Think Before Reading, Think While Reading, Think After Reading with Summarization (TWA-WS)

Why Is This Strategy Useful?

Think Before Reading, Think While Reading, Think After Reading, With Written Summarization (TWA-WS) is a type of self-regulated strategy development (SRSD). An SRSD is a framework in which explicit strategy instruction occurs and is individualized for the student. TWA-WS gives students who are remedial readers and/or have behavioral or attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (ADHD) steps to develop their comprehension strategies for reading and writing. Evidence shows that adolescents who have behavioral disorders or who are remedial readers benefit from this type of SRSD, because it empowers and engages students to modify their own behavior and transfer their ability to comprehend content area reading into writing.

NOTE: Also see TWA strategy (remedial reading students) and TWA+PLANS strategy (fourth-and fifth-grade remedial reading and behavioral disorder students).

Description of Strategy

TWA-WS strategy is an SRSD which has an established framework for the teacher to follow. SRSD-based instruction is individualized. Regardless of the specific literacy strategy used, it unfolds in a series of steps. First, the teacher discusses the nature of the literacy practices in which the students will engage. The student then describes it. The teacher often introduces a mnemonic device to support memorization of the literacy strategy. The teacher next models the strategy, and the students use the mnemonic as a support while they receive guided practice. The teacher infuses the literacy instruction with the self-regulation techniques of goal setting, self-monitoring, self-instruction, and self-reinforcement. The ultimate goal is for students to internalize the literacy and self-regulation strategies so that they can comprehend text and write independently. To implement TWA-WS specifically, the teacher follows these steps with a small group of learners (three to four students) over five lessons lasting 45 minutes each.

1. Identify the author’s purpose in a written text.
2. Determine what they already know about the topic.
3. Set a reading goal.
4. Focus on their reading speed.
5. Link their background knowledge to information from the text that is new for them.
6. Reread parts of the selection.
7. Identify the main idea.
8. Orally summarize the information in the text.
9. Reflect on what they have learned, transfer oral to written summarization, and emphasize self-monitoring.

Research Evidence

In at least one quasi-experimental, matched comparison group study of 63 adolescent boys with behavioral disorders (BD), participating in a self-regulated strategy development intervention called TWA-WS, evidence showed statistically significant positive effects for the reading and writing comprehension skills of the treatment group. TWA-WS participants showed significantly greater gains than a matched comparison group, which practiced literacy tasks with the same text, on reading comprehension as measured through written summarization. The increases for TWA-WS generalized both to social studies text and to a more complex task in composing from sources.
Sample Studies Supporting This Strategy


Sixty-three adolescent boys with BD, 31 of whom had comorbid ADHD, participated in a self-regulated strategy development intervention called Think Before Reading, Think While Reading, With Written Summarization (TWA-WS). TWA-WS adapted Linda Mason’s TWA intervention by adding written summarization, focusing on self-monitoring, and using only science text. TWA-WS participants showed significantly greater gains than a matched comparison group, which practiced literacy tasks with the same text, on reading comprehension as measured through written summarization ($\eta^2 = 0.42$). The increases for TWA-WS generalized both to social studies text and to a more complex task composing from sources.

Sample Activity

(Source: http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/sped/twaplans/twa-lessons.pdf)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TWA for Reading Comprehension: Lesson Plans—TWA Lesson 1</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> Develop Background Knowledge, Discuss It</td>
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<td><strong>Objectives:</strong> Introduction to TWA strategy. The instructor will explain and discuss how to use the strategy before, during, and after reading. The instructor will explain and discuss why using the strategy will help with reading.</td>
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<td><strong>Materials:</strong> Mnemonic charts, Learning Contract, student folders, scratch paper, pencils, stickers</td>
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1) **Introduce Lesson**
   a) Introduce yourself as a reading instructor. Discuss briefly what good readers do while reading passages that inform and share knowledge about people, places, and things (for example, they reread a part if they do not understand, look for the main idea, summarize information). Tell the students that you are going to teach them a “strategy” or “trick” for reading. Tell them that this trick will help them understand more about what they have read and also help them remember the things they read. Stress that by understanding and remembering what has been read, they will be able to respond to questions about reading with more accuracy and detail. Note that this works for both oral and written responses. For example, when an instructor asks you a question about something that you have read, if you remember and understand more of the passage, you will be able to give a more detailed response.
   b) Introduce TWA. Put out the mnemonic chart so that only the heading “TWA” shows. Uncover each part of the strategy as you introduce and discuss it. Be sure to emphasize that TWA is a strategy that good readers often use before, during, and after reading. Use the analogy of an airplane taking off. “With TWA we can take off with reading. Just like a pilot of a plane, we are the pilots and in control of our reading. Just like a pilot who does specific things before, during, and after a plane trip, we need to do things before, during, and after reading.”

