Strategies for Engaging the Most Reluctant Reader

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Important Facts about Reading

• Reading enriches our daily lives
• It is the tool through which we learn about the world
• It develops the mind and ability to think and imagine
• We learn to read by reading
• Reading is not an automatic skill, it must be taught
• Reading skills and reading strategies are not the same concepts
• Every child wants to be a good reader
The Components of Reading

- Good readers are competent in the five essential elements of reading:
  - phonemic awareness
  - phonics or word recognition
  - fluency
  - vocabulary
  - comprehension

- Students who struggle to read usually have challenges in one or more of these areas.
Why do Some Children Not Want to Read?

- Children recognize that reading is a valuable skill
- They want to be good readers but something happens that turns them off from reading.
- These children are often referred to as reluctant or struggling readers.
Types of Readers

• Doralyn Miller, author of the book, *The Book Whisperer: Awakening the Reader in Every Child*, has identified three types of readers in every classroom:
  ✓ Proficient or underground readers
  ✓ Reluctant or dormant readers
  ✓ Struggling or developing readers
• Can read and reads for his or her pleasure.
• Sees self as a proficient reader.
• Finds reading a valuable way to use his or her time
• Reads often and reads a lot
• Reads various types of books
• Uses strategies before, during and after reading to monitor and deepen his or her understanding.
• Has a large vocabulary and is usually a good writer
• Prefers to choose his or her reading materials
The Reluctant or Dormant Reader

- Can read but prefers not to
- Shows little interest in reading
- Reads only when necessary
- Is not convinced that reading is a worthwhile way to use his or her time
- Does not read for pleasure
- Prefers to spend his or her time engaged in other activities: sports, video games, social media, texting, talking with friends.
- Perceives reading as unrelated to his or her life
- Sees reading as boring
- Are often boys
The Struggling or Developing Reader

• Has difficulty in learning to read
• May be dyslexic
• Has inadequate opportunities to practice reading
• Sees reading as an obstacle course, a chore, a source of anxiety
• Sees him or herself as a failure at reading
• Finds reading an unsatisfactory activity
• Does not read for fun
• Has low expectations for reading success
• Does not see him or herself as a reader
• Avoids reading activities
• May become a reluctant reader
Characteristics of Reluctant & Struggling Readers

**Reluctant Readers**
- Need to be coaxed to read.
- May act up to avoid reading.
- Begins reading by checking the number of pages to read.
- Finds small print and no pictures demotivating.

**Struggling Readers**
- Are not motivated to read.
- Spend less time reading.
- The less they read, the more they fall behind.

- Avoid having to read
- Have low self-confidence
- Read without understanding
- Read without purpose
- Fail to use strategies when reading
- Have problems with decoding, fluency & comprehension
Children are Turned-off from Reading

When they do not:

1. see themselves as readers
2. believe they can become proficient readers
3. get enough time for reading
4. have choice over what they are given to read
5. find reading to be authentic because it is not related to their interests, lives or the real world.
Authentic Reading

- Authentic reading
- Improved reading
- Motivated reading
- Engaged reading
• Teachers create conditions that make students want to read and want to read in various ways (Rasinski & Padak 2004, p. 6)
• In many classrooms, reading instruction is seen as:
  ✓ everyone reading the same book with the same goals
  ✓ reading materials are chosen by the teacher
  ✓ reading time is limited in the school day
  ✓ using the Round Robin method
  ✓ not explicitly teaching a variety of reading strategies
• When reading is perceived as not being authentic or relatable to the students then students become disengaged and lose interest in reading.
Reluctant and struggling readers can become better and more engaged readers if they spend more time reading, and if they have choice in what they read.

When these readers experience success in reading they begin to see themselves for the first time as readers.
Why are some students unmotivated to read?

- Past experiences with reading have been negative
- Reading creates feeling of anxiety and fear
- Reading triggers feelings of insecurity and self doubt
- The reader does not have a purpose for reading
- The reader does not use strategies that could make them more successful readers.
- They are not intrinsically motivated to read
- They may not know how to choose a book at their level or within their interest
- They are focused on their weaknesses rather than on their strengths
Factors that Encourage Motivation for Reading

- Prior experience with books
- Social interactions with books
- Access to a wide variety of text
- Book choice
- Provide time to read
- Provide good reading models
- Incorporate students' strengths and interests, and address their weaknesses
- Set high expectations for all students
- Provide opportunities for success at reading
- Provide high interest, low vocabulary books for struggling readers.
Motivation

Motivated reader

Experiences greater levels of engagement and satisfaction

Active and strategic

Uses effective strategies to monitor comprehension

Sets a purpose for reading
Strategies that Improve Motivation for Reading

Good readers use strategies before they read, while they are reading and when they have finished reading. This is so that their understanding is maintained throughout the process.

