

Explicit teaching of visualisation using the R.I.D.E.R strategy to Grade Prep students will improve comprehension and oral retell.

Abstract

Some Prep students entering school may become quite proficient at decoding and working at word level, but may experience difficulties comprehending.

When asked to retell a story, some students are unable to explain the story read in detail, or in a clear and succinct fashion, and this disconnection impacts on their engagement and understanding of text.

The hypothesis of this study is that explicit teaching of visualisation to Prep students, using the R.I.D.E.R strategy, will improve comprehension and oral retell.

Research suggests that explicit teaching, modelling and practise of various strategies improves a reader's comprehension of text. Visualisation is one comprehension strategy that encourages the reader to engage with the text by 'making or creating' images/pictures in their minds, assess the images/pictures created in relation to the information presented and then make changes if needed, allowing immersion with the text, thus affecting and improving comprehension and oral retell.

The study compares the results of two groups of Prep students: a 'Teaching' group (explicit intervention) and a 'Control' group (no intervention). The students were taught how to visualise using the R.I.D.E.R strategy.

The study's results support the hypothesis showing an improvement in the teaching group's ability to visualise and orally recall information in a clear, detailed and sequential fashion.

The results suggest that explicit teaching of visualisation, using the R.I.D.E.R strategy is definitely a successful strategy and it does improve a student's oral retell and comprehension of text.

The students taught to visualise (teaching group) achieved higher listening comprehension and visualisation outcomes than their peers (control group).

These results have direct implications for students that have difficulty with comprehension and oral retell.

Introduction

The most important thing about reading is comprehension. Reading comprehension can be a struggle for many students. Some students achieve limited success in reading by relying heavily on the strategy of decoding, and in most situations these same students demonstrate very basic literal comprehension skill and very basic retell of the text read. Students struggle to recall information, to 'link' information or make connections which will inevitably lead to low comprehension.

Research states that generally, comprehension could improve more if all readers were explicitly taught to use the comprehension strategies that 'good' readers use; and in order to achieve this it is the teacher's responsibility to model the 'when' and 'how' of the strategies used and then repeat opportunities for students for guided practise, which in turn will improve and increase a student's comprehension (Scharlach, 2008). As teachers, it is an ongoing challenge to meet the wide range of needs that exist within our classrooms.

Research states that through the teacher's daily teaching, modelling, explaining and facilitating and scaffolded practice, the student should begin to internalize all this new information which will inevitably lead to reading and comprehension success because it is with ongoing practise that the reading strategies, such as prediction, analysis, questioning, visualizing and paraphrasing, will become self-regulated. Students will be able to reach a level of metacognition where they will not only be able to use these strategies but also know where and when to apply them (Gurthrie, 2002 and Hilden and Pressley, 2007 – cited in Scharlach, 2008).

When considering the area of 'comprehension' we know that there is always a beginning stage. To be able to read, we need to comprehend, otherwise what's the purpose of our reading in the first place? Comprehension is quite complex since it is a process which involves knowledge, experience, thinking and specific teaching.

When a child begins to read, he starts with his knowledge of letters and then he needs to be able to decode the known letters into sounds and sound clusters, then he needs to transfer these sounds into words and words into sentences and sentences into paragraphs (Munro, 2011).

Harvey and Goudvis (2007) state that once all the above is in place, then it is in the reader's best interest that he understand what he reads. The reader needs not only to comprehend but to incorporate meaning and life experience into the text being read. The reader needs to make 'connections' of all the above. As teachers we are constantly reminded about the importance of oral language and how, basically, it is the foundation that not only reading but also writing is built upon (Munro, 2011).

Mills describes a student's oral language playing a crucial role in the acquisition of reading fluency and comprehension. Mills believes that a student's reading comprehension has more to do with their relevant prior experiences and knowledge of the topic, genre or vocabulary than their cognitive ability. A way in which we as teachers can improve a student's comprehension is to activate and support their mental files or prior knowledge before reading (Mills, 2009).

When considering oral language, it is also important to realise that each student starts school at a different stage of development and each student brings different language and life experiences with him (Munro, 2011).

Comprehension goes beyond the literal decoding of a text. Both Harvey and Goudvis (2007) believe that comprehension means that the reader not only thinks about what he is reading, but he also needs to be aware of what he is learning. When a reader constructs meaning, he must build his knowledge content and along with knowledge comes understanding. In order for a reader to become thoughtful and insightful, he must extend his thinking beyond a 'make shift/superficial' understanding.

Fountas and Pinnell also discuss how reading/comprehending is a very complex and multi tired process that begins and ends with meaning. It is a process where a reader must draw on both cognitive and linguistic features, as well as a range of information, not only inside the text but also outside the text. A reader must be able to do this in order to process continuous print and understand the print read (Fountas and Pinnell, 2001).

In light of the above, the question we now need to consider is exactly how important or crucial is teaching and using the strategy of visualising?

Munro (2011) believes that the visualising strategy assists readers with comprehending while reading (literal and informative) and after reading (inferential and evaluative).

It is a known fact that students who have trouble creating visual/mental images often experience comprehension difficulties and having low ability or low comprehension difficulties leads to the reader experiencing difficulty describing the pictures that he has created in his mind while reading. Verbal (words) and nonverbal (images) are intricately connected. A reader needs to be able to create images when he hears words and he needs to give these pictures 'words' or a 'description.' If these connections are not made between words and images, then comprehension is put at risk. If a student displays weakness in creating mental pictures, then weakness in reading comprehension will exist and this will cause weakness in oral language, verbal skills and critical thinking (Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson, 2009).

