Teaching middle year students, who experience comprehension difficulties, the strategy of predicting before, during and after reading, leads to an improvement in comprehension skills.

Abstract

The strategy of predicting is a strategy that supports the acquisition of text comprehension in reading narrative text. Grade Four students with reading and reading comprehension difficulties were taught explicit predictive skills over a series of ten lessons with the aim of improving comprehension. This present study examines the outcomes after pre and post tests. Results verified evidence that students who received intervention did improve in accuracy of comprehension, however, students who did not receive intervention also demonstrated some progress.

Introduction

Research is showing that students in the middle years of primary schooling are failing to continue the upward trend in reading and comprehension skills.

Reading is the process of getting meaning from print. It is a crucial skill for success in school, occupations and every day living. "Reading is the transfer of meaning from one mind to another through the medium of written language". (Primary School Information Booklet Australia, 1981) cited in Bond (1990). Dwyer, (1989), says reading "… is closely related to talking, listening and writing". (p.21). For children to become successful readers they need to know that stories and books are a great source of enjoyment, and that knowledge can be gained from reading. "To convert written

1

information to knowledge, that is, to comprehend it, students need to act on the information in the written text in various ways." (Munro, 2004 p.836.) Many children in the early years of schooling, who read words accurately still experience difficulty with comprehension. Wakier, (2006) believes that the primary purpose of reading is comprehension, or understanding, and that the key to increasing reading comprehension is to tap into students' prior knowledge about a topic before actually reading about the topic. To make sense of print we need to draw on experiences of the subject matter, and the flow of language to predict its meaning. To search for meaning a variety of clues are used to make predictions, and to keep the meaning of the printed word going. To make predictions about text, students must have prior knowledge about the topic and have a means or a reason to retrieve it. To assist children to become avid, willing and thoughtful readers, we must be skilled in creating an environment that enables them to do so. For children to develop reading competencies and enthusiasm for literature it is paramount that reading is for meaning and that this results in a joy of reading. Dupree and Iversen (1994) say that reading is a complex process which needs to be taught. They state, "In order to become competent, independent readers and writers children need to control a range of strategies." (p.8).

Reading Comprehension depends on thinking skills, background experience, language skills and intelligence. Dupree and Iversen (1994) note, "Discussion and activity surrounding readings of good literature should lead children to understandings of characters, plots, themes, settings, moods and the interactions between these different components. Such in-depth reflection helps children understand the different levels of meaning contained in many stories." (p.9). " The focus of the current research is on the actions readers employ to achieve these levels of comprehension. These actions are ways of thinking about the ideas a reader encounters in a text and are referred to as 'reading

comprehension strategies'." (Munro, 2004 p. 836.) Mc Laughlin and Allen (200) cited in Oczkus (2002) believe there needs to be an extensive framework for comprehension teaching comprising of strategies for teaching students to read and understand. They state that the first strategy is to preview which includes "…activating prior knowledge, predicting, and setting a purpose." (p. 11).

Reading comprehension is in development all through ones school life. In fact it is a life-long activity whether you read in vocational text, in university course books, or simply for pleasure. It is a life-long learning process that is never complete. Carter cited in Jacobucci, et al (2002) "…describe the process of reading as an interactive one, in which readers interact with the text as their prior experience is activated." (p. 66.)

Comprehension is drawing out meaning from written text and spoken language. In spoken language meaning can be gained from a variety of cues_ pitch, stress, intonation as well as face-to face- communication, facial expressions, gestures and posture help determine understanding. 80% to 90% of communication is attributed to non verbal communication. " … oral language remains the predominant mode of communication in our society." (Love and Reilly, 1997 p.3.) However, in reading comprehension, you have to discover each new statement, in light of those that come before it. Dupree and Iversen (1994) believe, "A strategic reader is a reader who has control over the process of extracting meaning from a series of print cues." (p.19). Strategies are the procedures that go on in the mind of the reader. We are not able to see these happen but it can be inferred that they are happening by observing the behaviours of the reader. Re-reading and making adjustments may even need to be done in order to understand what is written.

Crilly (2002) believes that there are 'Stages of Reading' and each strategy involves teaching students to delve into text. The before stage provides a scaffold for new

concepts and vocabulary, promotes engagement and provides a means for prediction. The during reading stage allows students to integrate the knowledge and information they bring to the text with 'new' information in the text and the last stage 'after ' reading allows students to articulate and process their understanding of what they have read and to think critically about the validity of the text. Details about things characters do and say often help you make a prediction about what they might do or say later in the story. Gauthier, cited in Jacobucci (2002) said, "When students work together, communicate their thoughts and seek answers to different questions, reading comprehension has a fertile setting in which to occur." (p.33.)

Teachers need to prepare students and guide them through texts so they are able to learn more effectively. Strategies are needed to scaffold student reading of texts and these can be used with a variety of texts across curriculum areas. Fountas and Pinnell (2001) say "Reading instruction must be specific to students' needs. Reading is complex, and the demands on the reader increase as texts become more varied and difficult." (p. 47.) They also state, " … the goal of the individual reader … is always the same_ to enjoy, understand and interpret text." (p.10.)

Wood and Enders (2005) state, "To make predictions about a text, students must have prior knowledge about the topic and have a means or a reason to retrieve it. This strategy takes the predictive process back to its origins in the imagination and extends it throughout the lesson." (p. 346.) Prior discussion before reading allows acknowledgement of the different experiences and backgrounds of knowledge that students bring to a text. It influences how they will read and learn from a particular text. By knowing what students bring to a text enables the teacher to provide appropriate scaffolds to make links between the known and new information presented in the text.

This discussion, prior to the reading, promotes engagement and interest by providing student with a means to predict text content. Cooper (2000) cited in Wood &Enders (2004) note that " … getting students to predict what will occur in a text is a widely accepted means of focusing their attention on the content to be read, thereby improving their understanding of key concepts." Activities for prior discussions and prediction is critical for comprehension to occur. Fountas and Pinnell (2001) say that a reader's first response is "…in the head, but talking enables the reader to put thoughts into words." (p.164.) These oral responses allow a student to be more conscious and aware of their thinking and leads to a

 " … deeper understanding of meaning because they are contributing to one another's understanding." (p.164.) Fountas and Pinnell (2001) also note that before the reading, "Children talk about the story, ask questions, and build expectations. The teacher's introduction supports their thinking about the story so that comprehension is foregrounded." (p.8.)

Springfield (2006) states that, "To infer as we read is to go beyond literal interpretation and to open a world of meaning deeply connected to our lives." (p. 1.) Making predictions is the ability to work out what might happen next in a given situation. The accuracy of a prediction can be related to how much information is already known. Often a number of predictions can be made for a given situation, some more plausible than others. Making a prediction is a way of using clues from a reading passage, as well as things you already know, to make a good guess about what might happen next. "Getting students to make predictions about a text is more than just giving the directive to 'guess what will happen in the story.' It seems … a retrieval of images of previous experiences – is necessary to ensure adequate predictions and to motivate students to read the text to follow." (Wood and Endres, 2004 p.346.)

