

*The explicit teaching of visualisation to Year 2 underachieving students,
using the R.I.D.E.R strategy, improves oral retell and
reading comprehension of fiction text.*

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ABSTRACT

Reading comprehension continues to be a problem for many students in the younger years. Their emphasis is on the decoding of words, and comprehension is neglected. When they are asked to retell or answer questions related to the text, they cannot recall details and lose meaning.

The hypothesis of this study is that, explicit teaching of Visualisation to Year 2 underachieving students through the R.I.D.E.R strategy, improves oral retell and reading comprehension of fiction texts. Current research on comprehension suggests that teaching students strategies such as visualisation can improve their comprehension.

There were eight matched Year 2 participants in this study, four students were withdrawn from the classroom and took part in the investigation and four were used as a control group. Ten 40 minutes lessons were conducted over a two-week period during the literacy block. The students learnt the Visualisation strategy through cue cards, actions, oral and written tasks.

Comprehension and performance of both groups was compared at the conclusion of the study. The research supported the prediction that explicit teaching of Visualisation improved comprehension and oral retell.

These results have implications for teaching students who have reading comprehension and oral retell difficulties. They suggest that teachers need to ensure they have an appropriate teaching model in place with explicit teaching. In order to cater for the needs of the cohort, a balanced reading program, with the inclusion of decoding and comprehension strategies with appropriate grouping structures is necessary.

INTRODUCTION

The ability for students to read and synthesize prose is paramount in order for them to become effective functioning members of society. The journey to become comprehenders is for some, fraught with obstacles. They have to navigate a sea of information in its various forms, written, visual and oral. Many students in the lower primary level, have difficulty with the bombardment of information, due to their restricted knowledge of, and appropriate application of, comprehension strategies such as visualising, to aid their understanding and involvement in the text.

All too often these students' efforts go towards the decoding of words, which are laboured over and take up valuable working memory, distracting them from making meaning. Conversely some students read fluently but are unable to create mental images that relate to the text, Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, (2003). This lack of meaning could be overlooked due to the students' rate and level of fluency, Yuill, N. & Oakhill, J, (1991). However once students orally retell the text, and engage in conversation the gaps in their comprehension becomes evident.

According to Munro (2008) in order for meaning to be acquired successfully, the integration and automatization of word, sentence, conceptual, topic and dispositional level knowledge need to be in place. Underpinning these levels of knowledge are self-management and control strategies, and their existing oral language and experiential knowledge.

Students' difficulties in comprehension arise if their early knowledge acquisition is not adequately developed. This begins with their oral language, phonological, phonemic, orthographic, and semantic knowledge, from coding sounds to letters, recognising sound patterns in words to manipulating sounds in more complex ways. This is directly linked with reading words. As they progress along the developmental sequence for learning unfamiliar word meanings their sentence meanings become more complex. At this stage, students learn to apply strategies to aid comprehension such as visualising, paraphrasing, scanning texts, predicting and self-correcting or rereading to clarify information and link ideas across the text (Munro, 2011). Munro (2011) cites Bell, McCallum and Cox (2003) which suggest that impacting on reading acquisition are a number of influences such as, auditory processing and phonological awareness skills, short-term auditory and visual memory, rapid automatized naming and visual processing speed.

As mentioned there are a range of factors that restrict reading. For this study we examine the effects of explicit teaching of visualisation to improve comprehension and oral retell.

Applying an explicit model of instruction facilitates more effective visual comprehension learning in students who struggle. Explicit teaching is focused and direct, initially providing a high level of scaffolding then gradually releasing responsibility to the student. This provides students with step-by-step explanations, modelling, engaging in guided practice then independently applying the strategy (Rupley, Blair & Nichols, 2009).

The ability for students to visualise and create images in their minds, is a powerful strategy that facilitates comprehension, as noted by Mills (2009), cites Guerrero, 2003; Sadoski & Paivio, (2001). Many students are able to visualise whilst reading, while others have to be explicitly taught the strategy. This strategy uses the mind's ability to imagine what is being communicated by words, images and gestures to form mental imagery, which then secures new ideas in a reader's mind by linking conceptual thoughts to a concrete experience or image. This strategy requires students to be taught to recall ideas in a visual way (Mills, 2009). The ability for students to recall ideas involves them selecting the most important information, making personal connections and representing the information in a logical sequence. This can be challenging for children who have short-term memory difficulties. However explicitly teaching the visualisation strategy helps us retain ideas in short-term memory (Munro, Date unknown)

Visualisation can be taught using the R.I.D.E.R strategy. This procedure was designed to teach the visual imagery strategy to improve comprehension in learning disabled students by Clark, Donald, Deshler, Schumaker, Alley& Warner (1984). The stages are -

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| R – READ | Read or listen to a sentence or paragraph |
| I – IMAGINE | Make a picture in your mind of what was read |
| D – DESCRIBE | Describe the image |
| E – EVALUATE | Check that the image matches the text |
| R – REPEAT/READ ON | Read on the next part of the text |

Clarks findings demonstrated that this explicit teaching procedure could be taught to students to increase their reading comprehension. Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson (2003) cites

Anderson's (1971) research shows that students who struggled with comprehension who were taught to use mental imagery of events in sentences learned two to three times as much as those who continually read the sentences aloud. The use of mental imagery also led students to recall information in more detail and increase their ability to draw inferences and make predictions. These students are not only taught to create images in their mind but to evaluate those images to match the words in the text. If this doesn't occur they need to know when to use appropriate strategies such as reread to enable this to take place Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson (2003).

Students could also be supported and teachers can gain an insight into their level of comprehension by enabling them to initially sketch their images. This helps them to clarify, compare and adjust their understandings against their peer's images, which provides a visible and specific record of their understandings, Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson (2003) cites McConnell, 1993.

Using a multisensory approach helps embed the procedure in students memory. Students not only see images they hear or read sentences, the inclusion of actions to represent words will give them another tool to use. Munro (Date unknown) stated, that acting out can help students to see how ideas are logically connected. This demonstration may be helpful for younger students; whereas older students may require visual imagery alone (Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, 2003).

The actions, visual imagery and oral retell scaffolds students in helping to activate prior knowledge to improve comprehension. The student's ability to orally retell is a valuable device used to gain meaning from text as it encourages students to organise and remember the sequence of important ideas. Retelling a story shows a student's ability to recognize the story's main events (Klinger et al., 2007, cited in Rader, 2010).

Encouraging students to visualise then verbalise their images helps them to process, organize, and store new information. When students change the mental images back to words, the verbalization process helps to let others know what they are thinking and how much they understand Rader, (2010). This notion is further supported by Woolley, (2010, page 119), he states 'Reading comprehension is enhanced when visual and verbal instructional techniques are integrated and linked in the working memory'.

The cohort of students for this study is predominantly from an 'English as a Second Language' (ESL) background. These students have poor attention skills and have difficulty

following instructions at times. Their ability to retell often highlights their restricted word bank, which maybe reflected in poor oral language, Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, (2003). This often presents a quandary if students are struggling solely with ESL, the text itself or formulating images. Woolley (2010, page 116) further supports the notion that 'vocab knowledge underlies all learning and is one of the significant predictors of reading comprehension'. As educators we need to be mindful of these students knowledge and the ambiguities that may arise that cause confusion. These students need to be encouraged to clarify and discuss mental images to increase vocabulary, which impacts on comprehension.