Initially, young students need lots of demonstrating and prompting by the teacher to use imagery and to describe the images made in their mind as clearly and detailed as possible. This process has a positive effect on learning and remembering and it provides a visible and explicit record of learning. Some studies suggest that young readers require direct instruction on how to use the strategy of visualising to help create pictures in their minds and this strategy, when taught explicitly will assist younger readers (in particular) with comprehending more efficiently while reading or listening to texts.

Making 'images' when reading links language and thought, it connects both the oral and written word and connects the reader to 'prior' knowledge and helps him access background information, establish appropriate vocabulary and then create and store information in both his short term and long term memory (Bell, 1991).

Bell continues by stating that readers who use images from which to speak, become more organised in their expressive language – they are more concise and more able to monitor their own language for relevancy and sequential logical thought expression (Bell, 1991).

“When children are taught to generate mental images as they read, they experience greater recall and enhanced abilities to draw inferences and make predictions, and thus comprehend” (Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson, Pg 34, 2009).

Bell specifies that visualising and verbalising involves comparing the identity and order of words in phrases and sentences through the images they present. Being able to compare the images then helps the reader to order and comprehend the information and concepts presented by the words he reads (Bell, 1991).

Research encourages that both verbal and visual mental imagery techniques should be incorporated in the ‘mix’ of strategies because they promote inferential linking, deeper engagement and improve interest in reading.

Research has found that when readers use mental imagery as a strategy, it results in improved reading comprehension outcomes. It is assumed that a student’s use of mental imagery actively links the information read in text to the reader’s own background experiences and provides a memory strategy that enhances recall and comprehension of the text. Woolley suggests that enhanced visualisations definitely lead to improved comprehension and coupled with this, focused discussion can further enhance the ‘vividness’ of mental images and improved comprehension (Woolley, 2010).

Using the R.I.D.E.R strategy with younger readers to assist with visualising (Read, Investigate/draw, Discuss, Evaluate and Read On), will encourage them to listen, imagine and also ‘draw’ their interpretations. Woolley suggests that the drawing aspect of visualising can be effective, it is goal directed and enables improved reading comprehension through the organisation of knowledge. Students who draw engage in a ‘more self monitored’ behaviour (compared to those students who don’t draw). When readers draw, selected elements are organised mentally and because of this, the reader is able to activate his prior knowledge and connect it to any ‘new’ understandings (Woolley, 2010).

A reader makes hypotheses which he retains visually and then the reader confirms or revises this information as ‘new’ information becomes available from the text he reads or is read to him (Tomlinson, 1993).

Miller also states that each reader is unique in his own way. Each reader comes with his own unique ‘background’, therefore by allowing the reader to draw, the teacher is able to ‘pinpoint’ any misconceptions that the reader may have and assist in correcting and amending it (Miller, 2002).

Images that are created by the reader can lead to ‘deeper’ levels of discourse and the reader achieves ‘experience’ of text and not just comprehension of information read. A reader’s task begins with a story of ‘pictures’ which he translates into ‘words’, adjusts and evaluates to comprehend. This is the visualising process and through the practise of ‘visualising’ the reader will be able to consequently comprehend and recall more and more. This will inevitably lead to motivation and success to read and comprehend.

When a reader visualises, he is actually constructing meaning by creating mental images and when he creates 'mental' images, he creates scenarios and pictures in his mind while he is reading. This level of engagement increases and his attention does not become obscured. Teaching readers to construct their 'mental pictures' while reading helps readers "become the book" (Harvey & Goudvis 2007).

The study undertaken will examine and investigate what effects the teaching of the visualisation using the R.I.D.E.R strategy has on a 'targeted' group of Prep students. The focus of the study is to evaluate the visualisation strategy (making pictures in one's mind) to assist in recalling and sequencing information and then to retell this information in detail, improving comprehension and recall, that is, to improve comprehension and at the same time assist and improve oral language.

The hypothesis is that the explicit teaching of visualisation using the R.I.D.E.R strategy to Grade Prep students will improve comprehension and oral retell.

Method

Student Information Table

Main Table Part 1)

Name	Control = 0 Teaching=1	Age in MONTHS	Gender 0=Male 1=Female	Years of Schooling	ESL No=0 Yes=1	LNSLN funding 0=SLD 1=ID 2=Asp	Earlier Intervention No=0 RR=1 Bridges=2 ERIK=3...	Record of Oral Language (March 2011) /42
A	1	69	0	1	0	0	0	11
B	1	65	0	1	0	0	0	12
C	1	67	0	1	0	0	0	11
D	1	69	0	1	0	0	0	10
AA	0	76	0	1	0	0	0	12
BB	0	73	0	1	0	0	0	12
CC	0	76	0	1	0	0	0	12
DD	0	65	1	1	0	0	0	9

Design:

This study uses a case study OXO design in which the gains in comprehension and the ability for oral retell are monitored following the explicit teaching of visualisation through the use of R.I.D.E.R strategy is monitored for a group of Grade Prep students. The study compares two groups of students, a Control Group (non teaching) and a Focus Group (intervention group).

The Participants:

The eight Grade Prep students chosen attend the same school which is situated in an inner Melbourne suburb. The students have varying degrees of comprehension and oral retell. Four of the students come from a straight Grade Prep classroom consisting of 21 students (Teaching Group) and the other four students come from another straight Grade Prep classroom consisting of 17 students. All students are third generation Australian with poor oral language which impacts on their ability for detailed and sequential oral retell. All eight students find it a challenge to keep 'focused' and sometimes struggle to listen attentively. None of these eight students are considered 'special needs or integration'. The main test that was used to select these children was the Record of Oral Language (ROL), which was completed in Grades Prep – 2 as part of the Literacy Advance Testing schedule (Catholic Education Office). All eight students selected scored between 9 and 12 out of a possible score of 42 on this test when compared to the remaining Prep cohort which scored between 20 - 42. All eight students are reading between Reading Recovery levels 1-3. Based on the above results and the above observations, the classroom teacher together with the Literacy Leader decided that these students would benefit from the opportunity to develop their comprehension and oral retelling skills through the use of explicit teaching of visualisation using the R.I.D.E.R strategy.