Reading is a strategic thinking process. "According to Kintsch's model of text comprehension, readers process written text at a number of 'levels'; the sentence, conceptual and topic levels. Paraphrasing, predicting and summarizing are examples of comprehending strategies used at these levels respectively." (Munro, 2004 p.835.) Keene & Zimmerman (1996) cited in Springfield (2006) say, "Predictions are inferences. We base a prediction on what has been stated in the text, but we add to it an informed guess about what is to come." (p.153.) Oczkus (2003) note that "Predicting is a strategy that assists students in setting a purpoe for reading and in monitoring their reading comprehension. It allows students to interact more with the text, which makes them more likely to become interested in the reading material while improving their understanding. In my experience, students seem to enjoy predicting and do so with exuberance." (p.23.)

To infer as we read, is to go beyond literal interpretation and to open a world of meaning deeply connected to our lives. Keene & Zimmerman cited in Springfield (2006), say, "Inference is, in some situations, synonymous with learning and remembering…." (p.153.) Munro (2004) states that "Inferring involves readers elaborating what they have read by linking this with what they know. Readers can infer by visualizing the text, by questioning it, by reasoning transitively or by induction." (p.836.) When we are inferring we are creating a personal process of meaning from text. It involves a mental process of combining what is read with relevant prior knowledge. The reader's unique interpretation of text is the product of this blending. Springfield (2006) says, "When proficient readers infer, they create a meaning that is not necessarily stated in the text. The process implies that readers actively search for, or are aware of, implicit meaning." (p.1.) Because inferences and or predictions may be revised based on the inferences and interpretations of other readers, it is important to provide students with multiple opportunities to discuss texts in a variety of settings.

Springfield (2006) says, "When students infer, proficient readers:

- Draw conclusions from text;

- Make reasonable predictions as they read, test and revise those predictions as they read further;

- Create dynamic interpretations of text that are adapted as they continue to read and after they read;

- Use the combination of background knowledge and explicitly stated information from the text to answer questions they have as they read;

- Make connections between conclusions they draw and other beliefs or knowledge

When proficient readers infer they are more able to:

- Remember and apply what they have read;

- Create new background knowledge for themselves;

- Discriminate and critically analyze text and authors;

- Engage in conversation and/ or other analytical or reflective responses to what they read;

- Make critical or analytical judgments about what they read." (p. 2.)

 " Completing a Personal Predictions activity format provides students with the opportunity to build some expectations of a text, activate their background knowledge and to preview material before reading." (Department of Education and Training of Western Australia, 2004 p.133). Robb (2003) believes "… by teaching powerful strategies- ones that enhance comprehension before, during and after reading-you can greatly increase interest and understanding." (p.36.)

Prediction: Teaching middle year students, who experience comprehension difficulties, the strategy of predicting before, during and after reading, leads to an improvement in comprehension skills.

METHOD

Design:

An OXO design has been employed in which the gains in reading comprehension skills following explicit teaching in the comprehension strategy of predicting prior, during and after reading prose is monitored for middle years students (Grade Four) who are experiencing reading difficulties.

Participants:

The participants are six Grade Four students who have shown a history of reading difficulties. All the children (four females, two males) chosen for the study have been taken from the same Grade Four / Five classroom. Three of the students (two females, one male) were chosen to receive intervention and three other students (one male, two females) were to act as the control group. The reason for the control group was to gauge by comparison whether specific teaching in the strategy of predicting skills led to changes in learning behaviour. Data collected since all the students were in Prep highlights reading difficulties from an early age. All six participants were on the tentative selection list for Reading Recovery in their Grade One year. Two students in the control group and one child in the intervention group completed a period of time in this program. Two of the three children who received Reading Recovery intervention experienced difficulties at the topic, conceptual level, while the other student exhibited difficulties across all areas (word, sentence, topic, conceptual, topic and dispositional). Data for all six students, taken from AIM and DART testing from the previous year and this

year, demonstrated that the students are comprehending below the benchmarks expected for their year level. See chart below for further specific information about the intervention group.

Participants	Description of learning difficulties
Student A	Age : 9 yrs. Demonstrated a reading score on the TORCH Reading Comprehension Test (Mossenson, Hill & Masters, 1987) of 25.5 approximately 10 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for grade three and 17points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade Four. In 2004 this student was assessed to determine whether her reading, writing and spelling difficulties may be partially due to visual perceptual dysfunction. Was diagnosed with Irlen Syndrome, a perceptual dysfunction and form of visual dyslexia, affecting how the brain interprets the messages it receives from the printed page and the environment. Is currently reading at 98% reading accuracy, however finds it difficult to remain on task and self efficacy is poor. Although oral language appears to be creative it frequently demonstrates the inability to integrate and organize text ideas. Demonstrates difficulty at word level, lacking in ability to suggest antonyms and synonyms of familiar and easy words, and plausible meanings for words by using context. At conceptual level student experiences difficulties making predictions at literal and inferential levels and explanations of cause and effect are rarely related to text. Performance outcomes show little comprehension. Is unable to locate one or several pieces of explicitly stated information and is unable to infer information not directly stated. Received intervention in previous year with specific teaching in the strategy of finding the main ideas in paragraphs. High level of distractibility and experiences high levels of frustration when reading.
Student B	Age 10 years. Demonstrated a reading score on the TORCH Reading Comprehension Test (Mossenson, Hill & Masters, 1987) of 32.8 approximately 3 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for grade three and 9 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade Four. Was on the tentative selection list for Reading Recovery in Grade One but did not receive intervention with this program. Experiences some difficulties with lack of vocabulary. Has difficulties with suggesting synonyms and antonyms for familiar and unfamiliar words. Is not able to suggest feelings and attitudes that are literally mentioned in text. Has difficulty inferring attitudes text does not present, and finds it difficult to explain causes and effects. Finds it difficult to locate one piece or several pieces of explicitly stated information when the information is not prominent. Experiences frustrations about reading as a reader and when 'talking and experiencing' eg.(visualizing and predicting)' text conversations.
Student C	Age 10 years. Demonstrated a reading score on the TORCH Reading Comprehension Test (Mossenson, Hill & Masters, 1987) of 25.5

approximately 10 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for grade three and 17 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade Four. Reads with little expression, substitutes words according to their distinctive visual features, is working at the 'graphic similarity' level and sometimes processes at the phonetic level. Demonstrates few strategies while reading and rarely appeals for support or re-reads incorrect portions of text. Reading errors do not maintain sense within the text sentence and does not appear to use meaning of words in the text and sentence conceptual or topic levels. His learning of sentence and comprehension processes are restricted in his lack of knowledge of grammar. Does not use correct grammatical structures thus losing meaning. Demonstrates a lack of experiential knowledge to support his reading. Does not monitor for meaning and demonstrates few attempts to re-read when what is read does not make sense. His orthographic knowledge is at the small cluster / letter knowledge and words with little similarity are guessed. Experiences difficulty in sequencing, integrating and organizing text ideas because reading is not automatised. Demonstrates short term memory space and is unable to consolidate effective comprehending strategies. Demonstrates difficulty at word level, lacking in ability to suggest antonyms and synonyms of familiar and easy words, and plausible meanings for words by using context. Demonstrates inability to pronounce words accurately. Received Reading Recovery program in Grade One and was successfully discontinued but now rarely uses strategies learned while on the program. Has difficulty maintaining concentration, is extremely disorganized and shows poor task-orientated strategies. Conversational skills are limited and gives short one and two word responses, finds it difficult to articulate when requested. Little self motivation to complete work of appropriate standards.

