Revisit, Reflect, Retell

Updated Edition

Time-Tested Strategies for Teaching Reading Comprehension

LINDA HOYT

HEINEMANN * PORTSMOUTH, NH
To Maura
Thank you for your wonderful book titles, creative thinking, and friendship.
Here’s to bunny slippers, treasured pets, and finding creative ways to connect the dots.

To Abby
Thank you for your patience, grace, and unerring attention to detail.
You have the gift of making complex tasks appear to be simple.
Thank you.
Dear Readers,

The quest for new knowledge and quality research to support effective practices in literacy education is unending . . . and that is good. As an educator with nearly forty years of experience and a commitment to advancing my own learning, it has been deeply gratifying to look back at Revisit, Reflect, Retell and discover that the instructional content is just as solid as it was ten years ago—and new research backs it up! New research not only makes the book more relevant than ever but also offers a wonderful opportunity to create fresh, new supports for students. This updated edition of Revisit, Reflect, Retell invites you to reacquaint yourself with time-tested favorites, and to explore additional possibilities through new tools for scaffolding multidimensional understanding.

In these pages you will find the influence of researchers such as P. David Pearson, Nell Duke, Richard Allington, Bob Marzano, and Michael Pressley, whose research has opened up so many important new insights. New tables have been included that organize lessons according to key comprehension strands to guide you as you plan units of study for comprehension (see pages xiii–xv). There are also direct links to Robert Marzano’s Classifications of Thinking that will help you select the best experiences for processing text at a number of levels (see pages xvi–xix). In response to requests from readers, there are also wonderful new photos showing strategies in action across a wide range of grade levels, and a CD with full-color and customizable reproducible tools, plus a DVD with video footage showing me working with students.

I believe academic experiences should be like a tapestry, richly woven with opportunities for promoting reflective, critical thinking, and environments that resonate with high-quality talk. When students engage in reflections that range from clarifying and summarizing to drawing interpretations and synthesizing, they learn that comprehension is a deeply satisfying, active experience.

This book is filled with suggestions for ways to engage learners as thinkers, as communicators, and as readers who understand that the primary goal is to comprehend. But I offer a caution: The learning experiences in these pages are not time fillers. They are meaningful investigations that support communicative competence and understanding. Too many students encounter learning situations in which they do little more than get through an assignment and comply with teacher directions. They don’t get excited about ideas; they aren’t actively involved as readers. It is my hope that the learning opportunities offered in this book bring those very students into a state of attention and interest—a state where problem solving, critical thought, and peer dialogue resonate with purposeful wonder.

As you use this resource, I encourage you to approach the reproducibles as springboards for your own creativity. Enlarge the spaces for writing or expand thinking with
invitations that challenge students to reach deeper and think in new ways. These are learning experiences that can be explored from your own perspective or linked to your own state standards. Best of all, these learning experiences can be explored on plain paper! Challenge yourself and your students to use these tools to help you build an environment that is alive with rich learning and spirited conversations about text.

While comprehension is a deeply personal exploration that is enhanced by strategy use, we must remember that comprehension instruction isn't about a single book or a single strategy. In designing comprehension instruction, it is vital that students develop a strong sense of how to reach for understanding, and how to be strategic as they navigate print. What they learn today should help them read more deeply in the next text they select. As you consider opportunities for active comprehension, please also consider the following:

1. Am I asking my students to engage in learning that is significant, learning that will shape them as lifelong learners who question, wonder, and challenge their own understandings?

2. Is this experience one that will help these learners reach for knowledge that is deep and multidimensional, rather than shallow and superficial?

3. Have I helped the students see how the learning could transfer to their interactions with other texts?

4. Does the task require social engagement and the use of academic language? Does the vocabulary of the learning “float on a sea of talk”?

5. Is this experience a necessary scaffold to understanding, or would these learners be better served simply by reading another selection?


Sincerely,

Linda Hoyt
FOREWORD

When I first read the first edition of Linda Hoyt’s popular book, Revisit, Reflect, Retell: Strategies for Improving Reading Comprehension, I was amazed and surprised. “Who is this woman,” I asked myself, “and how did she manage to get the comprehension revolution just right? How did she provide something so practical, yet so reflective of all we have learned about comprehension in the past thirty years?” And now, with this updated and expanded edition, she gets it even “righter”—if that is possible. At any rate, she has once again brought a remarkably useful resource to her teaching colleagues.

What makes Linda’s book so useful is its simultaneous grounding in solid theory and research about reading comprehension and in the everyday world of classroom practice. In the final analysis, it is Linda’s uncanny ability to provide fellow teachers with down-to-earth, practical activities they can use in their classrooms that sets her book apart. In good conscience teachers can feel free to use any or all of the activities, including the reproducible graphic organizers, to promote and in some cases assess students’ comprehension of a wide range of texts. All the while teachers can be comfortable in the knowledge that what they are providing is just what their students need to make progress in the all-important process of improving their comprehension.

