

Developing Independent Problem-Solvers:

Teaching to Foster Active, Strategic Readers

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Objectives of Today's Session:

- Consider (and re-consider) some ideas about reading processes
- Understand conditions that foster the development of strategic problem-solving
- Explore how **Guidebook** prompts and teaching interactions promote self-regulated, independent problem-solving

Copies of Transparencies available at:

www.serrra.org (Notice the 3 R's) – 2006 Notes

Marie Clay's comment on strategies: (Our challenge!)

I reserve the word 'strategy' for in-the-head neural activity initiated by the learner and hidden from the teacher's view. Given this gloss (definition) of 'strategy', teachers cannot teach or demonstrate strategies; they can infer them from the behaviours they record, and they can encourage learners to be strategic by the ways in which they teach.'

[Change Over Time, pp. 127-128]

Key points:

- "in-the-head" and "neural" — not verbal, not conscious, not deliberate, not something the child can explain.
- "initiated by the learner" — This means not only something the child activates on his own, but it also means more than that—it means something the child invented on his own as a way of operating.
- Teachers cannot teach or demonstrate strategies

Key Question: How DO we teach in ways that encourage learners to use effective strategies that help them learn how to read and write?

Examples of Child-Teacher Interactions

Example #1

Child is showing beginning awareness of visual information. He is beginning to self-correct when he miscues on well-known words. Can is a known word.

Child is reading Sally and the Daisy, Level 4

Text: “Here comes Sally

Sally can see the daisy.”

Child: *Reads line one correctly and begins line two as, “Sally comes...” and stops, puzzled.*

Teacher: “Why did you stop? . . . I think you noticed something. That was very smart; that word is not comes, is it? That word is can

Example #2

Child is beginning to use meaning, language structure, and some visual cues (usually first letter) to solve new words.

Child is reading the book Bread (Level 6).

Text p. 6, They saw a hungry dog.

Child reads: “They saw a hairy dog.” (*Miscue uncorrected and ignored by teacher.*)

Text p. 14: Mom said,

‘Where is the rest of the bread?’

Child reads: “Mom said,

‘Where is the . . .’ (*Child stops, puzzled.*)

Teacher: “That’s a tricky word, isn’t it?” Try that again and get your mouth ready for that word.”

Example #3

Child is using visual information within words as well as M and S. On running records she makes quite a few self-corrections, and occasionally pauses to confirm. She can manipulate initial and final consonant clusters in making and breaking, and even change some medial vowels.

Child is reading Catch that Frog. (Level 8) “After” and “around” were located during the book introduction.

Text, p. 16: “The frog jumped around the store.”

Child: “The frog jumped across/around (repeats and self-corrects) the store.”

Teacher: “Helen, I am so proud of you. You noticed that word wasn’t ‘across’ and you fixed it! That was wonderful.”

These examples will be discussed at the end of the presentation.

A key distinction, between:

- Self-control – Complying with caregiver commands and/or directives in the absence of the caregiver.
- Self-regulation – Capacity and propensity to plan, guide, and monitor behavior from within and flexibly according to changing circumstances. The child takes over the caregiver's role.

We can't make readers strategic by telling them what to do and when to do it

All we can do is

- set the proper conditions
- pose just right challenges to the child
- observe very carefully
- react-interact appropriately
- continually analyze, reflect and adjust

Three Different Contexts for Learning

- Active teacher, passive learner
- Active learner, passive teacher
- Active learner, active teacher

