

DR/TA DIRECTED READING/THINKING ACTIVITY

WHAT? The **Directed Reading/Thinking Activity (DR/TA)** is a procedure teachers use to scaffold and extend students' thinking regarding their reading content. The teacher guides students to:

- Activate their prior knowledge for the topic/content of the text to be read.
- Hypothesize about what might be addressed in the text.
- Establish purposes for reading the text.

The student reads through the text confirming, revising, and rejecting hypotheses.

WHEN? This instructional activity is used **Before, During, and After Reading**. Teachers introduce the concept of **DR/TA** in first grade in order to support the U-46 Literacy Roadmap. This instructional activity is appropriate for all text material. A teacher can use **DR/TA** as a whole class activity when dealing with science and social studies material and small group activity during reading instruction.

WHY? Teachers use **DR/TA** for several important reasons.

- To activate a students prior knowledge of a topic/content of the text to be read. As students share their knowledge of the topic/content students develop a common class knowledge of the topic/content.
- To hypothesize about what might be addressed in the text. In order to hypothesize, students need to be aware of text support such as graphs, diagrams, text structure, illustrations/pictures, and titles.
- To establish meaningful purposes for reading the text.

HOW? As teachers become familiar with using DR/TA, they will adopt variations to accommodate their students and teaching style.

1. At the beginning of a new story, chapter, unit, or article have students preview the text by reading the title, noting picture, graphs, illustrations, subtitles, and reading the introductory paragraph. (With primary children the teacher might provide a key vocabulary word(s) included in the story or read the title and first paragraph to the students.)
2. Based on the information that students reviewed, ask the students to make logical predictions about what they think will happen in the text.
3. The students read to a place in the text that makes a logical stop point.
4. When the students have completed reading to the logical stop point, lead a conversation on the accuracy of their predictions. After the discussion, have the students make new predictions based on references in the text to defend their hypotheses.
5. Repeat the process until the students complete the text.

REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Allen, J. (2004). *Tools for teaching content literacy*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Billmeyer, R. and Barton, M. (2002). *Teaching reading in the content areas*. Aurora, CO: McREL.
- Haggard, M. (1985). An interactive strategies approach to content reading. *Journal of Reading*, 29, 204-210.