2) **Introduce Think Before Reading**
   a) Tell the students that there are three steps to complete when you are Thinking Before Reading. The first step is to think about the Author’s Purpose (uncover this). Use the pilot analogy again. A pilot thinks about his or her purpose and then has an understanding of where he or she is to go. Thinking about the author’s purpose works in the same way. It lets you know where you are going.
   b) Ask the students what they know about author purpose (why author may write a passage). Be sure to include that authors write to inform, write to persuade, and write for personal expression. Say, “When we know the author’s purpose, it helps us understand what we are about to read.” Describe and discuss together how this helps reading. For example, if the author has written for personal expression, we know to look for certain things. The author may have written a story or personal narrative (may want to say a personal event). We know to look for characters, places, times, etc. If the author has written to inform, we know to look for information about real people, places, events, etc.
   c) Uncover Think about What You Know. Use the pilot analogy. The pilot of a plane knows a lot about flying. When pilots know where they are going, they begin to think about what they know - 2 the flight path, the airport, etc. When reading, thinking about what you know about the subject of the passage also helps you understand what you are reading.
   d) Uncover Think about What You Want to Learn. Use the pilot analogy. A pilot wants to learn if there are storms in the flight path, other planes in the flight path, etc. This tells him what to look for while flying, making the trip easier. Thinking about What You Want to Learn helps you look for things while reading, therefore making reading easier.

3) **Introduce While Reading** - There are three things good readers do while reading.
   a) Uncover Think about Reading Speed. Use the pilot analogy. A pilot must constantly check his or her speed. Going too fast or slow can have disastrous results. When reading, checking reading speed or pace is something good readers do as well. Reading speed is important because reading too fast or slow can make it harder for you to understand and remember what was read.
   b) Uncover Think about Linking What You Know. Use the pilot analogy. Pilots link what they know about a new situation with what they already know about flying. For example, if a pilot comes upon a storm they link how to fly in stormy weather with all the times they flew in stormy weather before.

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Linking knowledge or making connections is something good readers do as well. It is easier to understand and remember something if you link it to what you already know. Provide another example. If I am reading about tigers, I can connect all the new information about tigers with what I already know.

c) Uncover Rereading step. Use the pilot analogy. A pilot must constantly check his or her instruments. If a pilot does not understand what the instruments say, he or she re-reads them. Good readers also check their understanding. When they do not understand, they reread.

4) Introduce After Reading - There are three things good readers do after reading.
   a) Uncover The Main Idea. Use the pilot analogy. The first thing a pilot records in his or her log after a trip is the main idea of the trip. For example, "I flew a Boeing 747 from Chicago, Illinois to Orlando, Florida." This helps the pilot focus on where he or she has been and sets the stage for reporting the rest of the trip. After reading, good readers think about the main idea of a paragraph they have read. This helps a reader focus on what he or she has read. For example, if you have read a paragraph about your school's playground, your main idea might be "our school's playground has a lot of things for children."
   b) Uncover Summarizing Information. Use the pilot analogy. Pilots will also add details to his or her trip logs. For example, if a pilot ran into a storm he or she would make a statement about the storm then add details such as where the storm occurred, what kind of storm, how long the storm lasted, how the plane handled the storm, etc. These details are important to the pilot. A pilot will not include trivial detail in his or her summaries. For example, he will not include what he had for lunch. That does not have anything to do with flying! Good readers also think about summarizing what they have read in a passage. The details of a passage make it more interesting and help you understand what you read. For example - using the playground passage again - you might add to the main idea (the playground has a lot of things for children) and include details about the type of equipment the playground has, ball fields, etc. You would probably not talk about the flowers in the yard next door, that is not an important detail. Good readers remember that a good summary includes main idea and important details.
   c) Uncover What You Learned. Use the pilot analogy. After finishing a trip a pilot talks about his flight with other pilots, or with his or her family. The pilot starts at the beginning and tells what happened with some details included. Using only what has actually happened; the pilot retells the events of his or her flight. Good readers can tell what they have learned from reading a passage. Retelling what you have learned in reading helps you understand and remember the information. And it is fun!

5) Commitment to Learn the Strategy
   a) Ask the students to "sign up" to learn the strategy. Introduce the contract. Give each a learning contract and have them complete it and sign it. After they have signed the contract, you sign it. Be sure to tell the students that you are committed to doing your best in teaching them the TWA strategy. These will be kept in their folders.

6) Lesson Closure
   a) Practice TWA. Have the students write out the mnemonic for TWA with spaces for the three steps. Ask students to orally state steps and check off spaces. Students only write the following:

   | T | W | A |

   Ask each student to explain what TWA stands for and why it is important to use TWA before, during, and after reading. Help the students as needed to ensure that each student knows what TWA stands for and why it is important. Review the nine steps orally. As each is identified, the students can check the blank spot. Stress that using TWA helps reading material – give an example.
   b) Tell students that they will need to come to the next session, write out the TWA mnemonic (like above), and tell what it means from memory. Have each student take the scratch paper with TWA and the spaces with them.
   c) Give each student a folder and copy of the mnemonic chart. Have them put everything except the scratch paper in the folder and give them a sticker to place on the folder. Collect the students' folders and tell them that you will bring the folders to every session. Thank them for working hard.

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**Additional Resources**