Materials Used:

All tests were administered on an individual basis. The students were withdrawn from their classroom environment and tested in another workroom, where no disruptions presented themselves. The duration of each testing session was approximately 40 minutes. The test was administered by the Literacy Leader who also works within the Prep level.

The following materials were used:

- Listening Comprehension Test (Munro, 2011) – both pre and post tests were administered. The students were asked to listen to a story which was read to them and then to retell what happened in the story in the right order. The sequence and detail given in the retell of the story was scored out of a possible score of 27.
- Visualisation Test – adapted for Prep Students (Munro, 2011) – both pre and post tests were administered. The teacher read one event and two event sentences to students. The students were asked to listen to the sentence/s, make pictures in their minds and then draw and explain their pictures. The visualisation test was scored out of a possible score of 18.
- Self Efficacy Test (Munro, 2011) – both pre and post tests were administered. Students were asked to answer questions on how they feel and see themselves as a reader. The student were shown five expressive faces ranging from extremely sad to extremely happy and asked to point to the face which best described their answer. The score of this test was out of a possible 6.

A series of 10 picture story books were used within the lessons to assist with the teaching visualisation using the R.I.D.E.R strategy.

- **Rosie's Walk** by Pat Hutchins
- **Where's the Green Sheep?** By Mem Fox and Judy Horacek
- **The Mermaid** by Lisa Thompson and Craig Smith
- **What come out of the egg?** By Colleen Carmody and Trina McDonald
- **Dinosaurs** by Rachel Griffith, Margaret Clyne and Sharon Madder
- **The Truck Race** by Sandra Iversen and Jo-Anne Ridgway
- **The Grumpy Troll** by Lisa Thompson, Luke Jurericius and Arthur Moody
- **Mountain Top** by Katy Pike and Luke Jurericius
Blake Education, 2010

Procedure:

At the conclusion of the testing schedule involving the Self Efficacy Test/Listening Comprehension and Visualisation Test adapted for Grade Prep students, the teaching group participated in an intensive 10 lesson teaching unit. The lessons were taught daily over a two week period. The lessons were conducted as a 'focus group' teaching in the Prep classroom within the Reading session of the Literacy Block.

Teaching Lessons (Appendix 1)

The teaching lessons were based on the Collin's model. The model has six principles of instruction, three of these principles are the responsibility of the teacher (modelling, coaching, scaffolding and fading) and three principles are the responsibility of the student (articulation, reflection and exploration). (Munro, 2011)

Lesson 1 began with a discussion on the student's interpretation of the term 'visualise' and the experiences referred to/used by the teacher were relevant to the age and interests of the students. The teacher modelled the visualising strategy to the students and the students were scaffolded to practise and discuss 'visualising' themselves, using the concepts of birthday cakes/presents and birthday parties.

The children's responses were collated into books and these books were and will be referred to continuously by the students within the Literacy block. The support and scaffolding was gradually faded to encourage the students to be as independent as possible.

Since the students within the teaching group are reading between Reading Recovery levels 1-3, the teacher read the one event sentences (and then two event sentences) to the students and then the students were encouraged to say/read the sentence themselves. To accommodate this, the R.I.D.E.R strategy also included an 'S' for 'say' before 'read' (the students were encouraged to 'read' the sentences with teacher support).

R.I.D.E.R cue cards and actions were used to allow the students to implement and remember the steps involved (Appendix 2)

S/R = let's say/read the sentence

I = let's imagine using our minds what is we see/what is happening?

D = let's describe and retell what we see in our minds
(encourage the Prep students to 'draw' what they see in their minds)

E =let's evaluate/compare our pictures to the sentence and see if the picture and words 'match'?

R =now let's read on

Within each lesson, the students were directed and encouraged to 'make pictures in their minds', then draw and describe their pictures. The students had to make sure that their description and their picture were the same. By lesson 7, the drawing component of the strategy was removed so that the students were encouraged to depend strongly on their oral description (detail and clarity).

At the beginning of each lesson, the students were asked to reflect and discuss what they had done and learned in the previous lesson. At the end of each lesson, the students were asked again what they had practised and learned. The four Prep students in the teaching group are frequently asked the question: 'What do good readers do?' on a daily basis. The students were asked to think about and explain how the visualising strategy helps them with being a good reader. This allowed the students to clarify why they were being taught the visualising strategy.

Storybooks were introduced in Lesson 3. The students were read one event sentences by the teacher and then repeated the sentence independently. Each storybook began with the visualising of the title. As the lessons progressed, the students were read/said two event sentences. The complexity and demands were increased by the teacher with strong support and scaffolding. Slowly these were removed to allow the students to demonstrate their learning independently and successfully.

At the conclusion of the 10 lessons, post testing was conducted in the similar manner as the pre testing. The time taken for the post testing was approximately 40 minutes (just as the pre testing). All data collected was tabled and graphed in order to analyse. Through the analysis, the effectiveness of the intensive 10 lessons was assessed and evaluated.

The students were asked to visualise by using drawings and explanations. Both the Listening Comprehension test and the visualising test results were analysed to determine whether or not visualisation, comprehension and oral retell reflected improvement.