Materials:

Materials used include the following:

- **TORCH** (Tests of Reading Comprehension) designed to assist teachers of students from Year 3 to Year 10 in their assessment of students' reading comprehension skills. It provides an estimate of a student's level of reading comprehension achievement; their ability to construct meaning from text.

- **ROL** (Record of Oral Language). Students are asked to listen and then repeat a number of sentences. Memory for sentence tasks.

- **Oral Synonyms Test** to determine what knowledge children know about words, their vocabulary knowledge, specifically synonyms. (Appendix11)

- **Reading Survey A** to determine how they perceived themselves as Readers.(Appendix1)

- **Reading Survey B** to determine what strategies the students use to support their reading and to find out what they know about the specific strategy of 'prediction'. (Appendix 2)

- **Teaching Sequences for Prediction Strategies** which consisted of ten lessons (Appendix 3)

- **Texts used for strategy teaching.** These narrative texts were used to teach the strategy of predication, ranged in word length from to 123 to 140 words and the estimated grade level from Fry Readability Graph is Grade Four. (Appendix 4)

- **Paper, pencil, whiteboard**

- **Twelve sentences** which were used for 'title prediction activities' (Appendix 5).

- **Think Aloud Prediction Charts** devised by the author (Appendix 6)

- **Short narrative text** with a set of comprehension questions (Appendix 7)

- **Word Splash** used to teach prediction strategy (Appendix 8)

- **Story Map Prediction Chart** (Appendix 9)

Procedure:

All participants, (including the control group) were administered the pre and post tests in the following order; TORCH Test (Lizards Love Eggs); Record of Oral Language; Oral Synonyms Test; Reading Survey A; Reading Survey B.

The ten teaching sessions were conducted over a three week period in rooms available at the time of teaching. Lessons were conducted in both morning and afternoon sessions and the children were withdrawn from the class setting. Each lesson lasted between 30 and 40 minutes.

Instructional procedure: The three intervention students were exposed to a series of ten teaching sessions. They were exited from their classroom environment at different times each day. The series of lessons were completed over a three week period, each being of 35 to 40 minutes duration. Lessons were conducted in a variety of rooms available within the school context on each particular day.

The activities implemented with the intervention group consisted of ;

1. an explicit description of the strategy,

2. when and how *prediction* can be used,

3. teacher modelling of the strategy through oral language conversation,

4. collaborative use of the strategy,

5. guided practice using the strategy with release of the responsibility from the teacher to the students,

6. independent use of the *predictive* strategy prior to reading, during reading, and final discussion of predictions,

7. review of strategy /strategies learned.

Sessions incorporated oral languages activities, brainstorming of strategies / predictions, eliciting of prior knowledge and experiences, identifying different types of stories, demonstrating formats of mind maps, using graphic organizers, reading, sharing and discussing responses, reviewing predictions, completing activities, linking prior knowledge with described information, finding clues, analyzing settings, characters, moods, predicting and revisiting predictions. (Appendix 3 for lessons 1-10).

Tasks given at the pre-test and post-test

- **TORCH** test was administered in groups of three to the intervention and control groups to assess overall reading ability and comprehension, with the aim of acquiring the achievement level of comprehension for each student. Information gained provided the

level of achievement for each student within the percentile and mean achievement of their year level. This was then compared with the post test results to determine if, at the end of the ten teaching lessons for the intervention group, improvement in test results had been gained.

- **Record of Oral Language.** This test allows subjective assessment of changes in a child's oral language over time. Sentence repetition procedures were used to give insights into ways children master the different structures found in English sentences.

- **Reading Survey A (Appendix 1)** This test was administered to asses how children felt while they read. It was to provide whether the students read with a degree of comfort or frustration both at home and at school and how they perceived themselves as readers.

- **Reading Survey B (Appendix 2)** This test provided information about the strategies students used prior to reading and what they knew about the 'predictive process'.

- **Oral Synonyms Test (Appendix 3)** This test was used to gauge vocabulary knowledge.

RESULTS

TORCH: Intervention Group

Table 1. Pre & post test results of reading comprehension levels of achievement for appropriate year level of <u>intervention group</u>.

Questions	Total correct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Student 1 Pre	**7**	*	*	*	*	*		*		*											
Student 1 Post	**8**	*	*	*	*	*		*										*			*
Student 2 Pre	**10**	*	*	*	*	*		*		*					*	*					*
Student 2 Post	**11**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*					*	*				*
Student 3 Pre	**7**	*	*	*	*	*		*													*
Student 3 Post	**8**	*	*	*	*	*		*									*		*		*
Pre test questions answered		3	3	3	3	3	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Post test questions answered		3	3	3	3	3	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	3

Intervention group — **Pre:** 6 out of 20 questions answered correctly by all 3 students. Average = 30%
Post: 7 out of 20 questions answered correctly by all 3 students. Average = 35%

<u>Intervention Group</u>

Pre : Students 1,2,3 achieved an average;
- 8 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade 3.
- 14 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade 4.(Current grade level)

Post: Students 1,2,3 achieved an average;
- 4 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade 3. An improvement of 4 points
- 10 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade 4.(Current grade level) **An improvement of 4 points.**

Table 2. Pre & post test results of reading comprehension levels of achievement for appropriate year level of <u>control group</u>.

Questions	Total correct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Student 1 Pre	8	*		*	*	*							*			*	*	*			
Student 1 Post	13	*	*	*	*	*		*	*			*			*	*	*	*			*
Student 2 Pre	8	*	*	*	*	*		*									*				*
Student 2 Post	8	*	*	*	*	*			*								*				*
Student 3 Pre	9	*		*	*	*				*			*			*	*				*
Student 3 Post	13	*	*	*	*	*		*		*		*				*	*	*		*	*
Pre test questions answered		3	1	3	3	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	3	2	0	0	2
Post test questions answered		3	3	3	3	3	1	2	2	1	0	2	0	0	1	2	3	2	0	1	3

Control group —⟨ **Pre:** 5 out of 20 questions answered correctly by all 3 students. Average = 25%
Post: 7 out of 20 questions answered correctly by all 3 students. Average = 35%

Control Group
Pre : Students 1,2,3 achieved an average;
- 7 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade 3.
- 12 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade 4.(Current grade level)

Post: Students 1,2,3 achieved an average;
- 1 point below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade 3. An improvement of 6 points.
- 10 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement for Grade 4. (Current grade level) **An improvement of 2 points.**

TORCH Analysis.

In the pre –test all six participants (intervention and control groups) were assessed for

their reading comprehension achievement levels in order to compare student achievement

with other Australian students from the same year level. *Intervention Student A's* results (raw

score of 7 and a percentile ranking of 9%) indicated that this student has a stanine level of 2.