- *Courtney Cazden*

Conditions for strategic activity toward literacy

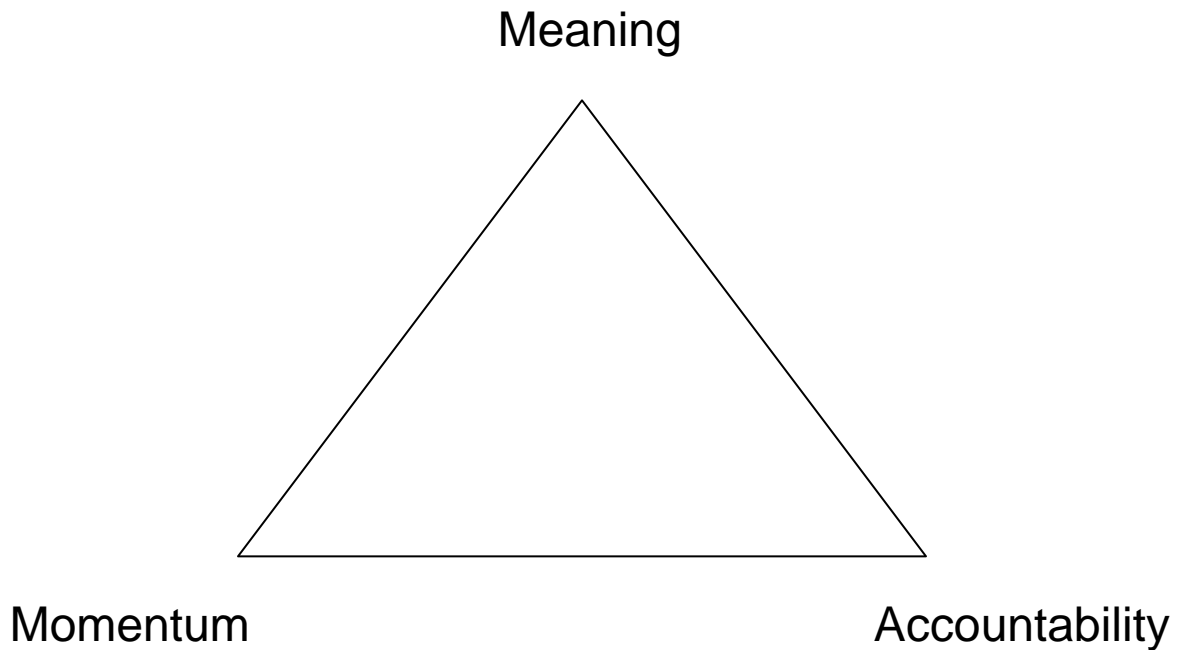
- Desire to learn to read and write
- Enjoyment of stories and books
- “Self-efficacy” as a learner
- Willingness to talk and interact with another
- Desire to get meaning from books and stories
- “Just right” books (level, type, topic, introduction)
- Latitude for trial, error, revisiting, exploring, etc.
- Very observant, knowledgeable teacher
- Contingent teaching interactions

References:

Carol Lyons: Teaching Struggling Readers

Peter Johnston: Choice Words

Representation of Reading Process (Chittenden, Sallinger and Bussis, 2001)



Momentum

Use of visual information on the page plus meaning and language structures to generate a coherent, meaningful story. Contributors to momentum: desire to read, interest, feelings of confidence, meaning, language structure, word recognition, and print knowledge

Accountability

Keeping the reading consistent with the information on the page and the meaning and language structure, or self-correcting to attain consistency

EFFECTS OF IMBALANCED PROCESSING

	<u>Momentum</u>	<u>Accountability</u>
Over-emphasis	Child does not read precise language of the text. In extreme cases, the child may invent text.	Child may lose attention to meaning and fluent language structure. Hesitates to take risks for fear of error.
Under-emphasis	Solving new words at point of difficulty is frustrating. Child gains little help from anticipated meaning and language	Child does not monitor visual elements in text and therefore loses the self-learning potentials of reading.

Benefits of momentum for the child

- Makes reading much easier for the child and
- Makes the child feel good about his/her reading
- Avoids breakdowns that require 'Told's' on running records
- Makes it easier for the child to use all sources of information