Results

Pre & Post Test Results

Main Table Part 2)

Name	Control = 0 Teaching=1	Attendance No. of sessions	Visualize PRE /18	Visualize POST /18	Listening Comprehension PRE /27	Listening Comprehension POST /27	Efficiency PRE /6	Efficiency POST /6
A	1	10	9	17	13	17.5	6	6
B	1	10	4.5	17	9	24.5	6	6
C	1	8	7	15	4.5	17	5	6
D	1	10	10	17	8.5	17.5	6	6
AA	0	0	10.5	12	10.5	11.5	4	4
BB	0	0	8.5	11	3	5.5	6	6
CC	0	0	10.5	12	13	13.5	6	6
DD	0	0	3	6	3	3.5	6	6

Results (Main Table) indicate support for the hypothesis that explicit teaching of visualisation to Prep students, using the R.I.D.E.R strategy does improve comprehension and oral retell.

Out of the teaching group, student A, B and D attended all ten teaching sessions, whilst student C attended eight (due to a family holiday).

For both the control and teaching group, the data shows that there was overall improvement in the post test results when compared to the pre test results. The data also indicates that there is a greater improvement in the visualisation and listening comprehension for the teaching group, than the control group.

Post testing scores for listening comprehension and visualisation show improvement for the teaching group and slight improvement for the control group; although in the self-efficacy the control group show no improvement, whilst the teaching group showed a slight increase. Student C increased by one point, scoring five out of a possible score of six for the pre test and then a six out of six for the post test.

Visualise Test for Teaching & Control Group

Figure 1)

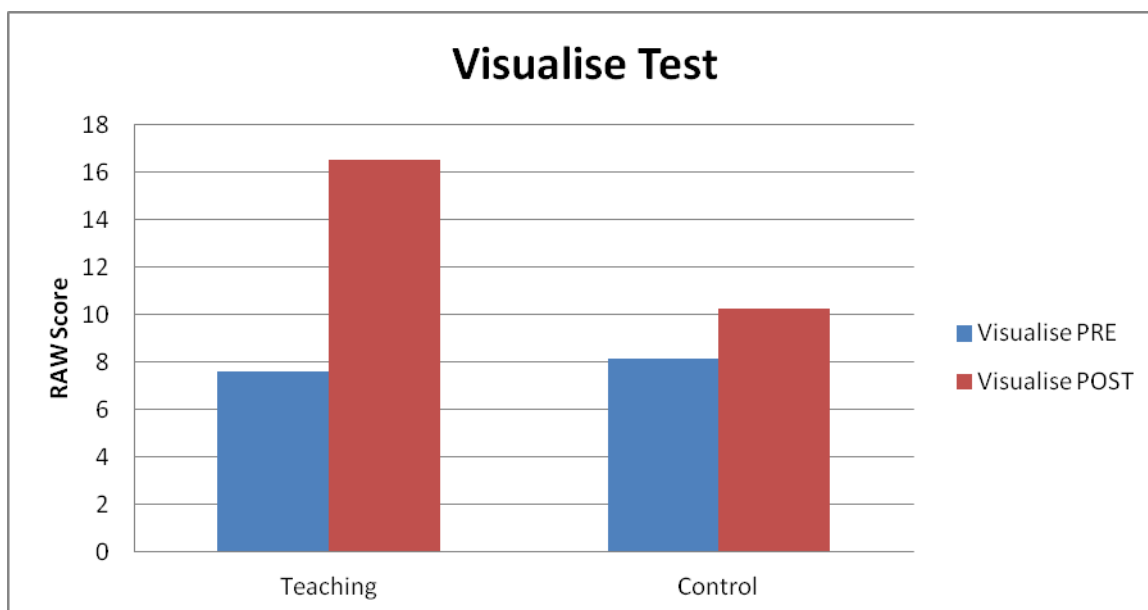


Table 1)

Student		Visualise PRE	Visualise POST	Percentage Increase
A	Teaching	9	17	88.89%
B	Teaching	4.5	17	277.78%
C	Teaching	7	15	114.29%
D	Teaching	10	17	70.00%
	<i>Average</i>	<i>7.63</i>	<i>16.50</i>	<i>116.39%</i>
AA	Control	10.5	12	14.29%
BB	Control	8.5	11	29.41%
CC	Control	10.5	12	14.29%
DD	Control	3	6	100.00%
	<i>Average</i>	<i>8.16</i>	<i>10.25</i>	<i>26.15%</i>

Figure one and table one show an improvement for all students. When considering pre test results, the teaching group scored an average of 7.63 out of 18 and the control group scored an average of 8.16 out of 18, which indicates that the starting level were very similar for both groups of students. In comparison, the post test results of the teaching group show an increase, with the scores being over double with a percentage increase of approximately 116.39%. The control group post test results, whilst still demonstrating improvement, only demonstrates an improvement increase of 26.15%.

Individually, student B showed the greatest improvement between the pre and post test results, increasing from 4.5 to 17 (out of possible 18), which relates to a 277.78% increase. Student AA and CC show the least improvement between the pre and post test results, with only a 14.29% increase. Student A showed a 88.89% increase between their pre and post test scores. Student C showed a 114.29% increase between their pre and post test scores, and student D showed a 70% increase between their pre and post test scores.

Student BB showed a percentage increase of 29.41% between their pre and post test scores, whilst Student DD showed the greatest improvement for the control group, with a 100% increase between their pre and post test scores. Although Student DD doubled their pre and post test scores, the post test score was 6 out of a possible 18, whilst the rest of the control group finished above 10 out of a possible 18.