The following are strategies that good readers use when they read:
- create mental images
- use background information
- ask questions
- make inferences
- determine the main ideas or themes
- synthesize information
- fix-up strategies
Effective Reading Strategies

• This workshop will share with you some proven strategies that will make reading a positive and successful experience for even the most reluctant reader.
Strategies to use before, during and after reading

MOTIVATING THE RELUCTANT READER
Supporting comprehension before reading

• To understand what they read, readers need some knowledge of the topic.
• Many struggling readers have limited knowledge of the topics they encounter in their reading.
• Too often, students are simply told to read or are given artificial reason for reading, such as “read to see how hurricanes are formed”.
• This sort of guidance neither prepares students effectively for reading nor motivates them to read.
Effective pre-reading activities should invite students to do the following:

- Consider what they already know about the reading and share ideas with others
- Anticipate and make predictions about what they are likely to encounter as they read
- Develop their own purpose for reading
- Build curiosity and motivation for reading
- A few minutes spent develop interest and background before reading can greatly benefit students’ understanding of the text.
Strategies that can be used before reading

- Anticipation Guide
- Probable Passage
- Previewing
- Jackdaws
Anticipation guides are used before reading to help students to activate their background knowledge, stimulate interest and set a purpose for reading. The anticipation guide consists of a set of statements that the student thinks about before reading and decides if he or she agrees or disagrees with the statements. The student then reads the material and after reading, revisits his or her decisions to see if they were true or if they need to change.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before Reading</th>
<th>After Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic: Strategies for Engaging the Most Reluctant Readers</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Reading is an automatic skill</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Reading skills and strategies are the same concepts</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. A reluctant reader describes a struggling reader</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Comics are acceptable reading material in class</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Fix-up strategies are usually used after reading</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Authenticity motivates children to want to read</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. All children want to be proficient readers</td>
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Probable Passage

• Probable Passage is one strategy to use to introduce a text, usually fictional.

• Students work with a set of words from the story, in partners or small groups, and decide how these words connect to the text that will be read or shared.

• Decisions need to be made together with regards to whether the words are part of the setting, problem, outcomes or characters.

• After these decisions are made, students need to come up with a "gist statement," a prediction as to what the text is about.
Steps in Using Probable Passage

• Select a short and interesting reading (story)
• Select 12-20 words used in the story (less for struggling readers)
• Write the words on strips of paper, the chalkboard or type them on the probable passage template
• In pairs or in small groups, ask students to write or paste words under the correct column heading on the template
• Have students complete the gist statement
• Ask students to share their predictions
• Give students enough time to complete this activity
Positive Outcomes of this Strategy for Students

- Discussing words together
- Working as a team
- Making predictions
- Exploring meanings
# The Probable Passage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Problem</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Unknown words</th>
<th>To discover</th>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Gist Statement

The story takes place ________________________________________ (setting)
_________________________________________________________ (character)
In this story _______________________________________________ (problem & solution)

The story ends _____________________________________________ (ending)
Jackdaws

- Teachers are notorious collectors
- Jackdaws are collections of interesting artifacts built around a particular book topic or theme
- By bringing in real or facsimile artifacts connected to a book and talking about them with students, teachers help create interest and background that carry students through texts they may otherwise find difficult.
- As students become familiar with the concept, they can add to the teacher’s Jackdaw, which is then displayed in a mini museum for all students to see, touch and ponder
• Students can also create and share their own jackdaws as an after reading response activity.

• *What a creative and interesting way for students to demonstrate understanding of a text!*
Types of Artifacts that can be used

• The number and types of items are limited only by one’s imagination and creativity.

• Examples include:
  • Clothes of the type worn by a particular character in a book – catalog pictures, paper dolls, old photos and so on
  • Songs or music from a period or event depicted in a book – sheet music, recordings, titles or musical instruments
  • Photographs from the time period
  • Household items from a period depicted in the book
  • Recipes and food dishes typical of the time period in the book
  • A glossary of interesting or peculiar words in the book
Supporting comprehension during reading

• To support meaning construction, communication should be open during text discussions.

• Free and voluntary exchange of ideas allows students to try out their ideas and modify them after they hear what others have to say.