Her scale score is almost 15 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement of her year

level, indicating her comprehension working level is well below the grade four expected levels

of achievement and it is 9 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement of Grade three level. *Intervention Student B's* results (raw score of 10 and a percentile ranking of 43%) indicated that this student belongs in the stanine level of 3. Her scale score is 12 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement of her year level, indicating her comprehension working level is below the grade four expected levels of achievement and it is 2 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement of Grade Three level. *Intervention Student C's* results (raw score of 7 and a percentile ranking of 9%) indicated this student has a stanine level of 2. His scale score is almost 16 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement of his year level, indicating his comprehension working level is well below the Grade Four expected levels of achievement and it is 9 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement of Grade Three level of achievement. To account for this result *Intervention Student C* experiences a variety of difficulties while reading, he loses meaning due to his difficulty in automatically decoding and recoding of words. Because his reading is not automatised he is not able to use comprehension consolidation strategies effectively and he is demonstrating insufficient short term memory space. *Intervention Student A's* comprehension results are reasonably comparable. While she has the ability to read more accurately, immature vocabulary and early visual perceptual processing has hindered progress. Emotional factors such as extreme lack of self efficacy and difficulty in maintaining focus cause her stress therefore affecting working memory. *Intervention Student B * reads quickly and has a tendency to continue reading even when the text does not make sense. Poor efficacy as a reader and few observable reading strategies are employed. It was important to have a control group with similar reading difficulties so that comparisons could be made. *Control Student A * is operating at an achievement level below his year level. His results (raw score of 8 and a percentile ranking of 12%) indicated this student has a stanine level of 2-3. His scale score is almost 13 points below the 50th percentile and mean achievement of his year

level, indicating his comprehension working level is well below the Grade Four expected levels of achievement. *Control Student B's* results were identical to *Control Student A. Control Student C's* results (raw score of 9 and a percentile ranking of 16%) also indicates this student is achieving at below the 50th percentile and mean achievement of her expected year level. Using the conversion table from TORCH (normative data) it builds a picture of students, in both groups, working at one grade level below their current school grade. These results implied that all six students were working at a comprehension level below Grade Three rather than middle Grade Four. In the post test, *Intervention Student A* increased her raw score by one point, thus giving her a percentile ranking of 12% an increase of3%. Her stanine level rose from 2 to borderline 2-3. *Intervention Student B* demonstrated a raw score increase of one point, thus giving her a percentile ranking of 26% an increase of 5%. Her stanine level increased from 3 to borderline 3-4. *Intervention Student C* increased his raw score by one point, thus giving him a percentile ranking of 12% an increase of 3%. His stanine level remained on borderline 2-3. Observations
 indicated that as the lessons progressed students began to express ideas and predictions with more fluency, confidence and ability. The trend suggests that specific teaching improved application of the strategy. Prior to teaching students were well below in comprehension ability. After instruction in the '*predictive strategy'* students showed small gains in comprehension levels. The application of this strategy may have influenced their results, however, because control group scores also showed gains, with the exception of one student. Other factors may also have contributed to these results.

Record of Oral Language

ROL was administered to two cohorts of students. The intervention group and the control group, each group consisting of three students.
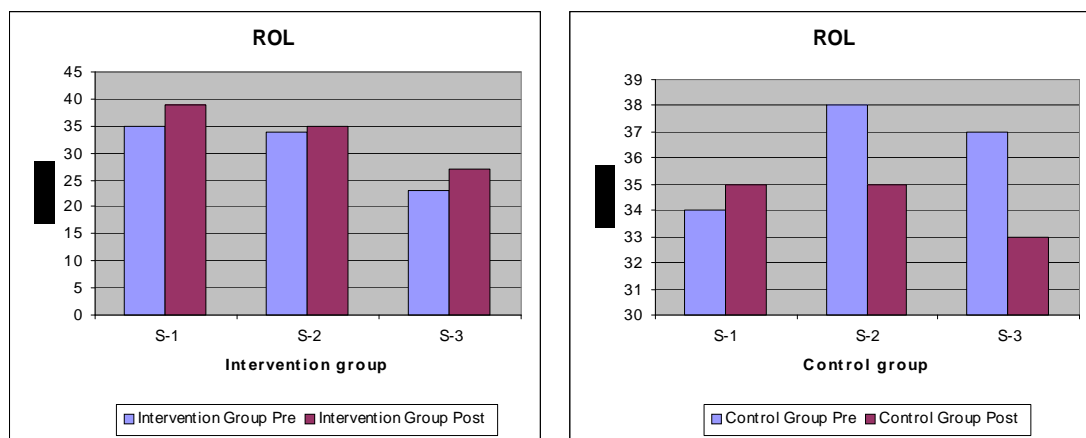
Figures 1&2 – Pre-Test and Post -Test Test Results of <u>Record of Oral Language</u> for <u>Intervention and Control Groups.</u>

Table 3. Pre & post test results of Record of <u>Oral Language for Intervention Group</u>

Intervention Group	Student 1		Student 2		Student 3	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Scores	35	39	34	35	23	27
Pre –post test average increase of three points.						

All three students in the intervention group demonstrated increases from one point to

four points. It is interesting to note that *Student 3*, who demonstrates poor articulating

skills showed an increase of four points. Love and Reilly (1997) believe, "Oral language

underpins literacy." (p. 3.) It is noted in Oral Language Developmental Continuum (1994) that

"Language learning takes place through interactions in meaningful events … Language

develops in relation to the context in which it is used; that is, it develops according to the

situation, the topic under discussion, and the relationship between the participants." (p.3.) The

huge amount of discussion through the series of lessons has supported him in effectively

making sense and problem solving in familiar and real life contexts. Enhancement of oral

language skills, once they becomes more familiar to him, frees up working memory space.

(Mental space). *Student I* demonstrated an improvement of four points over the short term.

While she appears to confidently articulate, frequently, what she says shows little relevancy to
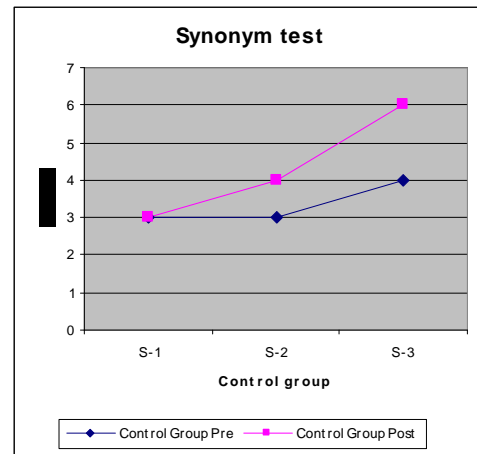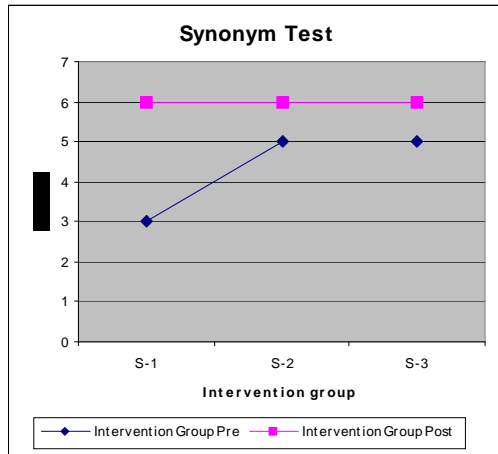
the topic under discussion. This student found it the most difficult to predict, in context, prior to the intervention. She exhibits poor efficacy and concentration, and "Any emotional issues can' fill up' mental space more quickly than anything else. Fear, …worry may totally inhibit a person's capacity to learn." (Education Department of Western Australia, 1994 p.7.) Students were given many opportunities to discuss, reflect, they were encouraged to think aloud, visualize, pause. This in turn contributes to a development of an awareness of specific understandings and effective talk can be achieved by purposeful language interaction. Department of Western Australia (1994) note that " Purposeful talk is one of the major means through which children construct and refine their understandings of language." (p.14.) Each student in the intervention group demonstrated an increase and the group scored a pre- post test mean increase of three points.