Listening Comprehension Test for Teaching & Control Group

Figure 2)

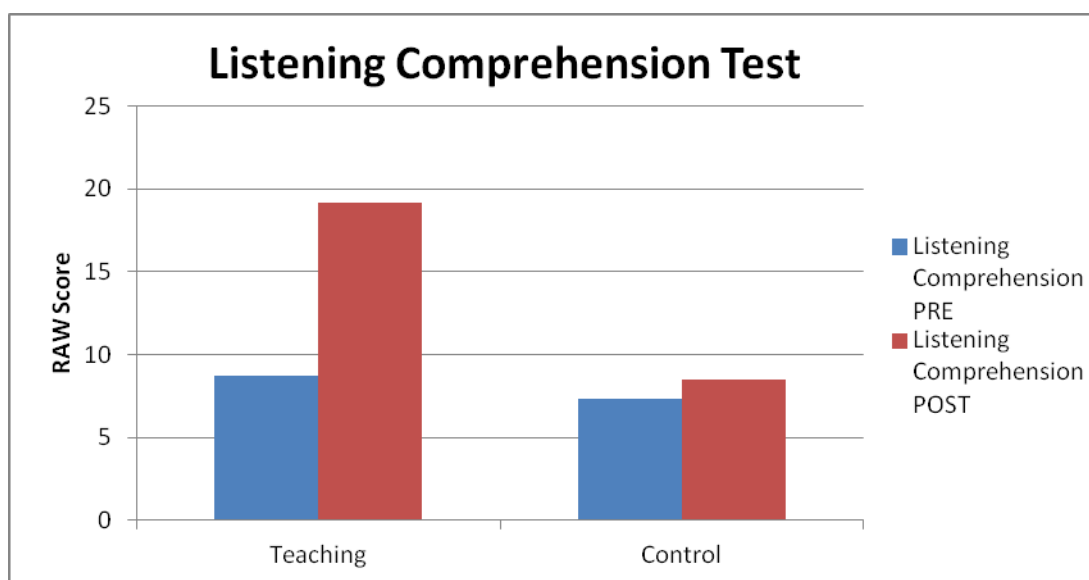


Table 2)

Student		Listening Comprehension PRE	Listening Comprehension POST	Percentage Increase
A	Teaching	13	17.5	34.62%
B	Teaching	9	24.5	172.22%
C	Teaching	4.5	17	277.78%
D	Teaching	8.5	17.5	105.88%
	<i>Average</i>	<i>8.75</i>	<i>19.13</i>	<i>118.57%</i>
AA	Control	10.5	11.5	9.52%
BB	Control	3	5.5	83.33%
CC	Control	13	13.5	3.85%
DD	Control	3	3.5	16.67%
	<i>Average</i>	<i>7.38</i>	<i>8.50</i>	<i>15.25%</i>

Figure two and table two show an improvement for all students. When considering the pre test results, the teaching group scored an average of 8.75 out of 27 and the control group scored an average of 7.38 out of 27, which indicates that the starting test results were similar for both the teaching and control groups.

In comparison, the average post test results of the teaching group show a percentage increase of 118.57%, whilst the average post test results for the control group shows a percentage increase of 15.25%.

The largest percentage increase was made by student C, who showed a 277.78% increase. Student CC, however, showed the least percentage increase with 3.85%.

Student A showed a percentage increase of 34.62% between their pre and post score. This is the least improvement for the teaching group. Student C showed an increase of 277.78% between their pre and post scores, which is the highest increase for the teaching group. Student B showed an increase of 172.22%, whilst Student D showed a 105.88% increase.

In the control group, Student BB showed the highest percentage increase of 83.33% between their pre and post test scores, whilst Student CC showed the least with 3.85%. Student AA showed an increase of 9.52% between their pre and post test scores, whilst Student DD showed a 16.67% increase between their pre and post test scores.

Despite Student BB showing a 83.33% increase between their pre and post test scores, their post test score was 5.5 out of 27, whilst Student A had a 34.62% increase, scoring 17.5 out of 27 in their post test.

Efficacy Test for Teaching & Control Group

Figure 3)

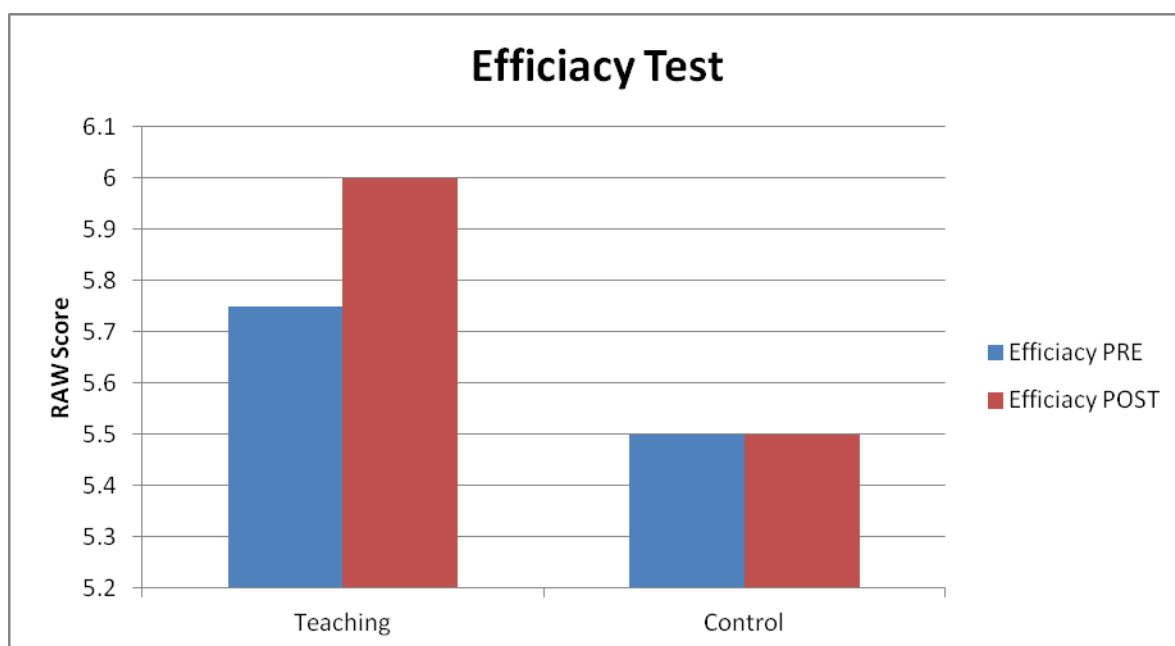


Table 3)

