instruction for teaching self-regulation. Strategy acquisition as highlighted in Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) instruction (Harris, Graham, Mason, & Friedlander, 2008), an evidence-based instructional approach, is described in Chapter 2. Six critical stages (establish background knowledge, discuss the strategy, model the strategy, memorize the strategy, support strategy use, independent practice) for effective strategy acquisition within the context of the secondary classroom are presented. The role of the struggling adolescent learner is highlighted throughout instructional delivery. Teacher-directed

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and peer-assisted approaches for supporting student learning throughout strategy development are provided.

Four self-regulation strategies—goal setting, self-monitoring, self-instruction, and self-reinforcement—for supporting students' strategy use over time and across settings and content are described in Chapter 3. Each of the four self-regulation strategies is described with guidelines for teaching within the context of the content classroom. Suggestions for supporting self-regulation across tasks (e.g., self-monitoring for attention and performance) are provided. We include vignettes for implementing self-regulation interventions for a whole class and for an individual student.

Reading to Learn

> Mr. Foster knows that the passages in the biology textbook are going to be too difficult for most of the students in his two lower level classes. However, he does want to use the text as the charts, diagrams, and illustrations are excellent and will support student learning. Understanding the difficult concepts, vocabulary, and structure of the text, however, will be important as Mr. Foster develops lessons. Mr. Foster plans to support his reading-to-learn activities with strategies that help students activate prior knowledge, stimulate vocabulary development, and promote reading comprehension.

In content classes, reading becomes the means by which information is obtained from text. Prior to introducing specific comprehension strategies for reading to learn, it is critical that teachers understand the difficulty of content text for many adolescent readers. Chapter 4 begins with a review of strategies for addressing prior knowledge, vocabulary acquisition, conceptual density, and text structure for the struggling reader. The rationale and theoretical frameworks for using strategies for a variety of reading purposes is noted. Vignette examples of content text are used to illustrate instruction. Methods for scaling students' reading from accessible text to complex text are illustrated.

Reading to learn chapters include a preinstruction overview, lesson plans, and instructional materials. Example scripts are provided for many lessons to illustrate procedures. Strategy instruction, however, is not intended to be scripted. These are only examples. The teacher's instructional delivery should match his or her personal style, the needs of the students, and the curriculum objectives. In the reading-to-learn section, we have included an appendix of text passages and scoring sheets for assessing students' comprehension of passages. The following three strategies are introduced:

- TRAP (**T**hink before you read, **R**ead the passage, **A**sk yourself—what is the main idea, **P**araphrase) for reading comprehension, presented in Chapter 5, helps students identify the main idea and details of a paragraph or passage.

- TRAP IDEAS (**I**dentify important details to support the main idea, **D**elete trivial details, **E**liminate redundant details, **A**dd a term for a list of words or concepts, **S**ummarize) for reading comprehension, presented in Chapter 6, assists students in developing summaries for content reading.

- TWA (**T**hink before reading, think **W**hile reading, think **A**fter reading) for reading comprehension, presented in Chapter 7, is a nine-step strategy for supporting student reading throughout all reading phases. TWA embeds TRAP IDEAS within the after-reading strategy framework. Minilessons for vocabulary development are embedded throughout the lessons. TWA provides a framework for dissecting information from a text that can support essay writing.

Writing to Learn

Mr. Foster knows that it is important to include writing in his biology classes. In fact, the school district has adopted a policy of writing across the curriculum. For his two low-achieving classes, Mr. Foster will include short writing assignments such as Quick Writes to build students' confidence in writing to learn about biology. Mr. Foster looks forward to working with students as they develop skills to write effective biographies about scientists, to write informational passages about material read, and to write to persuade him to their point of view.

In Chapter 8, the difficulty that many students have in expressing knowledge through writing is reviewed. The problems that many students have for writing across text structure and genre is noted. Selection and timing for writing complete essays and/or short written responses, such as in quick writing, to support student learning in content classes are discussed. Specific tips for integrating writing strategies within the reading to learn strategies are noted. The theoretical frameworks for each strategy to be presented in Chapters 9–12 are briefly reviewed including reference for each strategy. Vignettes for using the four strategies in the content classroom are included.

 As in the reading-to-learn chapters, we include preinstruction overview, lesson plans with example scripts, and instructional materials for each writing intervention. Four strategies for developing written expression are described:

- Story writing, personal narrative writing, and biography writing are supported by the C-SPACE (**C**haracters—**S**etting, **P**urpose, **A**ction, **C**onclusion, and **E**motion) strategy, which is highlighted in Chapter 9.

- STOP (**S**uspend judgment, **T**ake a side, **O**rganize ideas, **P**lan more as you write) and DARE (**D**evelop a topic sentence, **A**dd supporting ideas, **R**eject an argument, **E**nd with a conclusion), presented in Chapter 10, are strategies that help students develop effective arguments for writing a persuasive essay.

- TWA is combined with PLANS (**P**ick goals, **L**ist ways to meet goals, **A**nd make **N**otes, **S**equence notes) in Chapter 11. TWA + PLANS assist students in setting goals for developing effective informative essays. Minilessons are embedded for combining sentences to improve the quality of essays.

- Quick Writes are short student written responses used to support or assess student learning before, during, or after content instruction. The POW (**P**ick an idea, **O**rganize notes, **W**rite and say more) strategy in combination with strategies for writing a narrative, persuasive, or informative response is presented in Chapter 12.

Homework

Mr. Foster wants to include appropriate biology homework for all his students. He notes that many of his struggling learners have the skills to do his assigned homework, but lack the organizational skills to complete work in a timely manner and often simply do not turn in assignments.

Homework completion can be a chronic problem for some students. Chapter 13 presents self-regulation procedures to enhance classroom preparation skills (e.g., seated when bell rings, eye contact with teacher when instruction begins, pen or pencil on desk, relevant instructional materials open when the lesson begins), and homework completion. We focus on strategies for how teachers can more effectively use homework, and how students can self-regulate

homework performance. Five lesson plans are provided for the A-WATCH homework strategy: (**A**ssignment notebook—get it out; **W**rite down the assignment and due date; **A**sk for clarification on the assignment if needed; **T**ask-analyze the assignment; **C**heck all work for completeness, accuracy, and neatness; **H**and it in).

REFERENCES

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