Table 4. Pre & post test results of <u>Record of Oral Language for Control Group</u>

Control Group	Student 1		Student 2		Student 3	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Scores	34	35	38	35	37	33
Pre –post test average decrease of two points.						

In the control group *Student 2 and 3* showed a decrease in scores of three points and four points respectively in the post test, while *Student 1* scored an increase of one point from pre to post test. Factors contributing to the lower scores of *Student 2 and 3* in the post test are unknown and it may be useful to retest this group at a later date.

Synonym Test

Figure: Synonym Test — Intervention group (S-1, S-2, S-3) with Intervention Group Pre and Intervention Group Post

Figure: Synonym test — Control group (S-1, S-2, S-3) with Control Group Pre and Control Group Post

Figures 3 & 4– Pre-Test and Post -Test Test Results of <u>Oral Synonym Test</u> for Intervention and Control Groups.

Table 5. Pre & post test results of Oral Synonym Test for <u>Intervention Group</u>

Synonyms	Student 1		Student 2		Student 3		% Correct	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Fast	x	c	c	c	x	c	33%	100%
Wish	x	c	x	c	x	c	0%	100%
Bad	c	c	c	c	c	c	100%	100%
Tiny	c	c	c	c	c	c	100%	100%
Noise	x	x	c	x	x	x	33%	33%
Fix	x	c	x	x	c	c	33%	66%
Cheer	x	c	x	c	c	c	33%	100%
Sure	c	x	c	c	c	x	100%	33%
Found	x	x	x	x	x	x	0%	0%
Annoy	x	x	x	x	x	x	0%	0%
Score	3/10 30%	6/10 60%	5/10 50%	6/10 60%	5/10 50%	6/10 60%	**Pre**:43% of questions answered correctly	
	30% increase		10% increase		10% increase		**Post :**60% of questions answered correctly	
Mean increase 16.6%								

Code: x = no word given or incorrect response; c = correct word

20

**Table 6. Pre & post test results of Oral Synonym Test for <u>Control Group</u>**

Synonyms	Student 1 Pre	Student 1 Post	Student 2 Pre	Student 2 Post	Student 3 Pre	Student 3 Post	% Correct responses Pre	% Correct responses Post
Fast	x	c	x	c	x	c	0%	100%
Wish	x	c	x	c	c	c	33%	100%
Bad	x	x	x	x	c	c	33%	33%
Tiny	c	x	c	c	c	c	100%	66%
Noise	x	x	x	x	x	x	0%	0%
Fix	x	x	x	x	x	x	0%	0%
Cheer	c	c	c	x	x	c	66%	66%
Sure	x	x	c	x	x	c	33%	33%
Found	x	x	x	x	x	x	0%	0%
Annoy	c	x	x	x	c	x	66%	0%
Score	**3/10 30%**	**3/10 30%**	**3/10 30%**	**4/10 40%**	**4/10 40%**	**6/10 60%**	**Pre**: 33% of questions answered correctly.	
	No increase		**10% increase**		**20% increase**			
Mean increase = 6.6%							**Post :** 43 % of questions answered correctly.	

 Code: x = no word given or incorrect response; c = correct word

The intervention group obtained an average increase of 16.6% from pre to post testing.

Intervention Student 1 answered three of the ten words in the pre test, however in the post test increased her score to six, an increase of three points. In the pre test the support of synonyms in context were of no help to her, however in the post test she was able to give three more synonyms using context. *Intervention Student 2* was able to increase her score by one point. In the pre test two synonyms were with the support of synonyms in context, however in the post test she confidently and quickly responded with six of the synonyms in isolation. *Intervention Student 3* scored five correct synonyms in isolation and was not able to give more when the same unknown synonyms were presented in context. During the post test he was able to score one extra point, this time using synonyms in context. Overall a mean increase of 16.6% was observed. Both *Intervention Students 1&3* did not demonstrate improvement with reading words in context, however *Control Student 3* showed a gain of two points, The control group mean gain was 6.6%, 10% less than that of the intervention group.

Reading Survey A
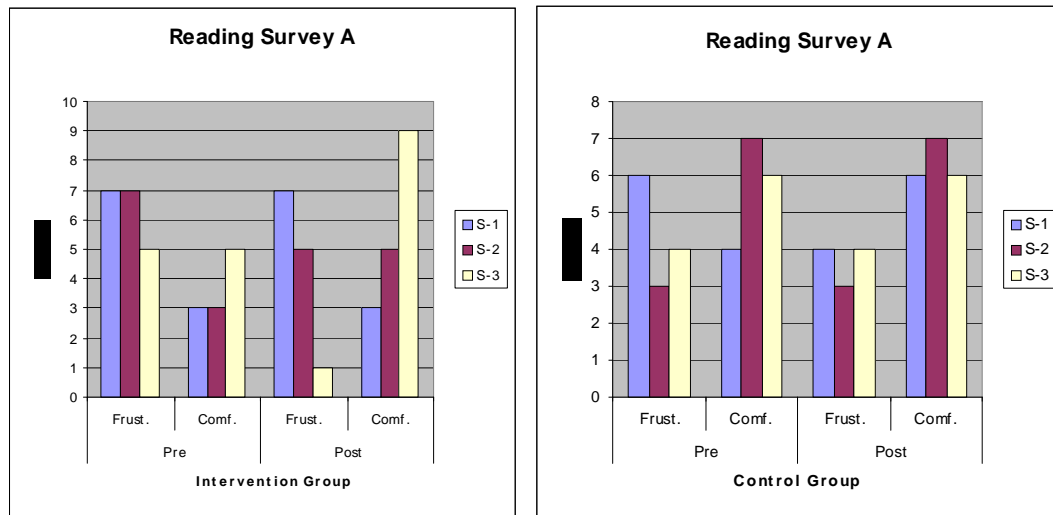
Figures 5&6 – Pre-Test and Post -Test Test Results of <u>Reading Survey A</u> for Intervention and Control Groups.

This survey showed that two of the three intervention students believed they felt less frustrated about their reading ability, comprehension and self efficacy after they had completed the intervention program. *Intervention Student 1's* frustration and comfort levels did not change from the pre to post survey, however in the post survey she was able to tick the comfort box re 'prediction' while pre test results showed this as a 'frustration' response. Also noted, is her post survey response to low self efficacy as a reader. Initially she felt at a comfortable level about reading and this changed to a 'frustration' level after intervention. *Intervention Student 2* demonstrated an increase in comfort levels by two questions when comparing her pre and post survey results. While she still felt frustrated when asked about predicting in post survey results she indicated a comfort level when being asked questions about what she is reading or had read. Prior to intervention she felt frustration, when being questioned about stories. *Intervention Student 3* also demonstrated an increase in comfort levels by four questions therefore his frustrations levels had decreased. Important to note that after intervention he believed he was more comfortable when working with unknown words and when something did not make sense to him. Prior to intervention only one of the students, *Intervention Student*

22

1, felt comfortable when reading at home while, at post survey, all three intervention students indicated the comfortable level in this activity. All three students felt comfortable about being introduced to new material in the post survey, however two students still don't feel comfortable with themselves as readers. *Intervention Students 2& 3* felt an increased security about the strategy of prediction after post survey.

