Scaffolding Reading Comprehension Instruction for Struggling Readers

You can scaffold instruction to help struggling readers better understand and clearly express their ideas and feelings about texts they read.

☐ <u>Incorporate small group discussions as often as possible to actively involve students</u>.

- When you scaffold discussions, teachers and students ask more questions and give more elaborated responses; students achieve greater understanding.

- This is especially true for struggling readers and English language learners.

☐ <u>Model different ways to respond to questions</u>.

- If students have difficulty answering questions, change the question to an answer. For example, change **How did Aunt Josie feel when she saved enough money to attend the family reunion?** to **Aunt Josie was very happy when she saved enough money to go to the family reunion. She danced around the room with her son and daughter**.

- Follow up with another question and if necessary, help students with a response.

☐ <u>Use questions and prompts</u>.

- Different types and levels of questions help students express their ideas and feelings.

- Questions should elicit more than a simple "yes" or "no" response.

- Prompt students who are having difficulty responding.
  - For example, "Aunt Josie was dancing around the room. How do you think she felt?"

☐ <u>Paraphrase and expand what students say during discussions</u>.

- Repeat the main idea using new vocabulary.

- Take students' responses and paraphrase them by including additional vocabulary and ideas.

☐ <u>Request clarification</u>.

- Ask "why" and "how" questions to help students make inferences and explain what they are thinking and feeling.

☐ <u>Promote questions and conversation among students</u>.

- Allow students to converse with each other about what they read.

- Encourage students to ask each other questions during discussions using the various types of questions.

- Provide questions to think about using the levels of questions and time to answer the questions.

☐ <u>Provide appropriate feedback</u>.

- Encourage ALL students to join in.

- Give positive feedback for all types of responses.

- Spotlight what someone has contributed to a discussion, such as "Mary noticed that the policeman was angry." If students understand that their ideas and responses are valued, they are more likely to participate.

- Pose questions that turn the thinking back to the students for further consideration, such as "John thinks the girl is unhappy. Does anyone know why she is unhappy?"

☐ <u>Give sufficient wait time for students to think and respond</u>.

- Be patient. Struggling readers often need more time.

- Ask questions in different ways to provide more time to respond.

(1TRA, 2000; 2TRA, 2001)