Things that work against momentum

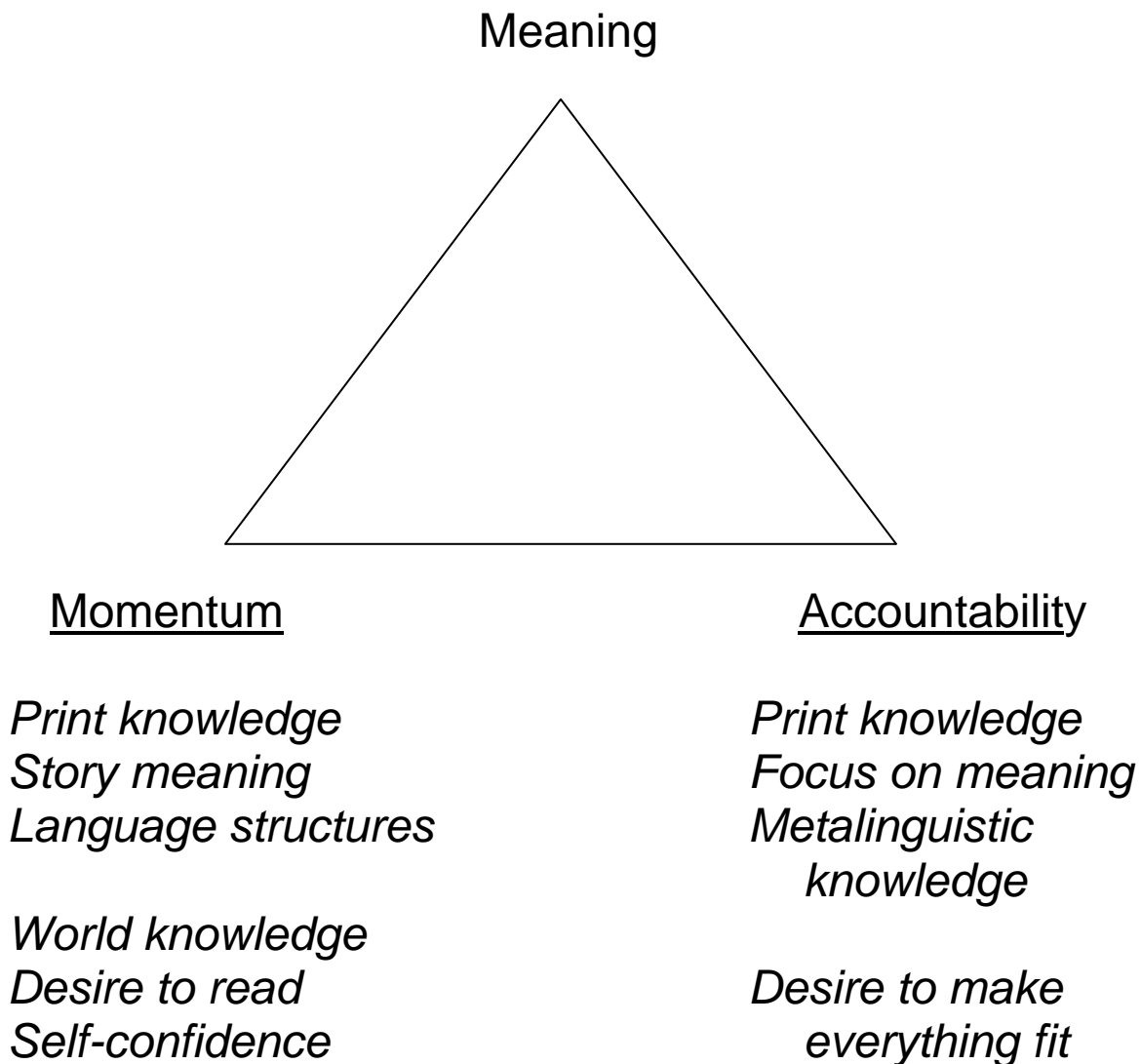
- The work is too hard for the child
- Over-emphasis on visual cues; loss of meaning
- Too much stress on accuracy
- Teachers give prompts the child can't use or understand

Lack of momentum negatively affects teaching

- Teachers do too much work for the child . . .
- Teachers prompt the child to do behaviors ("re-read," "go back," "get your mouth ready," etc.)
- Reading becomes a rule-application process rather than a perceptual process

Result: Child does not develop self-regulation – he performs because he was taught to carry out those actions rather than seeking and searching of his own volition.

Factors involved in Momentum and Accountability



[Momentum and accountability are somewhat comparable to the strategies of 'searching and 'monitoring']

Anecdote: Child reading *All By Myself*)

Child: I can brush my hair

Text: *I can brush my fur*

Child: That's a funny looking word for hair! I'll go back and figure it out.