• Lehman and Scharer (1996) note “children’s primary responses are valuable and form basis for literary conversations. However, left unexamined they can also be limited” (p.33).
During reading comprehension strategies:

• Encourage students to express their thoughts
• Explore new possibilities
• Challenge others’ opinions
Strategies that can be used during reading

- Imagery
- Graphic organizers and semantic maps
- Generating and answering questions
- Using text structure
- Making connections
- Linguistic roulette
- Reading selectively
- Open mind portraits
Open-Mind Portraits

This strategy allows students to think more deeply about a character and reflect on story elements from the character’s viewpoint. Students draw the character’s thoughts about an incident or element of the story.
Graphic Organizers

Venn Diagrams are a type of graphic organizer that helps children to compare two or more elements in a text and to see their logical relationships.

- Reluctant Readers: Can read but do not want to read
- Struggling Readers: Have difficulty learning to read
- The Matthew Principle: Have difficulty learning to read
Linguistic Roulette

• Developed by Jerry Harste.
• After reading a portion of a story, each student is asked to select a single sentence that he or she finds interesting, important, puzzling, or special to them in some other way.
• Students write sentence on a piece of paper. Teachers can assist struggling readers to select a their sentences by re-reading a section and tell them to listen carefully.
• Discussion begin when all members of the group have selected their sentences.
• Each student reads a sentence aloud and invite responses.
• Students will explain why they have selected their sentences.
• Hearing other’s sentences and participating in discussions sometimes encourages consideration of alternate perspectives.

• **Modifications:**
  • Struggling students can draw a picture depicting the sentence that is interesting, puzzling or special to them.
  • Teachers can read sentences for students so that they can participate in discussions as well.
Extending comprehension after reading

Effective post reading techniques activities:

• Encourage dynamic interaction with the text among themselves
• Encourage students to continue to think deeply and widely about the text after they have read
• Integrate the text information into their own cognitive structures
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies that can be used after reading</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tableau (x)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sketch to stretch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cubing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readers theatre</td>
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<td>Response journals</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Tableau (x)

- Non-linguistic representation involves “illustrations” that students create with their bodies instead of pencil and paper.
- Begins with a text students have read or listened to.
- Students select aspect of the text to represent by means of a tableau which is a “living picture” or a depiction of a scene by silent and motionless people.
- Students prepare and share their tableau with the rest of the class, who then attempt to determine what is being portrayed and what roles individual members of the tableau play.
• Students will raise hand when they think they know what the tableau is.
• If the audience cannot decide what they’re looking at, they tap the shoulder of one person in the tableau, who then provides a clue.
Sketch To Stretch

After reading the text, students sketch their response to the text or their favourite part of the text. The sketch does not have to be a perfect artistic representation. It is a quick visual representation of the students understanding of the text. The student can discuss their drawing or write an explanation on the back of the page.
The strategy of cubing allows students to explore a topic from six dimensions or viewpoints. Each side of the cube represents a dimension of the instructional procedure [describe, compare, associate, analyse, apply, argue or the 5W+H for younger students]
Cubing can be used as a review strategy as well as a means focusing thinking while reading. Cubing can be used across grade levels. Each side of the cube presents a task.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Primary grades</th>
<th>For Secondary grades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. WHO?</td>
<td>1. DESCRIBE the topic in detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. WHERE?</td>
<td>2. COMPARE the topic to something else [similarities and differences]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. WHEN?</td>
<td>3. ASSOCIATE the topic to something and explain your reason(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. WHAT?</td>
<td>4. ANALYZE the topic and tell how it is made or what it is composed of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. WHY?</td>
<td>5. APPLY the topic. How can it be used or what can be done with it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. HOW?</td>
<td>6. ARGUE for or against. Take a stand and provide reasons to support it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Response Journals

• The reading –writing combination is powerful.

• Response journals provide a special place for capturing reactions and thoughts related to reading.

• Journal entries can be open or closed.

• An open entry is just that: students can write whatever they want about what they have read.

• Closed entries focus students’ thinking in particular ways. Teachers can ask students to write about their favorite part of the book so far and tell why they like that part so much.

• Both open and closed entries support students’ effort to construct meaning as they read.
LET US PRACTICE! 😊

Pre-reading
• jackdaws
• Probable passage
• Gist statement

During reading
• Mind portrait
• Linguistic roulette
• Character sketch

After reading
• Tableau (x)
• Cubing
• Readers theatre
• Sketch to stretch
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sisters</th>
<th>Climbing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>Decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nose</td>
<td>Rubber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crocodile</td>
<td>fly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trees</td>
<td>Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Ladder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>Jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire</td>
<td>Tickle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brothers</td>
<td>dragon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swim club</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Engaging the most reluctant reader
References


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