A visualization program together with oral retell will motivate these students to identify, develop and utilize their ability to visualize and retell in order to comprehend.

This proposition that visualisation is accessible to young children is not supported universally. Freeman, Robertson & Outhred (1999) cites Guttman, Levin and Pressley, (1977) state that, making mental images is difficult for children younger than eight. This could be due to young readers, trying to decode and generate images at the same time. Freeman, Robertson & Outhred (1999) cites Oakhill and Patel, (1991) that there is evidence that students of this age do not create imagery but need to be instructed in its use.

The current investigation aims to examine the influence of specific instruction in Visualisation using R.I.D.E.R strategy, by creating mental imagery to improve comprehension and oral retell, in Year 2 underachieving students.

Hypothesis

The explicit teaching of visualisation to Year 2 underachieving students, using the R.I.D.E.R strategy, improves oral retell and reading comprehension of fiction text.

METHOD

DESIGN

The study uses a naturalistic design, in which gains in comprehension and oral retell following explicit teaching of visualisation through the R.I.D.E.R strategy will be monitored for a group of Year 2 students who are displaying difficulty in comprehension. This study compares two groups of students, a control group and an intervention group. Data was collected during the pre and post-test period and analysed to see how the two groups compared.

PARTICIPANTS

The participants selected for this study attend the same Catholic primary school and are in a straight year two classroom. They range in age from 7- 8 years and are in their third year of schooling. Two groups of 4 students were selected, 4 in the investigation group and 4 in the control group, all of which have a history of comprehension difficulties. The intervention group was selected based on discussions with the classroom teacher and their low Neale comprehension results. The control group was selected from a different year 2 classroom with similar ability and comprehension results.

The students all displayed similar reading ability. Three out of the eight students received Reading Recovery in Year One, however only one participant was in the intervention group. The participants consisted of five females to three males, with slightly more females than males in the control group. There were six English as Second Language (ESL) participants as opposed to two non-ESL participants. There were three ESL students in both groups. There was only one student in the control group receiving Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and one student in the intervention group with a severe language disorder, receiving Language, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs funding (LNSLN).

Participant characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Participant Characteristics

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...	EMA No=0 Yes=1
A	1	94	1	3	1		0	0
B	1	89	1	3	0	0	0	0
C	1	95	0	3	1		0	0
D	1	97	0	3	1		1	0
AA	0	98	1	3	1		1	0
BB	0	89	1	3	0		0	0
CC	0	97	1	3	1		1	0
DD	0	94	0	3	1		0	1

MATERIALS

Materials used in this study include the following:

Formal Assessments for pre and post-testing:

Visualising Task – Group Administration (Munro, 2005) refer to Appendix B

This test was administered in a whole group setting to both Intervention and Control groups. It was used as a pre and post-test to compare gains in visualisation ability as result of intervention. Refer to Appendix B for scoring.

Listening Comprehension Task – Individual Administration (Munro, 2004) Refer to Appendix C

This test was administered individually to both Intervention and Control groups. It was used as a pre and post-test to compare gains in listening comprehension ability as result of intervention. Refer to Appendix C for scoring.

Neale Analysis of Reading Ability Task – Individual Administration (Neale, 1999)

This test was administered individually to both intervention and control groups. It was used as a pre and post-test to compare gains in comprehension ability, word accuracy and reading rate as result of intervention. It provides qualitative information and standardized scores.

Informal Assessments:

Images drawn during sessions were analyzed for inclusion of ideas.

Texts:

The texts were easy, Year 2 appropriate using, the Fry Readability Scale.

The following texts were used to teach Visualising to the Intervention group:

Lesson	Text	Author
3	The picnic Tree	Jacque Kilkenny
4	The picnic Tree	Jacque Kilkenny
5	The Pony Club	Jay Dale
6	Pet Day	Margaret McAlister
7	Peppers Adventure	Beverley Randell
8	Late for the Party	Jackie Tidey
9	The Hospital Party	Dawn McMillan
10	Matt's Good Idea	Jenny Giles

Visual Aides:

Set of visual cues for R.I.D.E.R strategy (Appendix E)

Writing/Drawing Aides:

Whiteboard and textas

Picture Box sheet and grey lead pencils, to draw images

Props:

Camera

Teaching Sessions:

Set of 10 lesson plans (Appendix E)

PROCEDURE

The Assessment tasks were administered to the Control and Intervention students before and after the intervention, in a quiet environment at their school. In both pre and post-testing the students were assessed in the following order:

Individually:

Neale Analysis of Reading Ability task,

This includes the assessment of reading accuracy, comprehension skills and rate of reading. Students read a passage whilst the administrator completed a running record and timed their reading, directly afterwards they were asked several questions.

Listening Comprehension task,

This includes the assessment of comprehension and oral retell. Administrator read students a short passage then immediately afterwards students retold information, whilst administrator wrote it down to cross check against story grammar criteria.

Group administration:

Visualisation Task,

This assesses students visualising and comprehension skills while reading. The students were required to read one or two sentences and make a mental image of the sentences then write a sentence describing what they imagined. Marks were allocated according to synonyms and paraphrasing used by the students.

The students in the Control group continued with their standard literacy class sessions. The students took part in whole class, group and individual sessions using strategies such as guided reading, independent reading activities based on guided reading text, paraphrasing and synonym work as it has become a whole school focus.

Students in the intervention group were withdrawn from their regular classroom mid term 3. The teaching sessions were conducted in a separate room, five times a week over a two-week period, for 40 minutes in the second hour of the literacy block in the morning. Detailed lesson plans are found in Appendix E. A brief overview of the lessons follows.

The teaching sequence for all sessions was based on John Munro's Comprehension Intervention strategy for Visualising (2011), using the Collins, Brown & Newman (1989) model. This model requires the teacher to be responsible for modelling the task, coaching and guiding the students providing prompts and feedback then finally scaffolding and fading out, reducing the cues for support as students increasingly complete the task independently. There was also an expectation for the student in the sessions to take responsibility for their learning. At the end of each session the students reflected on what they had learnt. Articulation of what they had learnt and when and how to apply it to new tasks helped them clarify their understanding and gave the teacher valuable insight as to when to reduce scaffolding.

Each lesson included three distinct stages –

Before reading activities- at this stage students and were orientated to the text and got their knowledge ready

During reading activity- at this stage students were visualising, reviewing and comprehending as they read.

After reading activity- at this stage students reviewed their knowledge.

The teacher began with selecting texts, which were scaled according to Fry's Readability Scale to ensure they were at an easy year two level. It is important that readability be easily managed by the students when teaching a new strategy – Visualising, so that the students are not struggling with decoding which could impede the successful uptake of the new strategy.

The intervention session began with the explicit focus of the visualisation strategy by tapping into their prior knowledge. Topics or ideas used were those that students were familiar with, such as the zoo and the farm, as students had been on excursions to these places. The teacher modelled the prompt ' In my mind I can see....' then described her image. The students were asked to read the sentence aloud together and imagine and describe their images individually, using the prompt as a scaffold. This gave the teacher the opportunity to observe the detail in the student's descriptions. The students were explicitly led to draw links between mental imagery used, as an aide to remembering the content in the text.

