Explicit Strategy Instruction: A Model for Developing Independent Learners

IDEAS Conference
St. Simons Island, GA
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Learning Targets

• I can list and explain the steps of explicit strategy instruction.

• I can use a content/grade level example to illustrate the application of explicit strategy instruction.

• I can use the steps of explicit strategy instruction to design effective strategy instruction lessons for my classroom.
Learning Targets

• I can list and explain the steps of explicit strategy instruction.
Step 1—Establishing Purpose & Modeling

Whole group environment:

The teacher conveys the purpose of the strategy to students by sharing what strategy they need to know, why they need to know it, and how they will use it.

The teacher purposefully models the strategy while sharing his/her thinking aloud with the students.
Step 2—Guided Instruction, Large Group

Whole group environment:

The students practice the strategy with the teacher.

The teacher asks guiding questions to scaffold the students’ strategy practice.
Step 2—Guided Practice, Collaboration

Small groups:

The students practice the strategy in small, collaborative groups.

The teacher works with individual groups as needed, providing scaffolding, asking questions, etc.
Step 3—Independent Practice

Individually:

The students apply the strategy with little or no scaffolding.

The teacher assesses student practice and provides timely feedback on student’s application of strategy.

Appropriate for homework OR ticket out-the-door
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COMMON CORE UNIT:
A Close Reading of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address

UNIT SUMMARY
This unit has been developed to guide students and instructors in a close reading of Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address.” The activities and actions described below follow a carefully developed set of steps that assist students in increasing their familiarity and understanding of Lincoln’s speech through a series of text dependent tasks and questions that ultimately develop college and career ready skills identified in the Common Core State Standards.

This unit can be broken down into three sections of instruction and reflection on the part of students and their teachers, which is followed by additional activities, some designed for history/social studies and some for ELA classrooms.

Source: Achieve the Core, Student Achievement Partners
http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools/close-reading-exemplars

Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
“Making Education Work for All Georgians”
www.gadoe.org
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3. Students translate the text of the first paragraph into their own words in one or more sentences.

This is the second independent activity, in which students attempt to understand on their own the first paragraph. The aim here for students is not to summarize, but to paraphrase, to put it in their own words. Students should write no more than a couple of sentences. In order for students to accomplish a task like this successfully, they will need practice in focusing and writing independently. The aim is not to have them ask questions but do what they can on their own.

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President Abraham Lincoln’s Speech  
The Gettysburg Address, 1863  
Paragraph 1

Four score\(^1\) and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

\(^1\)score: twenty

Source: Achieve the Core, Student Achievement Partners  
http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools/close-reading-exemplars
Strategy Instruction: Paraphrasing

1. Teacher models the strategy.

2. Teacher guides whole class through a second example, and then students practice in small groups with more examples and teacher works with groups as needed.

3. Individual students practice independently with additional examples; teacher provides feedback.
Strategy Instruction: Paraphrasing

Modeling the Strategy

Of all the enemies to public liberty, war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded because it comprises and develops the germ of every other.

Strategy Instruction: Paraphrasing

Modeling the Strategy

1. The words in this sentence are in a funny order; it’s definitely not an SVO sentence—I need to reorganize the ideas so that this makes sense to me.

2. Let’s see. War is the subject . . .

3. Okay, now I need to put it in my own words and style.

4. I can’t look at it when I try to do this because if I do I have a tendency to word slot or just replace a word or two with synonyms and that’s not my own words and style. So, I’m going to turn the page over and write my paraphrase on the back.
Strategy Instruction: Paraphrasing

Modeling the Strategy

War may be the most dangerous threat to our freedom because every other threat to our freedom is either a part of war itself or an effect of war.
Modeling Debrief

• Read through and determine meanings of unfamiliar words.
• Circle, draw arrows, underline, etc., to determine how parts of sentence go together to make the whole—syntax.
• Figure out what author is saying.
• Turn the paper over and rewrite in your own words and style.
• Check to see that your paraphrase is as long or longer than the original.
While educators should avoid introducing “get tough” authoritarian policies that students would perceive as illegitimate and would thus be counterproductive, administrators and teachers could be more proactive and responsive in addressing disciplinary problems, and work consistently to promote learning environments perceived by students to be relevant and meaningful.

Strategy Instruction: Paraphrasing

Guided Practice, Collaboration

Performance invariable improves when training and evaluation focus on a severely limited number of crystal-clear criteria, which inspire confidence and competence—not fear and confusion.

Strategy Instruction: Paraphrasing

Independent Practice

To succeed, students with disabilities need flexibility in the way that essential content is presented, flexibility in the means of interacting with material and expressing what they know, and flexibility in the means by which they are motivated and engaged.

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Think/Pair/Share/Apply

1. Make a list of specific strategies students in the grades/classes you teach need to have in their toolkits to be successful.

2. Working with a one or two other people, share your lists.

3. Collaborate in your small groups to apply the four steps of explicit strategy instruction to the design of explicit strategy instruction for your students.
Resources

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Link to Session PP & Materials

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/j32o9yb5ax2gfg5/9u9BhdIqDqF
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