OUR ROLE AS TEACHERS

Our objective: Develop the child's working systems for literacy learning.

Present tasks the child can perform with fluency, but with just the right amount of challenge

Establish momentum for each "story" (R and WR)

Foster the use of M, S, and V-Ph for generating the 'text' (for momentum, for processing)

Foster the use of M, S, and V-Ph for accountability (for monitoring, checking, confirming)

Spend a little dedicated time (letter work; M & B; writing time) working on print knowledge

Work in the zone of proximal development (ZPD)

Interact to promote affect (positive), sense of agency ("I can do this, this is my job"), and awareness ("Hey! I just noticed something")

Analyze each child's "working systems" regularly to adjust our teaching decisions

Developing and Maintaining Momentum

Select books carefully

Pick books that match the child's interest

Pick books that are right for the child — M, S, V-Ph

Make sure the book is at an easy/instructional level

Establish and maintain momentum

Pique the child's curiosity, prediction, anticipation

Give an appropriate book introduction

Plan the introduction on the basis of what you understand about the child's working system and the challenges of that particular text

Just enough talk to do the job

Keep a focus on meaning during the reading

Enjoy the book with the child

Create an air of suspense, wonder

Make meaning 'deposits'

Prompt occasionally to monitor for meaning

Accept approximations

Develop and maintain fluent reading and a quick pace

Purpose of accountability prompts

- Improve ways of working on text (working systems)
- NOT to achieve accurate reading
- Improve the ability to search and use information from all sources (M, S, and V-Ph)
- Develop skill in monitoring, using information from all sources (M, S, and V-Ph)
- Learn more about how words and texts work (print knowledge)
- Become a self-regulated reader / decision-maker

Habitually searches and monitors for M, S, V-Ph

Makes independent decisions during reading

Work for fluent, phrased reading

- Work quickly on most tasks

Prompting for Momentum and Accountability

(Searching and Monitoring)

Have detailed knowledge of what the child knows

Observe/infer the information the child is

. . . attending to . . .

. . . ignoring . . .

Visual? Language structure? Meaning?

Scaffold your support

Allow independence

Give help for what the child can't do (not much)

Choose just a few points of intervention as TP's

Over time, balance prompts across M, S, and V-Ph

Keep your language spare, to the point

Be sure the child understands the language you use

Teach at the level of the child's emerging awareness

Help the child maintain balance between momentum
and accountability

[MORE on prompting shortly]

Over-balanced toward Momentum

- Value the child's strengths
- Build up the repertoire of known items
- Prompt to monitor visual information
- If necessary, teach the child how to monitor
- Call attention to known items that were over-looked
- Choose TP's based upon what the child is beginning to notice (re-runs, self-corrections, hesitations)
- Teach how to look at print (**Guidebook** Sections 4, 10, and 11) – (letter and word work lesson segments)

Over-balanced toward Accuracy

- Avoid prompts for accuracy
- Use familiar re-reading to teach/foster anticipation and momentum
- Strong, individualized book introductions
- Get child to predict, anticipate, guess
- Give anticipation prompts per page
- Prompt monitoring for M and S
- Confirm the child's strength, i.e., occasionally confirm that successful responses "look right"

Prompting for Accountability

- Prompts must be within the child's ZAD or ZPD
- The aim is independent monitoring – for the child to learn to monitor his own reading and then search further if something is still out of kilter
- Choose what is emerging in the child's notice -- (hesitations, partially correct responses or correct responses worked out)
- Teaching on successful solving is very rewarding – as long as it is on the edge of the child's competence (not, e.g., self-correcting trivial errors out of habit)
- Monitoring for the child can stall learning progress
- Prompt at the general level first (e.g., “Were you right?”); if that doesn't work narrow the prompt
- If prompting is not working, give more helpful information; or demonstrate
- Even after the error has been found and/or fixed, the child must still decide if everything is right (the monitoring decision)

The child must learn to make independent decisions based upon what he/she sees in the text and what is in his/her own head – not on cues from the teacher

Analyzing **Guidebook** Prompts (pp. 39-42)

Types of occurrences

Is the prompt usually given after an error has been made? (Immediately? After sentence, page, or story?)