Table 7. Pre & post survey results of Reading Survey A for Intervention Group

Questions	Student 1				Student 2				Student 3			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	Comfortable	Frustrated	Comfortable	Frustrated	Comfortable	Frustrated	Comfortable	Frustrated	Comfortable	Frustrated	Comfortable	Frustrated
How do you feel about reading at home?		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	
How do you feel when you read a book at school?	✓		✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	
How do you feel about spending free time reading?		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
How do you feel about reading a new book or story?	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	
How do you feel about predicting before you read?		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	
How do you feel when you come to a word you don't know?		✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	
How do you feel when something you read does not make sense?		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	
How do you feel when you are asked questions about what you have read?		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	
How do you feel about using a graphic organizer?		✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	
How do you feel about yourself as a reader?	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	

✓ = response

Table 8. Pre & post survey results of Reading Survey A for <u>Control Group</u>

Questions	Student 1				Student 2				Student 3			
	Pre		**Post**		**Pre**		**Post**		**Pre**		**Post**	
	Comfortable	Frustrated	Comfortable	Frustrated	Comfortable	Frustrated	Comfortable	Frustrated	Comfortable	Frustrated	Comfortable	Frustrated
How do you feel about reading at home?		✓	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	
How do you feel when you read a book at school?	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	
How do you feel about spending free time reading?		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓			✓
How do you feel about reading a new book or story?	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	
How do you feel about predicting before you read?	✓		✓			✓		✓		✓		✓
How do you feel when you come to a word you don't know?		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
How do you feel when something you read does not make sense?		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
How do you feel when you are asked questions about what you have read?		✓	✓		✓		✓			✓		✓
How do you feel about using a graphic organizer?		✓		✓	No response			✓	✓		✓	
How do you feel about yourself as a reader?	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	

✓ = response

<u>Control Student 1</u> indicated a frustration level of six on the pre survey and this degree of frustration dropped by two questions at the post survey. Interesting to note he now feels more comfortable about reading at home. This may be due to an influencing factor presently being encouraged at school, 'The Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge'. <u>Control Student 2</u> demonstrated no change in pre and post survey results. <u>Control Student 3</u> numerically scored the same result, however, like <u>Control Student 1</u>, she now feels more comfortable about reading at home. A contributing factor could possibly be the same as for <u>Control Student 1</u> .

Reading Survey B

Students in both the intervention and control group demonstrated little knowledge about what to do when choosing new material to read. All indicated they would look at the pictures and <u>Control Student 2</u> said reading the blurb would support her choice of reading. Post survey results of the control group showed no changes in their responses when choosing a book to read. Students in the <u>intervention group</u> were able to articulate more strategies for choosing a

book in their post survey. All six students indicated they preferred to read at school rather than at home and these figures did not change after the post survey. The results of Reading Survey B indicated that in the pre test none of the students knew what 'prediction' was. Post survey results indicated that all three students in the intervention group understood the strategy and could articulate how it supports their reading. This was a 100% improvement as no students in the control group, at post testing, indicated knowledge about the strategy or its use. Using a number line one to ten, all intervention students indicated, in the post survey, that they believed they had made gains in their comprehension. This was not demonstrated in the post survey of the control group.

Discussion

This study's aim was an attempt to determine whether teaching the strategy of prediction to students experiencing reading comprehension difficulties would improve their comprehension abilities. Assessments were made by comparing results and surveys from pre and post-test results of each child and the intervention group as a whole, and then making comparisons with the control group students who did not receive intervention. The findings support the use of this strategy instruction to improve reading comprehension as noted by Munro (2004) "Reading strategy instruction has been shown to improve reading comprehension." (p. 836.) Munro (2004) continues by stating "It is generally agreed that a knowledge of how to predict … and monitor comprehension facilitates reading comprehension." (p.836.) Although overall finding were positive, only small gains, by the intervention students, were observed. Munro (2004) states, "The effectiveness of strategy instruction, however, is limited. It does not always lead to improved reading comprehension, for several reasons." (p. 836). It should also be noted that the control group demonstrated gains in their comprehensions scores. Questions for consideration: (1) What made the performance of Control Students 1 & 3 (in Torch) out

perform the students receiving intervention? (2) What further support could Intervention Students 1, 2, & 3 receive to show greater overall performance achievements?

The intervention group, with the exception of Student 2, were excited about the prospect of working as a small group and quickly developed a positive rapport with the instructor. As the students were being withdrawn from the classroom it became apparent that other members of the class wanted to be a part of the instruction group. This had a direct impact on the withdrawn students making them more enthusiastic and enhancing a positive attitude. The quality of relationship between students and researcher may have been a factor which impacted on results, especially the ROL results as there were bigger gains for the intervention students in this area. Love and Reilly (1997) note that " Language helps children integrate new information, ideas and experiences into their existing framework of knowledge and beliefs. It also assists in making sense of the 'new', so that we can change and expand what we already know. Furthermore, when we express our ideas, justify our opinions and hear the responses of others we are compelled to accommodate and modify our thinking." (p.3.) *Student 1 & 3* showed the greatest gains while *Students 2 & 3* in the control group showed a decrease in their results. During the series of lessons there was a huge amount of dialogue and for this to be successful children needed to be in an environment where they felt comfortable to voice their ideas and opinions. It is stated in Oral Language Developmental Continuum (1994) that,
 " Effective communication can be achieved by focusing on activities based on purposeful language interaction. Purposeful talk is one of the major means through which children construct and refine their understandings of language." (p.14.) The Education Department of Western Australia (1994) believe that as children explore language and use it to clarify and further extend their ideas they will use their language to develop and investigate situations, monitor and reflect on pertinent information and become curious and enthusiastic learners. Variable may have impacted on the lower than expected results of the intervention group.

Lessons were conducted at various times of the day, sometimes in the morning and frequently in the afternoons. These lessons were conducted in a variety of rooms, therefore there was no consistency in time of day or permanency of rooms. Because the researcher is not the classroom teacher the intervention students may have felt they were missing out on other lessons of importance. Strategies taught were not being provided as revision at other times during the day and the series of lessons were conducted over a three week period of time. Because this research was done in a small school it was more difficult to choose a control group that was as needy as the intervention group therefore the control group pre tested at a higher level of competency. While it is imperative to have high expectations of students and their learning it is sometimes difficult to move some students with learning difficulties, quickly along their developmental continuum.

Implications

This study suggests that even with small research gains can be made. The study supports the idea of teaching the strategy of prediction to middle year students to assist them in improving their reading comprehension. It indicates the value of explicit strategy instruction and it draws attention to the implication of addressing the curriculum in order to implement explicit strategy instruction in a developmental way

Limitations

This study was comprised of only ten teaching sessions and the strategy of prediction was taught in isolation to other comprehension strategies. Although benefits were gained, if the study was ongoing, and integrated other strategies such as paraphrasing, summarising, visualizing, it is possible that more noticeable gains may have occurred. Because the intervention has ceased and the students no longer attend sessions with the researcher it is to be questioned whether the students will continue to use and consider what had been taught.