The teacher proceeded to write a one-event sentence and modelled sketching the image where the emphasis was on the ideas in the sentence, not the artwork. She then modelled checking if the image matched the sentence. The students repeated the procedure with another sentence, this time sketching their own images and describing their illustrations to the class then matching them to the sentence. The session concluded with the students articulating and reflecting on their new knowledge.

The second session commenced with students recalling and clarifying their understanding of visualisation and its purpose. The R.I.D.E.R strategy was introduced then each stage of the strategy was modelled using visual aides (Appendix E) along with actions for each acronym as this helps students embed the strategy in their long-term memory. The students read the sentence aloud together, and then applied the strategy to two event sentences. Individually they sketched, described and evaluated images. The session concluded as the previous session.

Lessons three to six followed a similar format with increasing text length. Scaffolding began to be reduced with student no longer sketching images. However, visual aids were still made available to support the process for students who had difficulty. The teacher modelled the new step, orally describing ideas in the sentence, and then the students repeated the procedure. The teacher also modelled retelling the text in order, then the students repeated the procedure.

Lessons seven to ten involved the fading out of support so that students could apply the strategy independently. Students read each paragraph silently then visualized the ideas and described their idea to the group. By session ten they individually visualised each paragraph and wrote a description of what they imagined using synonyms to paraphrase the images in their mind.

The Control and Intervention students were post-tested at the end of the two-week teaching session. This data was then collected and collated, into tables and graphs, which were compared and analysed to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching sessions.

RESULTS

Trend group and individual data indicate support for the hypothesis that explicit teaching of visualization using the RIDER strategy for Year 2 students will improve reading comprehension of fiction text and oral retell. All students in the Intervention group improved in their results, the Control group didn't make as many gains.

Table 2: Individual Students Test Results for Neale

* Average scores rounded

Students	Accuracy				Comprehension				Rate				
	Intervention	Raw Score Pre	Raw Score Post	% ile Rank Pre	% ile Rank Post	Raw Score Pre	Raw Score Post	% ile Rank Pre	% ile Rank Post	Raw Score Pre	Raw Score Post	% ile Rank Pre	% ile Rank Post
A		28	38	21	38	9	11	19	26	114	47	99	42
B		38	40	38	44	8	12	15	34	67	108	65	99
C		41	41	48	52	10	15	22	53	45	49	39	44
D		27	38	19	38	6	16	11	59	32	28	19	16
Average		33	39			8	14			65	58		
Control													
AA		22	28	15	21	6	6	11	11	66	80	64	85
BB		25	23	18	16	4	4	7	7	30	33	16	21
CC		24	27	17	19	8	8	15	15	57	51	54	45
DD		27	29	19	22	9	8	19	15	59	78	56	84
Average		24	27			7	7			53	60		

Table 3: Individual Students Test Results for Listening Comprehension and Visualising

Students	Listening Comprehension		Listening Comprehension		Visualising Task		Visualising Task		
	Intervention	Raw Score Pre (6)	Raw Score Post (6)	% age Pre	% age Post	Raw Score Pre (32)	Raw Score Post (32)	% age Pre	% age Post
A		2	5	33	83	11	17	34	53
B		1	3	17	50	13	20	41	63
C		4	5	67	83	5	15	16	47
D		3	4	50	67	13	22	41	69
Average		3	4	42	71	11	19	33	58
Control									
AA		3	3	50	50	5	6	16	19
BB		1	3	17	50	5	7	16	22
CC		4	5	67	83	10	12	31	38
DD		2	4	33	67	7	8	22	25
Average		3	4	42	63	7	8	21	26

The post-test results for Table 2 shows that the Neale Analysis Intervention group had out performed the Control group in both accuracy and comprehension. However the Control group had out performed the Intervention group with the reading rate.

The pre test reading accuracy average for the Intervention group was 33, whilst the Control group was 24. The post-test data for reading accuracy shows that both groups trend data was up. The Intervention group on average increased by 6 points whilst the Control group increased by 3 points. The Intervention group doubled the increase of the Control group.

The pre test reading comprehension average raw score for both groups was similar, with the Intervention group at 8 points and the Control group at 7. The post-test average results for the Intervention group were 14 points which shows an improvement of 6 points. In contrast the Control group showed no improvement.

The pre test rate average raw score showed the Intervention group at 65 points and the Control group at 53 points. The post-test reading rate average displayed a reverse trend for the two groups. The Intervention group decreased by 7 points whilst the Control group made an increase of 8 points.

The post-test Individual raw scores trends shows that most scores had improved in reading accuracy, comprehension and rate.

For the Reading Accuracy Task, in the Intervention group, student D achieved the greatest improvement with a pre test score of 27 and a post-test score of 38, an increase of 11 points. Student C 's pre and post-test score hadn't changed receiving the same score of 41 for both tests. Student B also made gains of 2 points. The Control group students showed increases and declines in scores. Student AA showed the greatest increase of 6 points for the group, whilst students CC and DD improved by 2 and 3 points respectively. Child BB score declined by 2 from 25 to 23 points.

For the Comprehension Task in the Intervention group, student D showed the most improvement with an increase of 10 points. Student A, B, C improved by 2, 4, 5 respectively. In the control group student DD showed a decline in score of 1 points whilst students AA, BB, CC showed no improvement from their pre test score.

For the Reading Rate the scores were interesting, as the previous trend of the Intervention group scoring higher results were somewhat reversed. For the Intervention group student A had the greatest decline in score, it reduced by 67 points, student D also experienced a decline of 4 points. Students B and student C results increased by 41 and 4 points respectively. The Control group students results had mostly all increased. Students DD and AA score improved by 19 and 14 points respectively whilst student BB improved by 3 points however student CC score reduced by 6 points.

