Listening Passage Preview

Why Is This Strategy Useful?

The listening passage preview strategy aims to improve the reading fluency of students with learning disabilities. In this strategy, the teacher models reading a passage for a student. Then the student reads aloud the same passage with correction and encouragement from the teacher. Researchers believe that previewing strategies are useful because they are efficient and inexpensive yet also effective. The listening preview strategy, specifically, is useful because it provides students with an opportunity to hear difficult words and fluent reading.

Description of Strategy

The teacher and student choose a book to read together from a selection of high-interest low-vocabulary books. The teacher works with the student individually in a quiet location. The teacher positions the book so both can follow the text. In a variation, the teacher and student can each use his or her own copy of the book.

- The teacher says to the student, "Now we are going to read together. Each time, I will read first, while you follow along silently in the book. Then you read the same part out loud."
- The teacher reads aloud from the book for about 2 minutes while the student reads silently. In a variation, with younger or less-skilled readers, the teacher can track his or her progress across the page with a finger.
- The teacher stops reading and says to the student, "Now it is your turn to read. If you come to a word that you do not know, I will help you with it."
- The student reads aloud. If the student makes a reading error or hesitates for longer than 5 seconds, the teacher tells the student the correct word. Then the teacher has the student continue reading.
- The teacher and student continue this process until they finish the book.

Research Evidence

At least one correlational study provides evidence for the listening preview strategy. Five seventh- through ninth-grade students with learning disabilities participated in the study. A baseline was recorded, and then the students received alternating treatments of the listening preview and silent preview strategies. The measure was words read correctly per minute. Findings showed higher performance for the listening preview than the silent preview for four of five students.
Sample Studies Supporting This Strategy


An alternating-treatments design was used to investigate the relative effects of two oral reading previewing procedures: (a) silent: the student reads silently the assigned reading passage prior to reading it aloud, and (b) listening: the teacher reads the assigned selection aloud with the student following along silently prior to the student reading the passage aloud. Five junior-high school learning disabled students, four boys and one girl, participated in the study. In four of five cases results showed that systematic pre-practice procedures were related to higher performance levels than was baseline (no pre-practice). Differential effects were noted: the listening procedure was related to higher rates of words read correctly than was the silent procedure. The findings are discussed in terms of their implications for research and instructional procedures, especially as these relate to adolescent learners.

Sample Activity


Student-adult reading: In student-adult reading, the student reads one-on-one with an adult. The adult can be a teacher, a parent, a classroom aide, or a tutor. The adult reads the text first, providing the students with a model of fluent reading. Then the student reads the same passage to the adult with the adult providing assistance and encouragement. The student rereads the passage until the reading is quite fluent. This should take approximately three to four re-readings.

Partner reading: In partner reading, paired students take turns reading aloud to each other. For partner reading, more fluent readers can be paired with less fluent readers. The stronger reader reads a paragraph or page first, providing a model of fluent reading. Then the less fluent reader reads the same text aloud. The stronger student gives help with word recognition and provides feedback and encouragement to the less fluent partner. The less fluent partner rereads the passage until he or she can read it independently. Partner reading need not be done with a more and less fluent reader. In another form of partner reading, children who read at the same level are paired to reread a story that they have received instruction on during a teacher-guided part of the lesson. Two readers of equal ability can practice rereading after hearing the teacher read the passage.

Additional Resources