Two aspects of her approach demand special notation. First is the skilled manner in which she employs graphic organizers. These are important tools for all students, but they are doubly important for that subset of students who must “see” the relationship of ideas in pictures or spatial relationships rather than in words. Visual displays of information are visual representations, or, as I like to say, visual re-presentations; they literally re-present the same information to the students and, in the process, make it more accessible and more memorable. Second is her dedication to active student learning through cooperative and collaborative activities. She understands that social learning is active, engaged learning and that many students need that extra touch of support and recognition to be successful.

This is a book that can be useful to teachers from kindergarten though middle school. The techniques and activities are that broad in their scope and application. I cannot imagine being a teacher and not having a resource like this at my fingertips. So my advice to fellow teachers is to get the book and get busy engaging your students in ways you never thought possible.

P. David Pearson
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| Knowing (defining, recalling)              | List, name, label, recall, identify, match, choose, formulate questions, clarify information, observe, store information for recall | • Name the strategies good readers use to understand what they read.  
• Identify strategies that you use during reading to help you remember content.  
• Formulate a question about the habitat of a _______. | • Partner Read and Think  
• I Remember!  
• Alphabox  
• V.I.P. Strategy  
• Stimulating Discussion Through Questions  
• Partner Retelling  
• Key Word Strategy  
• Riddling Along  
• Read, Cover, Remember, Retell  
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| **Organizing** (arranging information)     | Categorize, group, classify, compare, contrast, sequence, represent (change the form but not the substance) | • Which fix-up strategies do good readers use when they come to a challenging word?  
• List the strategies that help you to visualize as you read. Which strategies help you to identify important ideas?  
• Compare the life cycle of a butterfly with that of a moth. | • Alphabox  
• The Character and Me  
• Book Commercials  
• Maybe  
• Team Retelling  
• Spin a Story  
• Spicing It Up with Line Drawings  
• Image Search  
• Writing Letters  
• Key Word Strategy group in meaningful clusters  
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| **Mid- to Upper-Level Thinking Skills**    | Apply, make, show, record, construct, demonstrate, solve a problem, illustrate, describe how you applied… | • What did you do in this text when you got confused?  
• Describe how you used the V.I.P. strategy to identify important points.  
• Show how you can use the _______ strategy in two different books. | • All Strategies:  
Each strategy applied in multiple contexts and settings  
Also:  
• Interactive Journals  
• Creating a Readers Theatre Script  
• Riddling Along  
• Word Prediction  
• Coding Strategy  
• Information Equation  
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| **Analyzing**                     | Outline, diagram, differentiate, analyze, examine relationships, identify characteristics and patterns, main idea, determine importance | • What kind of text requires the most frequent use of fix-up strategies for you as a reader?  
• Which strategies are you most comfortable using? Which ones do you need more practice in applying?  
• Outline the main ideas in this selection. | • Say Something  
• Alphabet, to describe a character  
• Two-Word Strategy  
• Understanding a Character  
• The Character and Me  
• V.I.P Strategy  
• Three-Circle Map  
• Novel Reflections  
• If I Were the Author  
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| **Generating**                     | Conclude, predict, explain, elaborate by adding details or examples, infer, produce new information | • What would happen if a reader never used the fix-up strategy of rereading?  
• What are the advantages of knowing a range of strategies to help you remember and understand what you read?  
• Predict five words that you expect to see in this passage on ______.  
• Explain how you solved this problem. | • Partner Read and Think  
• My Partner Said …  
• Two-Word Strategy  
• In the Text/I Can Infer … Charts  
• Stimulating Discussion Through Questions  
• Drawing Conclusions  
• Maybe  
• Team Retelling  
• Spin a Story  
• Storytelling Glove, with details and opinions  
• Interactive Journals  
• Key Word Strategy  
• My Character Says  
• Story Reflections  
• Sketch to Stretch  
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| **Upper-Level Thinking Skills**             | **Integrating**                     | Connect and combine information, summarize and create cohesive statements | • Imagine you were reading a book with a stain on the page, covering several words. What could you do to make sense of the text?  
• Imagine that you were giving advice to a younger student on reading for meaning. Which strategies would you most encourage that younger student to use?  
• Summarize your learning from this passage. | My Partner Said . . .  
I Remember!  
Say Something  
Alphabox, words used in retell or writing  
Inference Equation  
V.I.P Strategy  
Drawing Conclusions  
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| Evaluating                 | assessing quality, verifying importance, considering accuracy, establishing criteria | Judge, evaluate, rate, verify, assess, define criteria | • Which fix-up strategy is the most important to learn? Explain why you think so.  
• Which comprehension strategies have you found to be most helpful? Why?  
• If we were to create a rubric for a high-quality piece of descriptive writing, what should be on the list?  
• Evaluate the verb choices in the book ______. | • Say Something, focused on evaluation  
• Book Reviews  
• Two-Word Strategy  
• V.I.P. Strategy, partners reaching consensus on most important points  
• Stimulating Discussion Through Questions  
• Get Real  
• What is Important?  
• Partner Retelling  
• Compare and Contrast  
• Retells on Tape  
• If I Were the Author  
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The Review Team
We asked elementary and middle school educators from around the country to help us reflect on the original edition of Revisit, Reflect, Retell and share their thinking about the strategies that have been sure-fire winners with students. They were also invited to offer suggestions for new features that might help this resource be even more useful to teachers and learners. The responses of this team helped us to bring new shape and vision to this resource, as well as affirming our belief that the content was already solid, and worthy of a fresh new face. Our sincere thanks to Marlene Hill, Mattie Fallen, Jan McCall, Glenda Haley, Kelly Boswell, Kelly Davis, Sally Wells, Jennifer Gotkin, Sonja Parks, Ceretha Mitchell, Marie Puett, Debbie McMahan, Denise Lutkin, and Jacquelyne Vereen for their thoughtful responses and support.