Name		Efficiency PRE	Efficiency POST	Percentage Increase
A	Teaching	6	6	0.00%
B	Teaching	6	6	0.00%
C	Teaching	5	6	20.00%
D	Teaching	6	6	0.00%
	<i>Average</i>	5.75	6	4.35%
AA	Control	4	4	0.00%
BB	Control	6	6	0.00%
CC	Control	6	6	0.00%
DD	Control	6	6	0.00%
	<i>Average</i>	5.5	5.5	0.00%

Figure three and table three do not show an improvement for any student for their pre and post test scores to be greater than 20%. The teaching group shows a .25 increase between their pre and post test scores, equating to a 4% increase on average, whilst the control group shows no improvement or decline.

Student C was the only student to show an increase between their pre and post test score, with a 20% increase, whilst all other students remained on the same pre and post test score.

Student AA scored 4 out of a possible 6 for both their pre and post test score, whilst Students A, B, D, BB, CC and DD scored 6 out of a possible 6 for their pre and post test scores. Student AA was the lowest scoring student in both the pre and post test score results.

Discussion

Mills specifies that the strategy of visualising uses the mind's capacity to imagine what is being communicated by the words, images, gestures, spatial layout and sounds within a text. (Mills, 2009)

On reflection of the results of this study there is proven evidence for the hypotheses indicated in this research which suggests that teaching Prep students visualisation through the R.I.D.E.R strategy improves comprehension and oral retell.

When considering the post test results of both the teaching group and the focus group (Main Table), it is fair to say that the Literacy program and strategies used within the Literacy block in both Prep classrooms, has had a positive impact on both groups of student's comprehension and oral retell, since the data shows an improvement. Although, it also needs to be acknowledged that the teaching group definitely made greater gains in both the Listening Comprehension post test and Visualisation post test when compared to the Control Group. On closer inspection of the results, it can be stated that the comprehension strategies used within the control group classroom had minimal impact in improving the listening comprehension and visualisation post scores of the four students concerned. Overall, the control group did not show noticeable improvement with their use of visualisation to assist them with comprehension of the text. This group of students were still unable to adequately describe events in detail to assist with their story retell (Listening Comprehension). The improvement percentage for the control group was an average percentage increase of only 26.15% (Table 1).

On the other hand, the explicit teaching of ten visualisation lessons using the R.I.D.E.R strategy with the teaching group, resulted in noticeable improved listening comprehension and oral retell ability for all four students involved. On average, the students showed an improvement of more than 116.39%.

The four students involved were able to create more complex and detailed sentences in the description of the visual tasks and retelling of specific events. These findings complement Scharlach's research in which she states that comprehension could and does improve greatly if all readers are explicitly taught to use, with guided practise the 'how' and the 'why' of comprehension strategies daily (Scharlach, 2008).

“.....studies consistently show that children who are encouraged to use visual imagery have improved performance on tests of comprehension and recall of material” (Marshall, A. 2011, page unknown). This quote proves true to the study undertaken with Prep students. In a short time (10 lessons), there was a great improvement in the students’ listening comprehension and their ability to recall and retell information. Appleton, through her research states that visualisation definitely plays a major role in helping achieve improvement in comprehension, retention and recall and encouraging students to visualise will consequently strengthen and motivate the student to read (Appleton, date unknown).

When looking at the Pre and Post Self Efficacy test scores (Figure 3 and Table 3) it can be assumed that all students displayed a level of confidence when it came to evaluating themselves as readers, all students’ scores remained quite even in both pre test and post test scores. Student AA was the only one who scored lower than any other student in this test, and his results showed no improvement at all. Student AA scored 4 out of 6 in both pre and post test. Perhaps it is important to mention that this child is fairly reserved and shy and keeps to himself as much as possible. The issue that needs to be addressed with this particular student is the lack of confidence that he has of himself, and his ability to see himself as a ‘good’ reader. Further intervention is a recommendation, perhaps focusing on ‘positive self talk’, with Student AA.

Perhaps it is also important to remember that all students tested are approximately five or six years of age and all students tested by me definitely displayed a level of confidence and self assurance when answering the self efficacy test questions.

Through observation, the students in the teaching group (Figure 1 and Figure 2) were far more confident in asking questions and being more concise with their descriptions, so it can be suggested that these particular students did become, in just ten lessons, more critical users of Literacy. Even though Student C only attended eight out of ten lessons, his absentee did not disadvantage his scores. Student C showed an increased percentage improvement of 114.29% in the visualisation test and an increased percentage improvement of 277.78% in the listening comprehension test.

Student D was very excited after teaching lesson 2. Student D made sure to tell me that he had gone home and while he read his reader with his mother he made lots of pictures in his mind to help him understand the text. He also went on to say that he now loved to make lots of pictures in his mind. He went on to explain he enjoyed using his imagination. This student also wrote visualising as his ‘Prep Reading Goal for Term 4.’ Student D was able to specify that making pictures in his mind

helped him understand the story better. Child D, according to Woolley, was able to use verbal information to help construct visual representations and enhanced visualizations lead to his improved comprehension (Woolley, 2010).

The teaching group showed more confidence and understood and added detail to their comprehension and oral retell. Their oral retells and descriptions were far more detailed and precise when compared to the control group. In reference to these results, we can assume that the students' (teaching group) use of mental imagery actively linked reading text information to their background experiences and provided a memory strategy that enhanced recall and comprehension of text (Woolley, 2010).