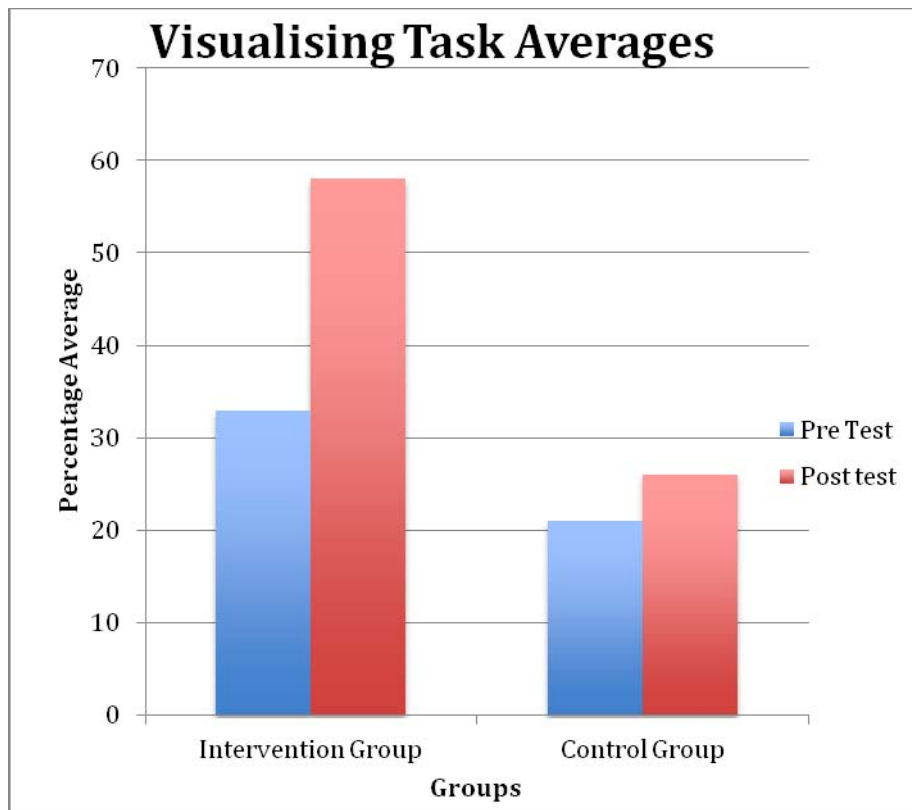


Figure 1: Visualising Task Averages

The average Visualising Task group results for the Intervention and Control groups demonstrates an upward trend for both groups. The pre test results for the Visualising Task Averages, for the intervention group was 33% and for the control group 21%. There was a 12% difference between the two groups. The post-test results for the Visualising Task Averages demonstrates both groups showed improvement. The gains made by the Intervention group were, however greater than those of the Control group. The Intervention group scored 58% as opposed to the Control group, which scored 26%. The total improvement for the Intervention group and for the Control group was 25% and 5% respectively. This gives the Intervention group a total increase of 20% above the Control group.

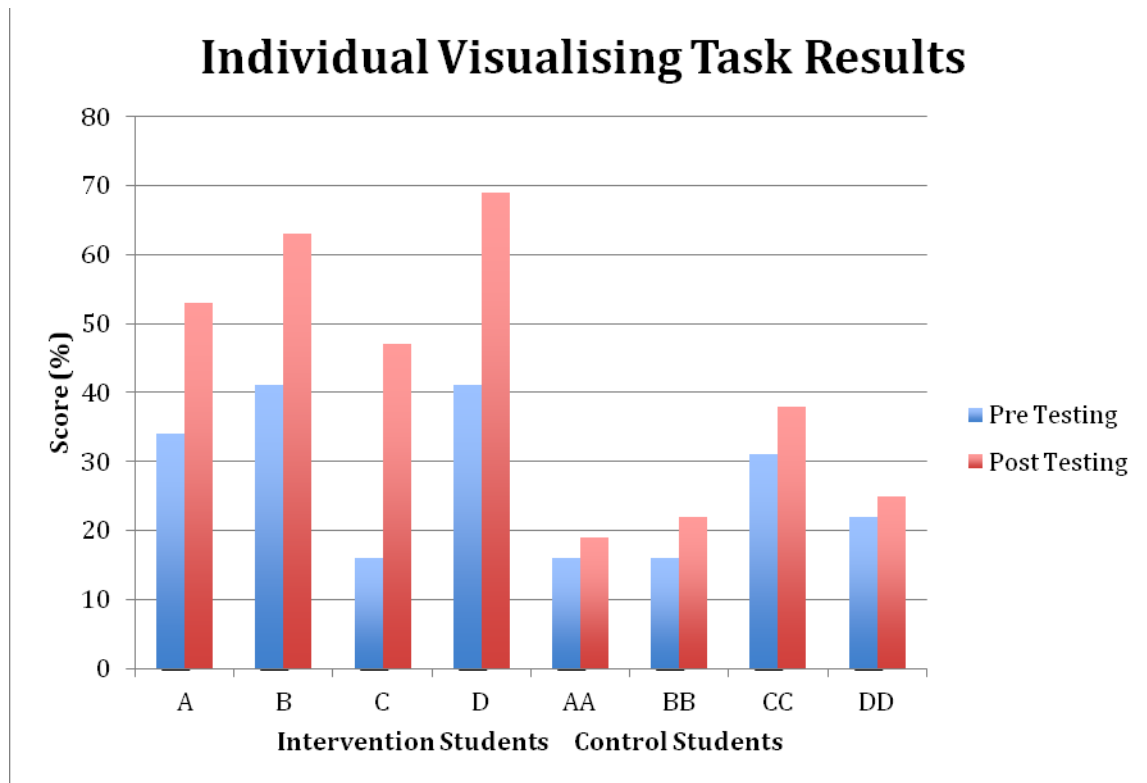


Figure 3: Individual Visualising Task Results

All individual students in the Intervention and Control groups showed improvement for the Visualising Task. Individual student results indicate that each student in the Intervention group made an improvement between 33% and 19%, in comparison the control group only made an improvement of between 3% and 7%. Interestingly Student C in the Intervention group had the same score in the pre test as students AA and BB of the Control group of 16% but his gains were 33% as opposed to 3% and 6% of the Control students. The greatest gains overall were made by students C and D of the Intervention group and the least improvements were made by students AA and DD of 3% in the control group.

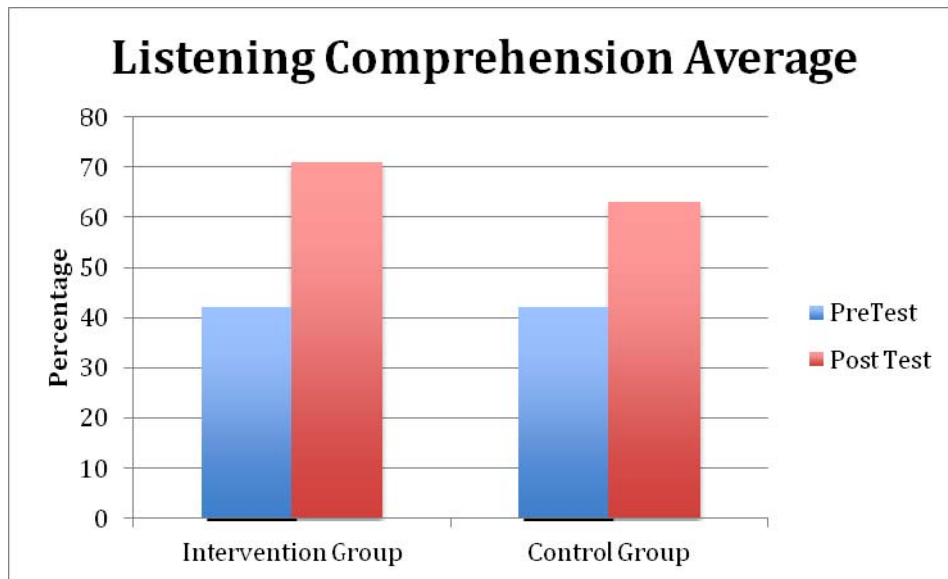


Figure 4: Average Listening Comprehension scores for Intervention and Control Group

The Listening Comprehension group averages for the pre test results for the Intervention and the Control Group were evenly matched at 42%. The post-test results followed the increased trend of the previous tests. The Intervention group averages improved by 29% whilst the Control group 21%. That is an 8% increase by the Intervention group over the Control groups' average score.