Is the prompt usually given at point of difficulty – when child is struggling to come up with a response?

Is the prompts given after successful solving?

Special considerations (pp. 42-43)

Prompts following self-correction

Verbalizing the processes

(Both of these can be valuable but must not be overdone.)

Teaching During the First Reading (p. 37)

- Two aims:
 - Shape up processing (info from all sources)
 - Shape up monitoring (what has been overlooked)

- “Prompt to the error” – Seems to imply that a response has been made
 - Think what information he has used
 - Prompt specifically to information that was overlooked,

- “Give ...some information” – Seems to imply the child is struggling to make a response
 - Does he need information about meaning?
 - Is there something he doesn't know about print?
 - Is a language structure or expectation puzzling?
 - Is there something he knows but isn't using?

- But . . . “Avoid too much questioning...”

QUOTATIONS FROM CLAY (CHANGE OVER TIME...)

The selection of an appropriate text in early reading provides the challenge for the reader to engage with novel features of text. *It is both the opportunity for error behaviour and the control of the amount of error behaviour which provide the opportunity for self-corrections.* These in turn provide opportunities to pay closer attention . . . or shift rules so that the system takes in more information and extends its capacity by doing so. And it is probably important that this occurs as a fairly rapid, . . . quick succession. In the past we have given slow learners time to learn slowly, and that may have made it harder for them. (p. 206)

The most spectacular signals which help the teacher to scaffold new challenges for the constructive learner appear when the learner goes beyond prior competence independently. This constructive 'going beyond the known' is not an outcome of the final weeks of the lesson series; it has to be fostered as independent processing from the beginning of a lesson series. It is the insurance taken out to ensure that the programme will be preventive and not merely a temporary catch-up on items known or skills mastered. (Clay, COT P. 236)

. . . For it is not what the teachers do that induces the necessary changes but rather it is how they understand the developmental changes they are trying to bring about that leads to their selection of what to attend to and to their prompting behaviours. (p. 237)

CONTINGENT SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

Levels of Support

Level 1 — General verbal support

Signals the current state of activity; e.g., “I like the way you’re working.”

Level 2 — Specific verbal information

Requests a specific action or focus of attention

Level 3 — Specific verbal information plus non-verbal indicators

Tutor also points to information or gives some physical assistance towards solving the task

Level 4 — Prepare for next action

Offers clear alternatives for action, or primes the specific response

Level 5 — Demonstrates action

Demonstrates or models action plus explanation

From David Wood, “The Why? What? When? and How? of Tutoring: The development of helping and tutoring skills in children.” LTL Volume 7, pp. 2-30.

Issues with Writing

Concepts of momentum and accountability still hold

Precept: Fluency before form

Keep it easy enough so the child enjoys writing and develops a sense of 'agency'

The problem of the blank page

Conventions in writing are all imposed – not subject to strategic invention

Preserving the child's sense of ownership of writing

The right number of teaching points

Gaining physical control

Learning to monitor

Spacing, letter formation, errors, readability
meaning, conventions

Learning to search

What sounds do you hear? In what order?

Is that a word you know? Try it. Does it look right?

Do you know any word that starts (ends) like that?

Do you know a "chunk" of that word?

How breaking and making words can help . . .

Ideas to Take Away from this Session

- The importance of momentum – purpose, meaning, enjoyment, fluency – and word/print knowledge
- The importance of making it “easy to learn”
- The importance of careful choice of prompts —
 - Teach to what is emerging in the child’s notice
 - Analyze your records to think what the child needs – that is, what he is attending to, what he is ignoring, what he is beginning to notice...
 - Balance prompting for searching and monitoring according to the child’s working system
- The importance of the child making the decisions about what fits (using M, S, and V-Ph information from the text/his head to decide)
- The importance of independent monitoring and searching
- The value of teaching on successful responding –
- Importance of keeping lessons upbeat, positive, quickly paced
- Some notion of how to shift your prompts to be more or less helpful to the child
- The importance of keeping your language sparse, clear, to-the-point and comprehensible to the child