Because the study was conducted at a small school it was difficult to find a control group with identical needs to those students in the intervention group. Time constraints and student numbers prohibited the availability of a larger cohort thus allowing the study to be less advantageous.

Other limitations, which may have impacted on the results, were the consistent changing of rooms and the various times lessons were conducted. The lessons were also conducted over a three week period rather than an intensive 'five lessons a week' over a two week period.

Future Research

The raising of awareness, among teaching staff, of the importance of explicit teaching of comprehension strategies across all age levels, the importance of sequential teaching, and inclusion in curriculum in a developmental way, are issues for further investigation. School AIM and DART data indicates middle years students are at most risk, therefore plans must be put into place to address this issue.

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Appendix 1

READING SURVEY A

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

DATE OF BIRTH:_____

GRADE: _____

	Comfortable	Frustrated
How do you feel about reading at home?		
How do you feel when you read a book at school?		
How do feel about spending free time reading?		
How do you feel about reading a new book or story?		
How do you feel about predicting before you read?		
How do you feel when you come to a word you don't know?		
How do you feel when something you read does mot make sense?		
How do you feel when you are asked questions about what you have read?		
How do you feel about using a graphic organizer?		
How do you feel about yourself as a reader?		

Appendix 2

Reading Survey B

Name:_____
Date: _____

What do you do when you are given a story or book to read?

_____

_____

_____

_____

When you read the title of a story what do you do or think?

_____

_____
_____
_____

How do you pick up clues about a story you are going to read?

_____
_____
_____

_____

Using this line indicate how you feel about reading.
At home: 1_____**5**_____**10**
At school: 1_____**5**_____**10**

Indicate how well you understand what you read.

        1_____**5**_____**10**

What are predictions?
_____
_____

When reading how important do think it is to make predictions? Why?

_____
_____
_____

Appendix 3

LESSON PLANS

LESSON 1
Using Bloom's Taxonomy to create questions and makes inferences that will focus on the key elements of utensils and what they are used for.

Step 1.	Display a selection of kitchen utensils. E.g potato peeler, egg cup, tea strainer, egg ring etc. and encourage children to look at, feel and hold utensils.
Step 2	In groups children guess what each item is, what it is used for and why. Children make inferences for each utensil.
Step 3	Children share responses and document the use of each utensil.

Step 4	Give examples of sentences for students to practice making inferences for.
	 E.g Harry plays his guitar for two hours every day.
	    We bought tickets and some popcorn.
	    John was the star bowler but he has a broken hand

Step 5	Show cards with drawings on them. E.g A student falling asleep; Mum yawning. In groups children tell what might be implied or inferred by each of the pictures.
Step 6	Review. Students comment on what has been learnt in this session.

Lesson 2

Step 1	Children brainstorm strategies that good readers use. Children brainstorm strategies that good readers do to understand what they read. List responses.
Step 2	Share the purpose of the lesson. E.g Today I am going to focus on one of the strategy that good readers use to support comprehension of text. **Prediction.** What do you think this word means? Explain what you thing it is and how you use it.
Step 3	Introduce and model a 'prediction' using the title and cover illustrations of a text. Model a 'Think Aloud' of predictions /inferences using an appropriate text. Demonstrate background and prior knowledge of the topic.
Step 4	In pairs children choose a book from the displayed books and make predictions orally using the title and cover illustrations only. Children give reasons for their predictions
Step 5	Read stories and discuss students initial predictions and outcomes.
Step 6	Ask chn. "What have you learnt during the lesson?" "What were you thinking as you worked and what actions did you take?"

Lesson 3

Introduction	Re introduce prior lesson about the concept of prediction.
Step 1	Build background and prior knowledge about fishing. Demonstrate a 'Think Aloud' prediction using the <u>title</u> of a story. (See Appendix 6) We're going to read a story about " A fisherman's Jumper".
Step 2	Children, together attempt a similar strategy using a given title.
Step 3	Discussion about their interpretations about each individual word in the title.
Step 4	Teacher demonstrates how to complete a "Word Splash" using original title "A Fisherman's Jumper"
Step 4	Children together or individually make a 'Word Splash' and talk about their choice of words and why using title from Step 2.
Step 5	Teacher reads story and children complete 'Word Splash' (See Appendix 8)
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 4
Objective: To use a story starter, which creates a setting only but gives no idea about who might inhabit the setting or what types of characters , problems or complications might happen. Children use Bloom's Taxonomy to predict story.

Introduction.	Review previous lesson.
Step 1	Read short text. "A long time ago in a forest there was an old house. In that house there was an attic where packing boxes were spilling out their contents onto the floor which was littered with bits and pieces. It must have been a long time since anyone had been in there." (Appendix7)
Step 2	Analyzing the setting using Bloom's Taxonomy of 'Knowledge and Recall.' Where is the story set? Where is the attic? What is the attic like? When was the story set? Children discuss and record with captions or visually their responses onto one large sheet of paper. Encourage children to springboard from each other's responses and ideas.
Step 3	Analysis: Children predict : What sort of things might be spilling from the boxes? What smells might be noticed in the attic? What noises might you hear in the attic?
Step 4	Synthesis: Children predict: What characters might the author place in the setting? What kinds of problems or conflicts might occur in this setting?
Step 5	Evaluation: Children predict: What kind of story do you think the author intends to write? What makes you think this? Is this an interesting setting/ story starter? Why/Why not? Would you add anything to the setting? If so what would it be?
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 5

Objective: To teach children to make predictions using 'Mind Mapping'.
To help predict storyline children create a Mind Map by writing word/words to create a Mind Map using the five senses.

Step 1	Illicit prior knowledge and experiences about car/drag racing.
Step 2	Read the first two sentences of the story: "Sue Ellen had been watching her father race ever since she could remember. She loved watching the cars race along the short, straight track to discover which one had the fastest acceleration."
Step 3	Demonstrate the format of the mind map by writing the words 'Drag – Race- Day' in the middle of the board. Draw five branches from the bubble, one for each of the five senses and add words, images, phrases for each of the five senses. Teacher articulates 'out loud' her thought processes.
Step 4	Children create their own five senses Mind Map as a group. They add images or thoughts that come to mind as they read the sentences. For each prompt they are encouraged to use short captions, pictures or symbols in response to each sense or prompt.
Step 5	Children share responses and discuss reasons for any differences between them. (It may be interesting to indicate learning style or intelligence of each individual).
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 6
Objective: For children to use activities to explore the way in which settings may predict story moods or genre

Introduction	Review of previous lesson.
Step 1	Brainstorm and identify different types of story which are familiar to the children. Eg. Legends, fairy tales, mystery, horror etc Each type of story is written at the top of sheets of paper.
Step 2	Brainstorm/ predict ideas about time, settings, place .
Step 3	Play 'Hot Potato' game where on a given signal the papers are passed around to the next child. Each time span the child reads what has been written previously and adds extra ideas to the sheet.
Step 4	This process is repeated until all children have completed each sheet.
Step 5	Choose one prediction sheet and allow children to use the ideas, suggestions to predict a story line.
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 7
Objective: To use four of de Bono's Thinking Hats to encourage children to think about settings, moods, plots, times to support prediction of different types of genre.