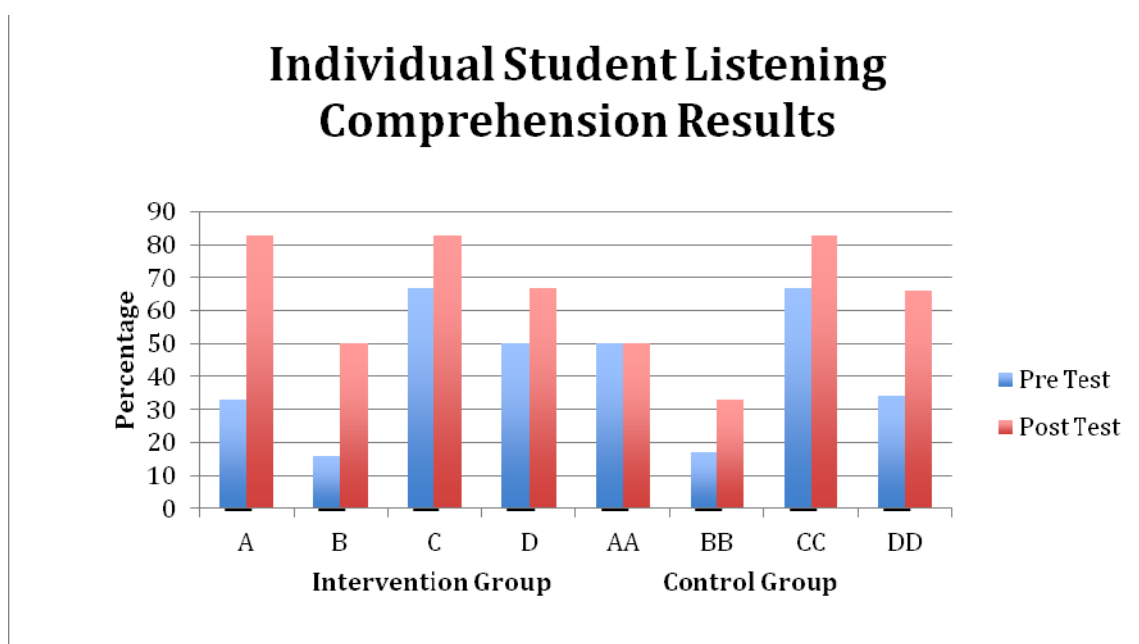


Figure 5: Individual Test Scores for Listening Comprehension

Individual results for Listening Comprehension showed that all students in the Intervention group improved their results. In this group students C and D showed an improvement of 17% whilst student B improved by 34%. It was student A, who had the greatest increase of 50%.

The Control group showed that most students improved in their post-test results. Student AA pre and post-test results however showed no improvement at 50%. Both students BB and CC improved by 16% and student DD had the greatest improvement at 32% for the Control group in their post-test results.

Summary of Individual Learning Trends for all Assessment tasks (Refer to Tables 2 and 3)

In the Intervention group student,

A's trend data had increased in all tasks except for reading rate where a decrease was noted.

B's trend data had increased in all tasks.

C's trend data had increased in all tasks except for reading accuracy, which demonstrated no change from pre to post-test.

D's trend data had increased in all tasks except for reading rate where a decrease was noted.

In the Control group student,

AA's trend data had increased in most tasks except for reading comprehension and listening comprehension task, which demonstrated no change from pre to post-test.

BB's trend data increased in all tasks except for reading comprehension, which demonstrated no change from pre to post-test.

CC's trend data increased in some tasks except for reading comprehension where no change was noted and reading rate where a decrease was noted.

DD's trend data had increased in most tasks except for the reading comprehension where a decrease was noted.

Students	Comprehension		Visualising Task		Listening Comprehension	
	Raw Score		Raw Score		Raw Score	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Intervention						
A	9	11	11	17	2	5
C	10	15	5	15	4	5
D	6	16	13	22	3	4
Average	8	14	10	18	3	5
Control Group						
AA	6	6	5	6	3	3
CC	8	8	10	12	4	5
DD	9	8	7	8	2	4
Average	8	7	7	9	3	4

Table 4: ESL Students Pre and Post-test

The Intervention ESL students overall showed a greater improvement than the Control group. However in the Listening comprehension the Intervention groups improvements when compared to the Control group were slight. ESL students average post-test results for the Intervention group in comprehension showed a 6 point improvement as opposed to the Control group that showed a 1 point improvement. ESL students average post-test results for the Intervention group in the Visualising Task showed an 8 point improvement compared to the Control group that showed a 2 point improvement. ESL students average post-test results for the Intervention group in the Listening comprehension showed a 2 point improvement whilst the Control group showed a 1 point improvement.

DISCUSSION

Upon reflection on the results of this study, there is evidence to support the hypothesis that explicit teaching of visualization using R.I.D.E.R to underachieving year 2 students improves reading comprehension and oral retell. Comparisons made between the Control and Intervention group support this hypothesis. The Intervention group showed an improvement in the Comprehension, Visualising and Listening comprehension tasks, whilst the Control group showed little if any improvement with these tasks.

Support for the prediction is evident in the post-test results conducted, in particular the Visualisation Group Task, where the results of the Intervention group showed a 25% increase in students visualizing ability as opposed to the Control group, which showed a 5% increase. This increase is linked to the Neale Analysis comprehension task where student's results increased by an average of 6 points in the Intervention group and no average improvement was noted for the Control group. The Listening Comprehension Task results show that the Intervention group average increase was 29% as opposed to the Control groups' increase of 16%. It appears that the teaching of visual imagery, the R.I.D.E.R strategy directly impacts on these positive trends.

These positive upward trend results for the Intervention groups and individual students are supportive of the prediction. The explicit teaching of lessons with release of support, scaffolding and the gradual transfer of learning independence to the student facilitates deeper comprehension. This model of teaching and learning was applied to all lessons and was developed by Collins, Brown, and Newman (1989). The structure of the model enabled both the teacher and students to have a clear understanding of their responsibility. This model is consistent with research conducted by Rupley, Blair & Nichols, (2009). Woolley, (2010) research similarly shows the importance of the lessons routine, in which discussions before, during and after reading encourage students to automatise the strategy. After discussions with the class teacher it was evident that the class teachers do not follow this model and this may partially account for the Control group's result.

The withdrawal of the participants from the classroom was an advantage for these at risk students. There was no background noise to detract from the sessions. The students were fully engaged, easily supported and felt safe in this environment. The use of the cue card prompts enabled the students to be scaffolded. They were able to remember the R.I.D.E.R acronym and used actions to help them remember to logically sequence the stages or ideas, as stated by Munro (Date Unknown). The 10 sessions also aided the repetition and automatisisation and consolidation of the strategy. The students were able to repeat the strategy initially scaffolded by the picture cue cards then by memory and actions alone. The reflection by the students at the end of each session also reinforced the meaning and application beyond the group session. It is important that students not see this strategy in isolation and only to be applied during this withdrawal group but rather applied in the classroom and at home when reading alone or in a group.

The results from teaching the visualization strategy indicates that R.I.D.E.R appears to scaffold students by applying a set of sequenced procedures that enabled the students to increase their results by 25%. In the initial stages of the lessons they were able to; discuss their illustrations and evaluate their imagery, make connections with their prior knowledge and recall information in more detail with the group. During the sessions their drawings gave the instructor an insight into their understandings. It appeared that they were able to represent most detail in one event sentences however when there were two event sentences they either disregarded or only included drawing items from the first event. This was also the case for some students even after they orally described their imagery. It was only after many sessions of using the R.I.D.E.R strategy; in particular after the evaluation of their images did they understand and improve their comprehension. The view that teaching visualisation appears to accelerate improvements in comprehension is supported by research, Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, (2003), cites Anderson, (1971). The implication for the class teacher would be not to underestimate the importance of the strategy, in particular, the initial drawing of mental imagery, the description and the evaluation, as it gives the teacher a glimpse into students comprehension, it could therefore be implemented with at risk students.

