

October 2015



Tutor in Touch

Relinquishing Responsibility

As teachers, we so desperately want our students to learn that we unintentionally end up doing most of the learning work for them. We tell them what words are important, what strategy to use, and what key ideas are essential to understand; creating learners who are dependent on us to tell them "what to do" rather than learners who know how to handle themselves when we are not around.



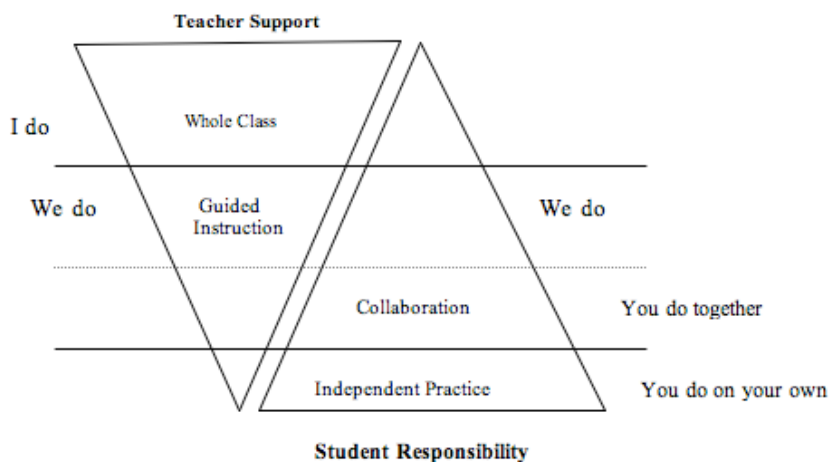
The goal of truly independent learning can be achieved if we gradually release the responsibility of learning to our students. This means that we must see ourselves as facilitators of learning who possess knowledge, not as the keepers of knowledge. We must provide students with opportunities to be in charge of their learning, discover new ideas, gain insight, and make connections.

So how do we accomplish this not so easy task? **I DO, WE DO, YOU DO**

This model proposes a plan of instruction that includes all the critical elements and conditions of a successful learning experience: modeling and demonstration, shared practice, coaching, collaborating, practice and sharing with prompts, and finally, independent practice.

It is important to understand that the gradual release of responsibility model is not linear. Students move back and forth among each of the components as they master skills, strategies, and learning standards.

Components of the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model



The visual representation in Figure 1 (Frey & Fisher, 2006) shows the four interactive (or interrelated) components of the gradual release of responsibility model.

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The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model

One way teachers can provide more targeted, individualized instruction is to use the gradual release of responsibility model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). This instructional model requires that the teacher, by design, transition from assuming “all the responsibility for performing a task .

. . . to a situation in which the students assume all of the responsibility” (Duke & Pearson, 2002, p. 211). This gradual release may occur over a day, a week, or a semester. Stated another way, the gradual release of responsibility “emphasizes instruction that mentors students into becoming capable thinkers and learners when handling the tasks with which they have not yet developed expertise” (Buehl, 2005). This gradual release of responsibility model of instruction has been documented as an effective approach for improving writing achievement (Fisher & Frey,

2003), reading comprehension (Lloyd, 2004), and literacy outcome for English language learners (Kong & Pearson, 2003).

Components of the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model

The visual representation in Figure 1 (Frey & Fisher, 2006) shows the four interactive (or interrelated) components of the gradual release of responsibility model.

□□ **Focus Lessons:** This component allows teachers to model their own meta cognitive processes as active readers. Modeled strategies focus on increasing understanding of content-area texts. Usually brief in nature, focus lessons establish purposes for reading and clue students into important learning objectives.

□□ **Guided Instruction:** During guided instruction, teachers prompt, question, facilitate, or lead students through tasks that increase understanding of a particular text.

□□ **Collaborative Learning:** During the collaborative learning component in the gradual release of responsibility model, students consolidate their understanding of the content and explore opportunities to problem solve, discuss, negotiate, and think with their peers.

□□ **Independent Learning:** This component addresses the most important goal of good instruction—to provide students with practice in applying skills and information in new ways. As students transfer their learning to subsequent tasks, they synthesize information, transform ideas, and solidify their understanding. They become active readers and capable learners.



Instructional Ideas

A very effective instructional technique is the cloze activity or instruction. The instructional cloze is a technique that can be used to develop comprehension skills by deleting words from a passage. The process supports the development of using context to determine the missing words in a passage. It also develops understanding why context is important. It supports prior knowledge by utilizing highly predictable text, or previously read text. It builds on specific reading strategies by deleting selected cues (i.e. nouns/verbs for meaning clues, pronouns for sentence structure, and letter/s for phonics). This encourages the student to think about what word would make sense in this sentence as well as the context of the entire story.

The major reading tasks it develops:

- Comprehension
- Context clues
- Predicting words using sentence meaning

Procedure

1. The teacher selects a text appropriate to the student's level.
2. The teacher decides on the target words.
3. The teacher systematically deletes the words from the paragraph and inserts a blank for the deleted word. Another option is to provide options for the blank.
4. The student is instructed to read the entire passage to get a sense of the entire meaning.
5. Then the student is instructed to fill in the blanks in the passage.
6. When the student finishes filling in the blanks, the student's answers are evaluated as to the similarity of meaning between the actual word and the supplied word.
7. The student reviews his choices and talks about what strategies he used to decide on his word choices.

Modifications

1. An oral cloze can be used to develop predictive listening.
2. A cloze exercise can be constructed from language experience stories in order to develop the ability to predict a word by using prior knowledge (what I said) and the text (how I said it).

Regardless of the student's level, using Cloze Activities can build listening and reading skills. If you haven't used this technique, give it a try and let us know how it goes.

Instructional Materials and Resources

To find materials that include Cloze Activities in our library, use our on-line search tool. Copy and paste the URL below. It will open to a page in which you can choose a field by which to search our inventory. Type Cloze Activities in the box and then click on "Subject Search". It will give a list of all the materials that include Cloze Activities.

<http://rmhosting.dyndns.org/10804/libsearch.exe?dbNum=1&action=3&Type=B>

Other on-line resources available include:

<http://worksheets.theteacherscorner.net/make-your-own/fill-in-the-blank/> This site allows you to create a cloze activity using words and context of our choice. Great when targeting specific spelling or grammar patterns.

<http://www.studyladder.com/games/activity/interactive-cloze-activity-14918> This is an interactive website designed for English Language Learners but is still appropriate for beginning reading students.

<https://quickworksheets.net/generators/cloze-test/info6.php> Another site that allows you to create your own text but also has already created Cloze worksheets.



Save the Date

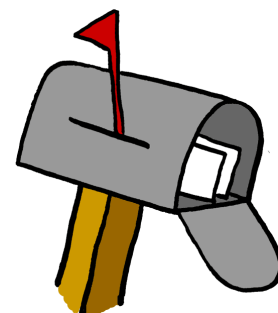


Holiday Open House

Friday, December 4, 2015, 2:00-5:00PM

REMINDER

The normal hours of operation for our library are 9AM to 4 PM Monday through Friday. An after-hours book return mailbox is located at the north end of the building (the end facing Elmwood Ave).



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