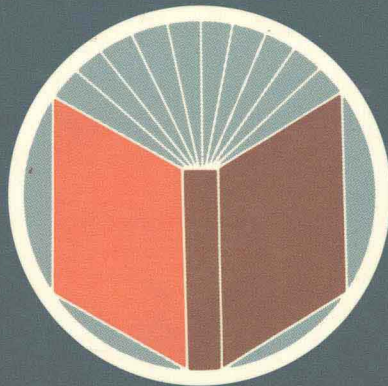


*Third Edition*

# Reading Strategies and Practices

*A Compendium*



Robert J. Tierney

John E. Readence

Ernest K. Dishner

# *READING STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES*

## *A Compendium*

*THIRD EDITION*

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The Ohio State University

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Louisiana State University

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Southwest Texas State University

**ALLYN AND BACON**

*Boston London Sydney Toronto*

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# Preface

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*Reading Strategies and Practices: A Compendium* represents a significant improvement over the earlier editions. Some of the changes that were made include the following:

- Addition of over 27 new strategies and practices
- Addition of several new units, including Discussion and Cooperative Learning, Response to Literature and Drama, Listening, and Intervention Programs for “At-Risk” Readers
- Revision of existing descriptions of strategies, especially the cautions and comments for each strategy
- Addition of several new strategies within existing units
- Addition of Whole-language to the General Framework Unit
- Discussion of each strategy in terms of current research findings, which addresses their utility

This book is a compendium of strategies; it is not a description of a single approach, nor is it intended to be eclectic. The inclusion of a strategy should not be perceived as our endorsement of that strategy. There are some strategies that we all view as problematic; there are others on which we disagree.

We appreciate those of you who have used the book, especially those colleagues who gave us feedback for this revision. We hope you will find this new edition even more useful than its predecessor. Ideally, the book will stimulate reflection, discussion, evaluation, and intelligent use of instructional procedures. We especially want it to fill a void by being a ready reference for teachers and prospective teachers who want a clear, overall perspective of instructional procedures and approach their teaching with a view to experimentation and decision making. The first and second editions were used in numerous courses at the undergraduate and graduate level for such purposes; the new edition will have even greater utility. We also recommend the book to administrators and others concerned with reading improvement—including parents.

# *How to Use This Book*

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## **INTENDED PURPOSES**

The purpose of this book is to afford the reader an active role in examining and evaluating instructional techniques. We do not expect readers to become familiar with all of the strategies or practices presented in the text, nor do we even advocate reading the text from cover to cover. Rather, we recommend reading it selectively and reflectively. Readers should select the units and strategies they wish to review and evaluate.

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## **HOW IS THIS BOOK ORGANIZED?**

For organizational purposes the text is divided into fourteen units. Within each unit we delineate our intent and provide recommendations as well as cautions for using various strategies and practices. The fourteen units under which the strategies and practices have been classified are as follows:

- |         |                                                                       |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Unit 1  | General Frameworks                                                    |
| Unit 2  | Comprehension Development                                             |
| Unit 3  | Responding to Reading as Writers and Writing to Enhance Comprehension |
| Unit 4  | Discussion and Cooperative Learning                                   |
| Unit 5  | Response to Literature and Drama                                      |
| Unit 6  | Meaning Vocabulary                                                    |
| Unit 7  | Content Area and Text-based Comprehension                             |
| Unit 8  | Studying                                                              |
| Unit 9  | Listening                                                             |
| Unit 10 | Teaching Reading as a Language Experience and with Shared Books       |
| Unit 11 | Intervention Programs for At-Risk Readers                             |
| Unit 12 | Word Identification                                                   |
| Unit 13 | Oral Reading                                                          |
| Unit 14 | Individualization and Recreational Reading                            |

Some readers may disagree with the separation of teaching strategies and practices into these particular strands. This breakdown is intended as one viable method of organization; it is not suggested as a divinely inspired division of reading or curriculum.

The fourteen units of this text describe eighty-two strategies and practices. As an aid to examining and evaluating these techniques, each unit provides the reader with an overview and a consistent organizational pattern. The following section describes how these aids might be used.