Small group focused and targeted teaching/learning is beneficial and the implication here is to make sure that all students within the school are given the opportunity to partake in and experience explicit teaching of the visualisation strategy, since it has been proven that explicit teaching and targeting specific needs does increase performance. Through focused and explicit teaching, the teacher engages with all students and is able to monitor individual progress. The teacher initially is the facilitator, allowing the students to direct and monitor their own learning. The teacher has the opportunity to monitor whether the student is able to implement the explicit strategy taught through all areas of the curriculum independently.

Students need to realise that it is of paramount importance and very beneficial that they understand what they read. Students need to move from decoding skills and sight word recognition to verbalising and internalising the knowledge that they gain from the text which they read.

In summary, the explicit teaching of visualisation to the teaching group resulted in improving listening comprehension and oral retell of all students involved. The group of students showed improved ability to recall details of what they had listened to. The teaching group, as a whole, were able to visualise images and then change their created images to include new information. The students within the teaching group were able to clearly visualise what was happening in their 'minds' and felt empowered to be able to do so. If there was a disconnection between the story (text) and the image in their mind, they were able to adjust and refine their image quite effectively. Tomlinson states that visualisation plays a major role in helping a student achieve improvement in comprehension, retention and recall. The reader makes hypothesis from a text, which he retains visually until the images are confirmed or revised as new information becomes available to him via the text (Tomlinson as cited in Appleton, 1993). It was quite powerful to listen to five and six year olds explain and describe the process undertaken by them as readers, to create images and how

they then recall this information and made links to their personal experiences, to assist them with comprehension.

The intension now and the future implication is to implement this explicit teaching of visualisation using the R.I.D.E.R strategy with all Grade Prep students within the school, so that all students are given the chance/opportunity to incorporate the visualisation strategy within their repertoire of strategies that all 'good' readers use. Due to the students being in their first year of schooling, it would be a strong recommendation to continue (at different stages/points), to monitor the images/pictures that they create in their mind and then allow them to draw and explain through illustrations. In following this process, it gives the teacher the opportunity to 'keep an eye' on the student's accurate alignment of images to the text read.

All students across the school, including the Prep cohort, need to be given the opportunity to self-monitor their own learning, become proficient, automatic and independent when comprehending a text. Receiving feedback from teachers who implement this intervention would also prove worthwhile in monitoring and adapting the lessons to accommodate all grade levels.

It is also important to incorporate the visualisation strategy within all areas of the curriculum and to continue to explicitly teach and increase complexity of all comprehension strategies such as predicting, inferring, questioning and evaluating. These strategies will definitely assist all students with comprehending the text which they read, which in turn will lead to overall reading success.

Resources

Story Books

Rosie's Walk

Pat Hutchins
Red Fox Book, 2007

Where's the Green Sheep?

Mem Fox and Judy Horacek
Penguin/Viking, 2004

The Mermaid

Lisa Thompson and Craig Smith
Blake Publishing, 2007

What come out of the egg?

Colleen Carmody and Trina McDonald
Scholastic, 1996

Dinosaurs

Rachel Griffith, Margaret Clyne and Sharon Madder
Horwitz Martin Education, 2001

The Truck Race

Sandra Iversen and Jo-Anne Ridgway
Macmillan Education, 1999

The Grumpy Troll

Lisa Thompson, Luke Jurericius and Arthur Moody
Blake Education, 2009

Mountain Top

Katy Pike and Luke Jurericius
Blake Education, 2010

R.I.D.E.R Cue Cards (Appendix 2)

Tests

Munro, J.K. Self Efficacy Test. (Literacy Intervention Strategies 2011).

Munro, J.K. Listening Comprehension Test. (Literacy Intervention Strategies 2011)

Munro, J.K. Visualising Task adapted for Prep Students. (Literacy Intervention Strategies 2011)

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Munro, J.K. Literacy Intervention Strategies, EDUC 90247, Lecture Notes, 2011.

Scharlach, T.D. (2008). *START Comprehending: Students and Teachers Actively Reading Text*. International reading Association.

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Appendix

Student Information Table Part 1 & 2

Name	Control = 0 Teaching=1	Age in MONTHS	Gender 0=Male 1=Female	Years of Schooling	ESL No=0 Yes=1	LNSLN funding 0=SLD 1=ID 2=Asp	Earlier Intevention No=0 RR=1 Bridges=2 ERIK=3...	Record of Oral Language (March 2011) /42
A	1	69	0	1	0	0	0	11
B	1	65	0	1	0	0	0	12
C	1	67	0	1	0	0	0	11
D	1	69	0	1	0	0	0	10
AA	0	76	0	1	0	0	0	12
BB	0	73	0	1	0	0	0	12
CC	0	76	0	1	0	0	0	12
DD	0	65	1	1	0	0	0	9

Name	Control = 0 Teaching=1	Attendance No. of sessions	Visualize PRE /18	Visualize POST /18	Listening Comprehension PRE /27	Listening Comprehension POST /27	Efficiency PRE /6	Efficiency POST /6
A	1	10	9	17	13	17.5	6	6
B	1	10	4.5	17	9	24.5	6	6
C	1	8	7	15	4.5	17	5	6
D	1	10	10	17	8.5	17.5	6	6
AA	0	0	10.5	12	10.5	11.5	4	4
BB	0	0	8.5	11	3	5.5	6	6
CC	0	0	10.5	12	13	13.5	6	6
DD	0	0	3	6	3	3.5	6	6

Appendix 1

Visualising Lessons using the R.I.D.E.R strategy

Lesson 1

The focus of this lesson is for the students to gain an understanding of the strategy of 'visualising.'

Before introducing 'visualising', allow the children to re cap on other strategies that 'good' readers use.