The ESL students increased results in the Intervention group appear to be attributed to the visualising and oral retell strategy, incorporated into each session. One could surmise through the student's anecdotal records that some of their responses needed clarifying and showed poor or confused item knowledge; this is supported by research by Hibbing &

Rankin-Erickson, (2003). It was noted during the lessons that the ESL students could read the text fluently however didn't know the meaning of certain words, which were beyond their experience such as 'rug' or 'parade'. The R.I.D.E.R strategy scaffolds these students, enabling them to clarify word meaning against other student's responses. As this occurred students word bank increased and they became more confident without the threat of making a mistake in front of their class. The retell component also enabled them to practice logically sequence ideas and articulate their comprehension. This explicit teaching wasn't available to the Control Group explaining their low results. Further investigation is necessary with larger cohorts of participants to confirm this conclusion.

Interestingly the Reading Rate task in the Neale assessment showed that the Intervention group did not follow an upward trend as was evident in other assessments. In fact three out of the four Intervention students decreased their results whilst three out of the four Control group students increased their results. This could be attributed to the Intervention students learning a new strategy ie, R.I.D.E.R. Learning a new strategy could cause them to slow their rate down whilst they are applying the strategy as it involves several steps before it becomes automatised. This correlates with the Intervention groups increased comprehension. However although the Control groups average rate had increased, their comprehension had not. This suggests that they were not slowing down their processing rate to learn a new skill. The implications for future teaching practice when focusing on comprehension is that the teacher needs to be aware of this trend in order to ensure that the reading rate improves. This could be achieved through reading together, timed reading or students recording their reading.

Students in this study were predominantly around 8 years old. The students' age could influence the results, as younger students struggle with the ability to form mental imagery. Even though the Intervention groups results were higher than the Control group, explicit teaching is necessary for mental imagery to be fully realized. This is supported in the research by Freeman, Robertson & Outhred (1999), cites Guttman, Levin and Pressley, (1977), who states that younger students have more difficulty simultaneously decoding and visualising than older students because they are mentally overloaded. The Control groups pre and post-test Accuracy results were below average with a stanine of 3 (Refer to Appendix A) whilst most students in the Intervention group either stayed the same or increased from below average to average. The average improvement for both groups was 2 to 3 points in the Accuracy task, which is decoding, whilst the average improvement in

the Visualising task varied. The Intervention group improved by 8 points as opposed to the Control group that improved by 1 point. This would suggest that explicit teaching of younger students is necessary to improve visualisation that impacts on comprehension, hence no change in comprehension scores for the Control group.

Further research into the impact of age on visualisation should be undertaken in order to replicate the study with younger readers of between six and seven. As this could impact on teachers assumptions that young students can focus on decoding and visualising at the same time, as reflected in the control groups struggle to make great gains in both areas. This could influence teachers knowledge of teaching a new skill such as visualisation which requires texts to be at an easy readability level for the child, so that students efforts are not divided.

It became evident that when students were orally retelling the sentences or describing their mental images they were applying familiar strategies such as paraphrasing and using synonyms. This suggests good classroom teaching that facilitates comprehension acquisition is in place. However the Control group results implies that visualisation needs to become part of the strategies at risk students can draw upon and use in conjunction with and not isolated from other strategies in order to scaffold comprehension.

A limitation of this study was the group size. Further research into the direct implications of teaching the whole class as opposed to a small group Visualisation to improve comprehension would further give teachers the best possible structure to work with. The increased sample size would enable the calculation of the results effect size, this would give more accurate data for the study. Future research into the impact of teaching Visualisation over a longer period of time, taking into account participants' age, ESL and teaching model should be undertaken. This could have implications for teaching visualisation for at risk readers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Excel Data- Student information

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...	EMA No=0 Yes=1	Attendance No. of sessions
A	1	94	1	3 years	1			0	10
B	1	89	1	3 years	0	1		0	10
C	1	95	1	3 years	1			0	10
D	1	97	0	3 years	1		1	0	10
AA	0	98	1	3 years	1		1	0	0
BB	0	89	1	3 years	0			0	0
CC	0	97	1	3 years	1		1	0	0
DD	0	94	0	3 years	1				0

Name	Neale Accuracy Raw Score		Neale Accuracy %tile Rank		Neale Accuracy Stanine	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
A	28	38	21	38	3	4
B	38	40	38	44	5	5
C	41	42	48	52	5	5
D	27	38	19	38	3	4
AA	22	28	15	21	3	3
BB	25	23	18	16	3	3
CC	24	27	17	19	3	3
DD	27	29	19	22	3	3

Name	Neale Comp Raw Score		Neale Comp %tile Rank		Neale Comp Stanine	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
A	9	11	19	26	3	4
B	8	12	15	34	3	4
C	10	15	22	53	3	5
D	6	16	11	59	3	5
AA	6	6	11	11	3	3
BB	4	4	7	7	2	2
CC	8	8	15	15	3	3
DD	9	8	19	15	3	3

Name	Neale Rate Raw Score		Neale Rate %tile Rank		Neale Rate Stanine	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
A	114	47	99	42	9	5
B	67	108	65	99	6	9
C	45	49	39	44	4	5
D	32	28	19	16	3	3
AA	66	80	64	85	6	7
BB	30	33	16	21	3	3
CC	57	51	54	45	5	5
DD	59	78	56	84	5	7

Name	Listening Comp (6)		Listening Comp %age		Visualising Task (32)		Visualising Task %ag	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
A	2	5	33	83	11	17	34	53
B	1	3	16	50	13	20	41	63
C	4	5	67	83	5	15	16	47
D	3	4	50	67	13	22	41	69
AA	3	3	50	50	5	6	16	19
BB	1	3	17	33	5	7	16	22
CC	4	5	67	83	10	12	31	38
DD	2	4	34	66	7	8	22	25

Appendix B

Visualising Group Task Adapted from John Munro

Scoring System (for description stage of RIDER)

At the completion of reading (or listening to) each sentence, ask the student to paraphrase the sentence in his/her own words.

Give 2 points for a sentence that has been reworded, and the student has substituted more than 50% of the words in the sentence (using synonyms).

Give 2 points for a sentence in which the order of the words within the sentence has been changed and meaning has been maintained. (Some synonyms may also be used.)

Give 1 point for a sentence that has had less than 50% of the words in the sentence have been substituted with synonyms.

Give 0 points if a sentence is complete, or does not maintain meaning.

Note: Students can only gain points if the meaning of the sentence is maintained.

Student name: _____ **Grade:** _____ **Date:** _____

Sentence	Teacher	Your try
A toy maker went to live in another city.	This person who makes toys moved to a new town.	
He wanted to find a place to live.		
He needs to get to know the city.		
After he bought a map he looked for a bus.		