### *Unit Overview*

At the beginning of each unit, an overview provides an introduction to the various strategies and practices presented in that section. This overview serves three essential purposes:

1. Since only selected strategies have been included within the various units, the overview provides information on the basis for selecting strategies.
2. Since several strategies could be classified into more than one unit, the overview provides information on the basis for the present classification.
3. The overview provides the reader with a brief orientation, which enables purposeful reading of each section and thus facilitates the evaluation, comparison, and intelligent selection of strategies and practices or their adaptations.

### *Strategies and Practices*

In detailing the major features of the various strategies and practices, the discussion of each adopts the following framework:

Purpose  
Rationale  
Intended Audience  
Description of the Procedure  
Cautions and Comments

Where further information is desired, each unit provides an annotated list of references to guide readers in their research.

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# General Frameworks

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# 1

## UNIT OVERVIEW

In most classrooms, teachers approach reading instruction and content area learning (e.g., social studies and science) with a general framework within which the teachers do a variety of activities. The present unit describes four strategies that we have labeled *general frameworks*. Two of the four strategies, the directed reading activity and the directed reading-thinking activity, are used primarily with reading material. The third strategy, the instructional framework, is used with content area material. Whole-language is somewhat different than the other frameworks. It is largely a set of beliefs/assumptions that guide classroom reading practices in a variety of ways.

*Directed Reading Activity (DRA).* Over the years, the Directed Reading Activity has been probably the most widely used framework for a “total” reading lesson. Five basic steps constitute a DRA. These steps purport to provide the structure for the improvement of a wide spectrum of reading skills—the most important of which is comprehension. This strategy, which may be applied to reading selections that vary in both length and readability, is suggested for use with students at all grade levels.

*Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA).* Assuming that critical reading performance requires the reader to become skilled at determining purposes for reading, the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity emphasizes that the reader declares his or her own purposes for reading. Like the DRA, the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity may be applied to reading selections that vary in both length and readability, and it is suggested for use with students at all grade levels.

*Instructional Framework.* The three major phases of the Instructional Framework—preparation, guidance, and independence—provide the content teacher with a viable design for presenting a unit of study. The framework provides a means for teaching both the important reading skills (process) the students need and the important concepts (product) of the unit. Thus, process and product merge in the development of independent learners. The strategy is appropriate for both fictional and expository materials and would appear most suitable for students in grades four and above.

**Whole-Language.** Whole-Language is a view of literacy, literacy-learning, and teaching that is driven by key assumptions about how students learn. Whole-Language has its antecedents in the student-centered notions of Dewey and the psycholinguistic assumptions of Kenneth Goodman, Smith, and others. In recent years, these assumptions have been used as the basis for suggesting classroom practices.

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## ***DIRECTED READING ACTIVITY***

### ***Purpose***

The purpose of the Directed Reading Activity (DRA) (Betts 1946) is to: (1) give teachers a basic format from which to provide systematic instruction on a group basis; (2) improve students' word recognition and comprehension skills; and (3) successfully guide students through a reading selection.

### ***Rationale***

The DRA is synonymous with the basal reader lesson. Betts (1946) compiled the guidelines that various authors of basal readers generally recommended for teaching their reading selections. Betts described a plan to follow when there was general agreement among the authors:

First, the group should be prepared, oriented, or made ready, for the reading of a story or selection. Second, the first reading should be guided silent reading. Third, word-recognition skills and comprehension should be developed during the silent reading. Fourth, the reading—silent or oral, depending upon the needs of the pupil—should be done for purposes different from those served by the first, or silent, reading. Fifth, the follow-up on the “reading lesson” should be differentiated in terms of pupil needs. (P. 492)

Thus, the general plan of instruction in basal readers, what became known as the directed reading activity,\* originated as a comprehensive means to provide reading instruction to children through a reading selection.

### ***Intended Audience***

The DRA is normally associated with basal reader instruction in the elementary grades, but the teacher may adapt it for any reading selection. For example, Shepherd (1973) has illustrated the use of DRA with content area textbooks from the middle school level through high school.

\*An example of the DRA applied to a story is given on pages 6–10.