Teacher to ask: 'What are all the *good* things that we as readers do?'

Students share.

Teacher to collate list.

Teacher to ask students what their understanding of the word 'visualise' is?

Students share their understandings.

Teacher to draw and write children's responses.

Teacher to model '*visualising*' a birthday cake.

Teacher begins by talking about a birthday experience with the students.

Teacher to build on student's background knowledge.

Teacher describes the birthday cake that she *sees/visualises* in her mind.

Teacher describes the colour of the cake, the shape of the cake and the decorations on the cake.

Teacher draws her cake on the Starboard for the students to see.

Teacher asks 'Does my birthday picture look like the birthday cake I described to you?' Discuss.

Teacher asks children to close their eyes and imagine a birthday cake just like she did.

Teacher asks: 'Can you see a birthday cake in your mind? Describe it to me'.

As students describe their cake, teacher encourages students to draw their cake.

Teacher asks 'Does your birthday cake picture look like the birthday cake you described?' Discuss.

Discussion focus: Students should become aware that the picture they created in their minds should match/look the same as what they described.

Teacher asks children to 'visualise' something else at a birthday party.

Encourage the students to *make a picture in their mind* (teacher to use this phrase)

Students may want to close their eyes to assist with this.

Students to share their *mind pictures* with the rest of the group.

The children draw what they visualised and describe it to the rest of the group (pictures will be collected and teacher will scribe the students' descriptions).

Teacher asks the students: 'Does your explanation/description look like your picture?'

Reinforce that the pictures that were created in their minds should match/look the same as what they described.

Reflection Questions:

- What did we do today?
- What did we learn?
- How does what we learnt today help us?
- How does visualizing help us to become better readers?

Children to complete sentence:

“Today I

.....used my mind to create a picture.

Lesson 2

Re cap on Lesson 1.

The focus of this lesson is for the students to continue to gain an understanding of ‘visualizing’ through the introduction and use of the R.I.D.E.R strategy.

What is visualising?

What did we do?

What did we learn?

Teacher to introduce S/R.I.D.E.R strategy using cue cards and one event sentences.

(This particular group of Prep students are reading around Reading Recovery Levels 1-3. The teacher will read the sentence to the students and then support them to read the sentence independently; therefore “S” will be included at the beginning of the R.I.D.E.R strategy. (‘S’ for say).

Teacher to let students know that she will demonstrate a *special way* to help with visualising (making pictures in our minds using cue cards).

Teacher to display sentence:

“The girl blew out 6 birthday candles on her cake.”

Using R.I.D.E.R prompt cards the teacher will model the R.I.D.E.R strategy for the above sentence.

S/R = let’s say/read the sentence

I = let’s imagine using our minds what is we see/what is happening?

D = let’s describe and retell what we see in our minds
(encourage the Prep students to ‘draw’ what they see in their minds)

E =let’s evaluate/compare our pictures to the sentence and see if the picture and words ‘match’?

R =now let’s read on

Students now practise, with teacher support the S/R.I.D.E.R strategy on another sentence:

“The girl unwrapped one of her birthday presents.”

Reflection Questions:

- What did we do today?
- What did we learn?
- How does what we learnt help us?
- How does visualising help us to become better readers?

Children to complete this sentence:

“Today I”

.....used the R.I.D.E.R strategy to help me visualise the sentence/story

Lessons 3

Recap on Lesson 2.

The focus of this lesson is for the students to continue to reinforce their understanding of ‘visualising’ through the use of the R.I.D.E.R strategy.

“What did we do/use to make pictures in our mind/visualise?”

Revise the R.I.D.E.R strategy with the students using the prompt cards.

Teacher to introduce an action or gesture that may assist the students with remembering the steps involved in the R.I.D.E.R strategy.

Storybook: **Rosie’s Walk**

Pat Hutchins

R.I.D.E.R strategy will be used for the entire book and students will work on one sentence at a time (including title).

No illustrations will be shown.

Teacher to begin by reading the title first and then the remaining sentences to/with the students.

Students to practise: (with teacher support)

S/R = let’s read the title/sentence

I = let’s imagine using our minds what is happening

D = let’s describe and retell what we see
(encourage students to ‘draw’ what they see)

E = let’s evaluate/compare our pictures to the sentence and see if the picture and words ‘match’?

R = now let’s read on

Reflection Questions:

- What did we do today?
- What did we learn?
- How does what we learnt help us with reading?
- How does visualising help us to become better readers?

Children to complete this sentence:

“Today I

.....used R.I.D.E.R to help visualise the story of **Rosie’s Walk**.

Lesson 4 – 10

These lessons will follow the same format as Lesson 3.

The focus of these lessons is for the students to continue to reinforce their understanding of ‘visualising’ through the use of the R.I.D.E.R strategy.

Lesson 4

Storybook:

Where’s the Green Sheep?

Mem Fox and Judy Horacek

From Lesson 5 onwards, the teacher will encourage students to work as independently as possible (teacher to ‘step back’):

- **“Show me what you will do?”**

- **“Show me how you will do it?”**

Lesson 5

Storybook:

The Mermaid

Lisa Thompson and Craig Smith

Lesson 6

Storybook:

What come out of the egg?

Colleen Carmody and Trina McDonald

Lesson 7

The teacher to remove the ‘drawing’ element at this lesson.

Storybook:

Dinosaurs

Rachel Griffith, Margaret Clyne and Sharon Madder

Lesson 8

Storybook:

The Truck Race

Sandra Iversen and Jo-Anne Ridgway

Lesson 9

Storybook:

The Grumpy Troll

Lisa Thompson, Luke Jurericius and Arthur Moody

Lesson 10

Storybook:

Mountain Top

Katy Pike and Luke Jurericius

Appendix 2



D

Describe



E

Evaluate