Sentences

Your mind picture

1. The young man and his friend rode on the bike.
- 2 They were enjoying themselves.
- 3 The birds were singing in the trees.
- 4 The two friends chatted. They were not paying attention to anything.
- 5 They were supposed to watch where they were going.
- 6 The track became narrow and twisted.
- 7 Suddenly it began to slope down and the bike sped up.
- 8 People in the park watched and gasped as it went faster and faster.
- 9 The two riders weren't smiling and chatting any longer.
- 10 Now they were gripping the bike as tightly as they could, showing fear on their faces.
- 11 People in the park had stopped what they were doing and started to yell, "Stop" or "Be careful."
- 12 All of a sudden the path goes around a sharp curve.
- 13 Ahead they see in the middle of the path, a huge stone.
- 14 The closer they get to it, the more enormous it becomes.
- 15 As they fly towards it, their hearts are beating louder and louder and they try to take avoidance action.
- 16 There is loud thud, the front wheel crumples and the young couple is airborne, flying over the obstacle to the grass on the side of the path.

Appendix C

Listening Comprehension

- Instruction to student: *I am going to read you a story. Listen carefully. When I have finished I am going to ask you to tell the story back to me.*
- Read the first story below aloud to the student. Read it as a story.
- When you have finished, ask the student to tell you what happened. Say *Now tell me the story. Say all you can about it. Try to retell the story in the right order.*
- If required, use prompt, *Can you tell me any more* or *What happened next?*

Jane was at school and went out to sit on the seats and eat her lunch. As she opened her lunch box, it fell over and her lunch went on the ground. Jane wondered what she was going to do. Her sandwiches now had dirt all over them. She told her friend, Susan. Susan took one of the sandwiches from her lunch-box and shared it with Jane. After lunch, Jane and Susan went into the playground and had a good time playing chasey.

Write down the student's immediate story retelling as accurately as possible
General prompt/s provided: Yes / No If yes, how many prompts?

*** The student needs to retell events in narrative sequence to be awarded points.**

	✓/X		✓/X		✓/X
Jane		at school		went out	
sit		on seats		ate lunch	
opened lunch-box		fell over		lunch on ground	
sandwiches		dirt		Jane wondered what to do	
told friend		Susan		Susan took sandwiches from her lunch-box	
shared it with Jane		after lunch		Jane and Susan	
went into playground		had a good time		playing chasey	

Score: / 21

The student needs to retell events in narrative sequence to be awarded points.

Story Grammar	✓ or X
1. Setting (<i>school, playground</i>)	
2. Initiating Event (<i>Jane dropped her sandwiches</i>)	
3. Internal Response (<i>Jane wondered what to do</i>) OR	
3. Internal Plan (<i>She decided to tell someone</i>)	
4. Attempt (<i>She told her friend Susan</i>)	
5. Consequence (<i>Susan gave her a sandwich</i>)	
6. Ending (<i>They went off to play</i>)	

<p style="text-align: center;">Comments on Performance:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Score:

/ 6

Appendix D

Lesson Plans- Adapted from John Munro,2006 Visualizing Lessons

The students have recently been on an excursion to the farm and have been working on this topic in class. Sentences selected because of prior knowledge.

Lesson 1

Duration – 40 minutes

Text - One event sentences

Materials – Grey lead pencils, Picture Box sheet, Whiteboard, Whiteboard markers

Before Reading –

Today I am going to teach you something that will help you to remember and understand what you read. It is called Visualizing. *Show students a 'V' action with your hand.* It is like taking a picture with a camera or making a movie in your mind. Teacher holds up a camera and asks, *When have you or your parents used a camera? Why? Visualising, is like taking pictures with a camera it helps us to remember what we read, by making pictures in our mind.* This is what you do. After you have read a sentence, you make a picture of it in your mind and say what the picture is.

Example

I want you to think about the zoo. Make a picture in your mind about what you see at the zoo.

Teacher writes on the whiteboard and models response aloud '*In my mind I can see... a black and white zebra eating grass near a fence.*' Students then take turns naming what they can see using the prompt. They are encouraged to give detail.

While Reading –

- Teacher shows and reads a sentence aloud to students;
On the farm Mary fed a pony hay.
- The teacher sketches quickly what she sees emphasizing the ideas are important then tells the students;
In my mind I can see Mary giving the tiny pony some hay on a farm.
- Teacher shows and encourages students to read new sentence aloud;
The chicken has laid an egg in the hen house
- The teacher checks for meaning;
What is a hen house?
- Students sketch image in their minds on picture box sheet and are told the emphasis is on the ideas, then describe it to the class
- As students describe picture using the prompt the teacher ticks words/ideas in sentence that match the picture
- Process is repeated with another sentence
The horse jumped over the fence to eat some grass

After Reading –

- Students Reflection

1/ What they have learnt? Why?

2/ What do you know now that you didn't know before?

3/ How and when can you use what you have learned in new tasks?

Lesson 2

Duration – 40 minutes

Text - One and two event sentences

Materials – Grey lead pencils, Picture Box sheet, Whiteboard, Whiteboard markers, R.I.D.E.R posters

Before Reading –

- Teacher uses ‘V’ actions as a prompt for students to articulate the meaning of visualizing
- Students encouraged to use prompt to make pictures in their mind, *‘In my mind I can see...’*
- Teacher shows and reads student a sentence;
The farmer is milking some cows then he puts the milk in bottles.
- Teacher introduces R.I.D.E.R strategy and models each step. Showing the students visual aides in the form of posters at each stage whilst simultaneously modeling action for each letter
- Students repeat the actions
- Teacher models quick sketched images, and emphasize the importance of the ideas to help them remember the text, not the artwork.

1. R- Read, the sentence or paragraph of a text
Action: Reading a book
2. I- Imagine, create in your mind a picture of what you have read
Action: Thinking
3. D- Describe, teacher describes drawn image, using prompt
Action- Hands making a talking motion
Prompt- ‘In my mind I can see..... ‘
4. E – Evaluate, teacher matches images/descriptions, to sentence
Action- Tick to show match
5. R- Read On, teacher demonstrates reading on to the next paragraph
Action- Turn Pages

- Students repeat, R.I.D.E.R acronym and revise actions that match each letter

During Reading –

- Students read sentence aloud together, then follow procedure as above, using another sentence;
The farmer is chasing the chickens around the farm then he catches them and puts them in the hen house.
- Students sketch and share their images, describe what they have drawn then evaluate the image against the sentence.
- The teacher ticks the word/idea when the image matches the text

After Reading –

- Students Reflection

1/ What they have learnt? Why?

2/ What do you know now that you didn’t know before?

3/ How and when can you use what you have learned in new tasks?

Lesson 3

Duration – 40 minutes

Text – The Picnic Tree

Materials – R.I.D.E.R posters

Before Reading –

- Teacher uses 'V' actions as a prompt for students to articulate the meaning of visualizing
- Students repeat R.I.D.E.R strategy using picture cues and actions as prompts
- Students encouraged to make pictures in their mind
- Students read and retell text 'The Picnic Tree' pages 4-8

During Reading –

- Students follow the R.I.D.E.R strategy
- Students read 'The Picnic Tree' page 2 together aloud, they each imagine then describe their mind pictures and use the prompt- 'In my mind I can see.....'
- They then evaluate their images against the text to see if there is a match
- Teacher models retell in order, including detail such as character names, setting etc, the prompt modeled 'In the book...' and explains to students the importance of retelling with detail, in their own words, paraphrasing, will help them to remember and understand what they have read
- Students repeat points 2,3 and take turns retelling, for pages 4-8

After Reading –

- Students Reflection

1/ What they have learnt? Why?