Introduction	Review of previous lesson.
Step 1	Brainstorm , list as many different times for story settings. (White Hat) E.g Early one morning; During the dark ,black night A minute past midnight
Step 2	Children brainstorm/predict settings that mean something unpleasant is about to happen (Black Hat)
Step 3	Children brainstorm/predict settings that suggest 'good' things may happen. (Yellow Hat)
Step 4	Children brainstorm/predict some unusual possible story settings. (Green Hat)
Step 5	Each child uses one of the settings, writes it down, adds a time to the plot and reads it to a partner to predict an event. Children compare predictions.
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 8
Objective: To predict story line using visual images.

Introduction	Review of previous lesson.
Step 1	Children are given a black and white picture. This initial picture gives no indication of the time of day or mood of the setting etc. Children discuss picture using prior knowledge of content.
Step 2	After orientation of picture each child colours in the picture adding more detail and information to improve the scene indicating time of day and creating its mood. Before colouring it in children choose a de Bono Hat they will use to complete the scene. E.g. Whit Hat they will add more information and detail; Red Hat they will choose a mood or emotion and use appropriate colours to convey the mood.
Step 3	Children exchange pictures and predict a conflict that could be included in the story.
Step 4	Children exchange pictures again and suggest characters that could be included in the story line.
Step 5	These ideas can be later used to write stories.
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 9

Introduction	Review of previous lesson.
Step 1	Introduce story "Birthday Surprises" Orally discuss ideas and prior knowledge about birthdays .
Step 2	Complete a "Think Aloud" using the title.
Step 3	Children read the first part of the story and as they read they think about what might happen next in the story.
Step 4	Thinking about what you know about birthdays and what you have read children make a good guess about what might happen next.
Step 5	Children continue reading and see how close their guess was to what actually happens
Step 6	Children discuss where they found clues to their predictions
Step 7	Highlight where and how to find clues to help with predictions. E.g. Clues are frequently found in the title; in facts and details in a text, what characters say and do; clues may be found in pictures accompanying text.
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 10
Objectives: To link prior knowledge about a topic with information described in the text.
To link what children already know about clues and where to find them to support making good predictions.

Introduction	Review of previous lesson.
Step 1	Introduce the story 'Fishing on the Lake" (Appendix 4) Orientate the title by discussing what children already know about fishing.
Step 2	Children read the article about two brothers fishing on a lake.
Step 3	Children answer the following questions: Predict what kind of weather will most likely occur next? What will the boys most likely do next? Predict what would happen if the boys stayed on the lake? If the weather had not changed, the boys would probably have ……..
Step 4	Children give reasons for their predictions
Step 5	Children revisit the story and find clues in the story to support their predictions.
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning. Children talk about what it means to predict, how to do it and discuss its support when reading a story.

Appendix 4

A fisherman's Jumper

Long ago, on the green island of Ireland, a woman named Nancy lived with her husband, Ian. They lived by the blue Atlantic in a cozy stone cottage with a thatched roof. Six days a week, Ian rowed his fishing boat out to sea. Nancy stayed at home doing chores. When she had time, she knitted jumpers for Ian. Each jumper had a bold pattern.

One stormy day, Ian did not return on time. Nancy watched for him at the cottage window. She was afraid that Ian had drowned.

At last she saw someone in the distance. A man was walking toward the cottage. Nancy strained her eyes to see who it was. The man wore a jumper. Nancy recognized the pattern immediately.

Cited: Hawker Brownlow Education (2000) STARS Book 3

Fishing on a Lake

"Look at the sky," Peter said as he cast his fishing line from the front seat of the canoe.

His brother, Danny, glanced upward. The bright sunlight of the morning sky was gone. In its place were dark clouds, moving swiftly across the blue sky. "Where did all of those clouds come from?"

Peter shrugged. "I don't know, but they sure moved in quickly." Peter looked over his shoulder. The clouds were turning darker. "It looks like the weather is going to change."

"I agree," Danny said. A strong, warm breeze blew across his face. He tightened the cap on his head. "I wonder how long we should stay out on the lake."

As Danny spoke, a flash of light lit up the sky. "I don't know about you," Peter replied, "but I think we should head home *now*!"

Cited: Hawker Brownlow Education (2000) STARS Book 3

Appendix 5

HARRY PLAYS HIS GUITAR FOR TWO HOURS EVERYDAY.

WE BOUGHT SOME TICKETS AND SOME POPCORN.

JOHN WAS THE STAR BOWLER BUT HE HAS A BROKEN HAND.

SUE BLEW OUT THE CANDLES AND GOT PRESENTS.

MARY PLAYS HER FLUTE FOR TWO HOURS EVERY DAY.

THE BOAT DRIFTED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE.

JOHN WENT RUNNING INTO THE STREET WITHOUT LOOKING.

RASHEETA WAS THE STAR PITCHER BUT SHE HAD A BROKEN FINGER.

I FORGOT TO SET MY ALARM CLOCK LAST NIGHT.

WHEN I WOKE UP, THERE WERE BRANCHES AND LEAVES ALL OVER THE YARD.

YESTERDAY WE CLEANED OUT OUR DESKS AND TOOK EVERYTHING HOME.

EVERYONE STOPPED WHEN THE REFEREE BLEW HIS WHISTLE.

Appendix 6

Think Aloud Prediction Charts

Story: Sucked into the Sky

Sucked	
Into	
The Sky	

Story: The Ants At The Olympics

The Ants	
At	
The	
Olympics	

Story: Training For The Big Day

Training	
For	
The	
Big	
Day	

Appendix 7

Short Narrative Text

A long time ago in a forest there was an old house. In that house there was an attic where packing boxes were spilling out their contents onto the floor which was littered with bits and pieces. It must have been a long time since anyone had been in there.

Where is the story set?

Where is the attic?

What is the attic like?

When was the story set?

What sort of things might be spilling from the boxes?

What smells might be noticed in the attic?

Predict:

What characters might the author place in the setting?

What kinds of problems or conflicts might occur in this setting?

What kind of story do you think the author intends to write?

What makes you think this?

Is this an interesting setting / story starter? Why / Why not?

Would you add anything to the setting? If so what would it be?
                                                                    If not, why not?

Appendix 8

Word Splash

TITLE:

Words I would

keep	add	delete

Appendix 9

Story Map Prediction Chart

Before Reading Use text and illustrations	After Reading Fill in what actually happened
Setting:	Setting:
Characters:	Characters:
Problem:	Problem:
Main Events:	Main Events:
Ending:	Ending:
Theme:	Theme:

Appendix 10

Oral Synonym Test

Name: _____   **Date: _____**

Fast

Wish

Bad

Tiny

Noise

Fix

Cheer

Sure

Found

Annoy

Fast. The boy won the race because he ran very fast.

Wish. I wish we were on holidays.

Bad. Mary feels sick because she has a bad cold.

Tiny. The ant is a tiny insect.

Noise. I heard a strange noise.

Fix. I will fix the broken bike.

Cheer. I will cheer loudly for my team.

Sure. I am sure she will arrive on time.

Found. I found a hidden treasure.

Annoy. Dad told me not to annoy him.