## Description of the Procedure

Although there may be minor differences as to what constitutes the DRA, it usually contains the following components, all of which the teacher may modify to fit a student's needs:

1. Readiness
2. Directed silent reading
3. Comprehension check and discussion
4. Oral rereading
5. Follow-up activities

**Stage 1: Readiness.** The readiness, or preparation, stage of the DRA involves getting students ready to enter the story by relating the story selection to their past experiences, developing their interest in reading it, and setting their purposes for reading. Four components comprise the readiness stage of the DRA.

a. *Develop concept background.* Here it is suggested that the teacher connect the new concepts that the students will be exposed to in the reading selection with their previous experiences or readings. Any misconceptions or hazy understandings by the students are expected to be clarified before they read the story.

The teacher may build background through various means, including discussions centering around the story title and illustrations in the selection, personal experiences of the students related to the story content, films, pictures, maps, or other audiovisual displays.

b. *Create interest.* Starting with the notion that children must be interested or motivated to read a selection in order to maximize their comprehension and enjoyment of its contents, the teacher attempts also to create interest in the early stages. The mechanical side of the selection alone, its title and the various illustrations, many times may serve to arouse students' interest; however, the teacher may also have to keep creating enthusiasm for students to read the story effectively. In some cases developing conceptual background (the previously discussed section) may suffice. If not, the teacher may choose to read a short, introductory portion of the selection in hopes of inspiring the students to want to read the rest. At other times, the teacher may wish to use multimedia material and/or experiences to stimulate interest.

c. *Introduce new vocabulary.* Here the teacher's task is to prepare students for any words they will encounter that are outside the students' reading vocabularies and word recognition abilities. To emphasize word meanings and not just word pronunciations, the teacher may introduce new vocabulary in context, both orally and visually. For example, the teacher might first use the word *orally* in a sentence, followed by a visual presentation on the chalk-

board using meaningful phrases or sentences. The introduction of new vocabulary is not a time for drill or for emphasizing word attack skills. Instead, it is the time to give students oral familiarity with selected words. Typically, a teacher introduces no more than five words at once.

d. *Establish purpose.* Based upon the notion that the establishment of clear, concise purpose for reading a selection determines the quality of the readers' comprehension, the teacher poses questions for the students to answer in their silent reading. The overall question the teacher should consider is, "What are the students reading for?" For example, the teacher must decide whether to set a general purpose for the entire selection, such as "Read to find out the series of events that led to the downfall of the dictator," or, if the teacher decides to set more specific purposes for each part of a selection, another example is "Read to find out how the dictator came to power before you go on to other parts of the selection."

The presentation of the readiness stage of the DRA should take approximately five to fifteen minutes but will vary in length and emphasis according to the ability of the students and the complexity of the selections. For less advanced students, it may be necessary to spend a longer time preparing them to read the selection than when preparing more advanced students. Depending upon how the teacher approaches the readiness stage, one component may encompass other aspects of this step. For instance, introducing new vocabulary may create interest and develop concept background simultaneously. With the exception of establishing purpose, which should conclude the readiness stage, the teacher need not present the other components in any established order.

**Stage 2: Directed Silent Reading.** Following the readiness stage of the DRA, the students should read the selection silently to seek answers to the purpose-questions that the teacher has set. It is emphasized that the teacher have students read the selection silently, and not orally. This way is more rapid, it is more characteristic of everyday reading needs, and it gives the students an opportunity to use their work attack skills without expressed effort.

If readiness activities have been thorough, many students will work efficiently with very little, if any, teacher help. The teacher should encourage students to work out word recognition problems independently; however, he or she might also be available in the event a student requests help with confirmation or analysis. Since silent reading is not a time for word attack drills, it is suggested that teachers guide students who require help to clues that will aid them in unlocking the meaning of unknown words. If students seem unable to decode certain words, the teacher usually will provide these words so that reading may proceed. The teacher can make note of those words that give students particular difficulty and/or those specific skill needs of students as they attempt to decode words. Later, teachers can plan appropriate individual and/or group activities to counteract those difficulties.