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Bill Miller
Bill, thank you for creating the video clips that bring some of these strategies to life. Your friendship, artistry, and amazing ability to listen have helped me more than you know.
Partner Read and Think

Partner Read and Think is based on the research that so effectively supports reciprocal teaching, but it requires fewer social skills as it is completed by partners instead of teams of four. The process engages partners in applying six distinct steps to each segment of text that is read. The combination of steps helps students engage at several levels of comprehension and encourages language use as partners navigate a selection.

Partner Read and Think guides partner pairs in:

- placing a stop sign
- predicting words they think are likely to appear
- reading the section (silently or in unison)
- identifying words they find interesting or are confused about
- summarizing the learning.

Model

I like using an enlarged text or a text projected on an overhead projector when modeling the steps of this strategy to ensure that students can clearly see the text as I am modeling.

Students watch as I place a sticky note stop sign in the text. During a Partner Read and Think, it is important to complete all steps before moving the stop sign to the next chunk of text.

Next, I show them how I scan quickly across the text and predict words that I think are likely to appear. This is an essential step in bringing out academic vocabulary that will support understanding.

I then read the section aloud or have students join me in reading the section in unison.

For the next step, I use a Literacy Frame as originally designed by Don Holdaway to direct student attention to words I think are worthy of attention. The frame should be proportioned to match the text you are reading so the words fit inside the frame. For student-size texts and use at the overhead, guidelines for making a

During Word Prediction, students activate prior knowledge about the topic and focus on key academic vocabulary.

Use a Literacy Frame to model selection of “an interesting word.”

Explicitly show students how to place sticky notes on the text as a reminder to apply all steps in a short passage before reading on.
frame appear on page 18. For big books, use the pattern as a guide then enlarge the frame to fit around the words in your favorite big books.

The next step is to model asking questions and wondering aloud about the words, the visuals, or the concepts. Questions are important because they encourage readers to interact with the selection.

Finally, I model a brief summary to show students how I can sum up my learning before I move the sticky note and proceed to the next section of the reading.

Notice that the words appear in a Literacy Frame, then are also written on sticky notes to make them more visible to students.

Kay and Will think together as they navigate a newsmagazine.

Students in Mandy Caine’s third grade created bookmarks to support Partner Read and Think experiences.

1. Place a stop sign.

2. Predict.

3. Read together.

4. Find interesting words.

5. Ask questions.


I learned that
**Literacy Frames**

**Step 1:** Fold a long, thin piece of paper or oak tag in half. Cut (and save) a strip from the middle (shaded section). Then staple together (one staple) the open ends of the large piece.

**Step 2:** Slip one side of the folded strip (removed in Step 1) into the Literacy Frame, stapling it at the bottom after insertion. The staples prevent the slider from falling out of the frame.

Frames should be made with windows sized to match the print you are reading:

**Primary-level reading**

The dog ran in.

**Intermediate-level reading**

The puppy dashed into the house.

*FIGURE 2–1: Literacy Frames. See the photographs at the top of page 17 for examples of the literacy frame in use.*
Partner Read and Think

1. Place a stop sign.

2. Predict words.

3. Read silently or in unison.

4. Find interesting words.

5. Ask questions.

6. Summarize. I learned that ____________
Thank you for sampling this resource.

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