**Stage 3: Comprehension Check and Discussion.** Discussion activities follow each silent reading segment that is assigned. An obvious start of the discussion can be answering the purpose-questions set during the readiness stage, although discussion may begin naturally on the other aspects of the selection. During the discussion it is appropriate to stress and develop comprehension abilities. For example, teachers might formulate discussion questions to extend and challenge the ideas students glean from their reading.

**Stage 4: Oral Rereading.** This stage of the DRA may occur in conjunction with the previous stage (comprehension check and discussion) or the teacher may use it to set new purposes for reading. The teacher may set these purposes independently, new purposes may develop out of the discussion, or they may serve as a preparation for a follow-up activity. Rereading may also occur if students are confused about one of the discussion questions. If such is the case, the new purpose is for students to read to solve problems that have resulted from the discussion. Students reread rapidly to locate information under question and then orally reread to the group to alleviate the confusion or to verify a point.

**Stage 5: Follow-up Activities.** Follow-up activities include experiences that build and extend skill development and activities that add to, or enrich, students' understanding of the concepts in the story. This is also an appropriate time for the teacher to review any skills that were noted to have produced difficulties during the silent reading. Such activities are suitable on an individual basis, in a small group, or in a whole class situation.

The rationale behind this type of follow-up activity is that practice with, and opportunities to use, skills that present difficulty to students will provide them with the reinforcement necessary to learn those skills. As such, the use of basal reader workbooks, teacher-made worksheets, or commercially available material is often suggested to strengthen those specific skills that the DRA showed to be of concern.

Activities that can enrich or extend students' understanding of the story's concepts start with the premise that the application of newly learned concepts to other types of activities will further enhance and broaden new learning. Such extension activities may involve creative work, study activities, or extended reading. Creative work may include writing about personal experiences related to the story, preparing dramatization, and making illustrations for the story. Study activities may include workbook exercises and teacher-made practice material. Students may also do research into the information they gain from the selection in order to organize it into a chart or table format. Examples of extended reading might include selected readings in other texts or library books on related topics, or reading to find answers to questions that arise in the discussion of the story.



### *Cautions and Comments*

The effective use of the DRA requires the teacher to be sensitive to the students' needs, to the differential demands of text, and to the adequacy of the DRA as a lesson framework. In this respect, the DRA seems to have one shortcoming; namely, it seems to be too teacher-dominated. Teacher-pupil interactions flow mainly from the questions and activities that the teacher prescribes. As a result, the DRA could develop students who are overly dependent on teacher direction rather than on their own self-initiated reading-thinking processes. Indeed, studies by Davidson (1970) and Petre (1970) compared the DRA with the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA) and found results favoring the DR-TA.

Another concern about the use of the DRA involves skill development, including oral reading, word recognition, comprehension, and study skills. If implemented properly, and related to the actual reading assignment, skill instruction can be purposeful and relevant. However, if skills instruction is rote or isolated from a selection, as worksheet exercises often are, then it is often meaningless. Indeed, Sachs (1981) and Osborn (1984) put forward arguments about the worthlessness of many such activities.

Despite these limitations, the DRA has adaptive potential to teach almost any reading selection. Aspects of other strategies described in this book may serve as supplements to the DRA. For example, teachers can effectively utilize ReQuest (see Unit 2) as a replacement for the readiness stage of the DRA.

Part of the DRA's adaptive potential has to do with classroom management and ability grouping. For example, when basal reading programs are used, teachers can use the DRA for a week with various ability groups. An example of such a schedule follows.

#### *A WEEK-LONG SCHEDULE FOR A DIRECTED READING ACTIVITY*

##### *Day One*

<i>Minutes</i>	<i>Group I</i>	<i>Group II</i>	<i>Group III</i>
3-5	Teacher briefs students whom he or she does not work with directly. Students working directly with teacher organize themselves.		
25-30	<i>Stage I—Introducing the Selection</i> (Teacher present) Teacher introduces new story. <i>Stage II—Directed Silent Reading</i> (Teacher present) Students read story silently. <i>Stages III &amp; IV—Comprehension Check</i>	<i>Independent Reading</i> (Students independently) or <i>Bookmaking</i>	<i>Stage V—Follow-up</i> (Students independently) Students work through activities reviewing outline. Students check own work. <i>Independent Work</i> (Students independently)