2/ What do you know now that you didn't know before?

3/ How and when can you use what you have learned in new tasks?

Lesson 4

Duration – 40 minutes

Text – The Picnic Tree

Materials – R.I.D.E.R posters

Before Reading –

- Teacher uses ‘V’ actions as a prompt for students to articulate the meaning of visualizing.
- Students repeat R.I.D.E.R strategy using picture cues and actions as prompts.
- Students encouraged to make pictures in their mind.

During Reading –

- Students follow the R.I.D.E.R strategy
- Students read each paragraph of the, ‘The Picnic Tree’ from pages 9-12 aloud
- They each imagine pairs of sentences, then describe their images and use the prompt- ‘In my mind I can see.....’ for each paragraph
- Students then evaluate their images against the text to see if image is accurate
- Teacher models retell in order, including detail such as character names, setting etc, the prompt modeled ‘In the book...’ and explains to students the importance of retelling with detail, in their own words, paraphrasing and using synonyms, will help them to remember and understand what they have read
- Students repeat points 2-4 for pages 13-16, however this time they individually retell the text

After Reading –

- Students Reflection

1/ What they have learnt? Why?

2/ What do you know now that you didn’t know before?

3/ How and when can you use what you have learned in new tasks?

Lesson 5

Duration – 40 minutes

Text – The Picnic Tree, The Pony Club

Materials – R.I.D.E.R posters

Before Reading –

- Teacher uses 'V' actions as a prompt for students to articulate the meaning of visualizing.
- Students repeat R.I.D.E.R strategy using picture cues and actions as prompts
- Students encouraged to make pictures in their mind
- Students read and retell 'The Picnic Tree' in sequence, including detail as a group

During Reading –

- Students follow the R.I.D.E.R strategy
- Students read each paragraph of the, 'The Pony Club' page 1-8 aloud
- They each visualize and describe their images, and use the prompt- 'In my mind I can see.....' for each paragraph
- Students then evaluate their images against the text to see if there is a match
- Students repeat points 2-5 for pages 9-16
- Students retell in pairs in order, including detail such as character names, setting etc, using the prompt 'In the book...'

After Reading –

- Students Reflection

1/ What they have learnt? Why?

2/ What do you know now that you didn't know before?

3/ How and when can you use what you have learned in new tasks?

Lesson 6

Duration – 40 minutes

Text – The Pony Club, Pet Day

Materials – R.I.D.E.R posters

Before Reading –

- Students articulate what visualizing means use ‘V’ actions as a prompt.
- Students repeat R.I.D.E.R strategy using picture cues and actions as prompts
- Students encouraged to make pictures in their mind
- Students read together and retell ‘The Pony Club’ in sequence as a group

During Reading –

- Students follow the R.I.D.E.R strategy
- Students read each paragraph of the ‘Pet Day’ page 1-8 aloud
- They each visualize and describe their images sentence by sentence, and use the prompt- ‘In my mind I can see.....’ for each paragraph
- Students then evaluate their mages against the text to see if there is a match
- Students repeat points 2-5 for pages 9-16
- Students retell to a partner in order, including detail such as character names, setting etc, using the prompt ‘In the book...’

After Reading –

- Students Reflection

1/ What they have learnt? Why?

2/ What do you know now that you didn’t know before?

3/ How and when can you use what you have learned in new tasks?

Lesson 7

Duration – 40 minutes

Text – The Pet Day, Peppers Adventure

Materials – R.I.D.E.R posters

Before Reading –

- Students articulate what visualizing means use ‘V’ actions as a prompt.
- Students repeat R.I.D.E.R strategy using picture cues and actions as prompts Students encouraged to make pictures in their mind
- Students read silently and retell in pairs ‘The Pet Day’ in sequence

During Reading –

- Students follow the R.I.D.E.R strategy
- Students silently read each paragraph of ‘Peppers Adventure’ page 1-8,
- Students visualize each paragraph and describe their image to the group ‘In my mind I can see.....’
- They then evaluate their images against the text to see if there is a match
- Students repeat points 2-5 for pages 9-16
- Students retell text to a partner ‘In the book...’

After Reading –

- Students Reflection

1/ What they have learnt? Why?

2/ What do you know now that you didn’t know before?

3/ How and when can you use what you have learned in new tasks?

Lesson 8

Duration – 40 minutes

Text –Peppers Adventure, Late for the Party

Materials – R.I.D.E.R posters

Before Reading –

- Students articulate what visualizing means use ‘V’ actions as a prompt.
- Students repeat R.I.D.E.R strategy using picture cues and actions as prompts
- Students encouraged to make pictures in their mind
- Students read and retell in pairs ‘ Peppers Adventure ’ in sequence

During Reading –

- Students follow the R.I.D.E.R strategy
- Students silently read, ‘ Late for the Party ’ page 1-8,
- Students visualize each paragraph and describe their image to the group ‘In my mind I can see.....’
- They then evaluate their images against the text to see if there is a match
- Students repeat points 2-5, for pages 9-16
- Students retell text in pairs

After Reading –

- Students Reflection

1/ What they have learnt? Why?

2/ What do you know now that you didn’t know before?

3/ How and when can you use what you have learned in new tasks?

Lesson 9

Duration – 40 minutes

Text – Late for the Party, The Hospital Party

Materials – Paper and pencils

Before Reading –

- Students articulate what visualizing means use ‘V’ actions as a prompt.
- Students repeat R.I.D.E.R strategy using picture cues and actions as prompts Students encouraged to make pictures in their mind
- Students read and retell ‘Peppers Adventure’ in sequence in pairs.

During Reading –

- Students follow the R.I.D.E.R strategy
- Students silently read, ‘Late for the Party’ page 1-8,
- Teacher models writing the description of the visual image emphasizing paraphrasing and the use of synonyms for pages 1-2, then evaluates against text
- The group writes a description together for pages 3-8, then evaluates against text
- Students then evaluate their written description against the paragraph
- Students Silently read pages 9-16
- Each student individually writes their ‘visualize’ of each paragraph
- Students retell text in pairs

After Reading –

- Students Reflection

1/ What they have learnt? Why?

2/ What do you know now that you didn’t know before?

3/ How and when can you use what you have learned in new tasks?

Lesson 10 -This stage of the lesson sequence the teacher removes some prompts in order to move students towards independence

Duration – 40 minutes

Text –Late for the Party, Matt's Good Idea

Materials – Paper and pencils

Before Reading –

- Teacher prompts with 'V' action.
- Students asked which strategy to use R.I.D.E.R and why
- Students read and retell ' Late for the Party ' in pairs.

During Reading –

- Students follow the R.I.D.E.R strategy.
- Students silently read, ' Matt's Good Idea ' page 1-8,
- Students visualize each paragraph
- Each student individually writes their 'visualize' of each paragraph
- Students then evaluate their written description against the paragraph
- Students share their written descriptions and evaluations with the group
- Students repeat points 2-5 for pages 9-16
- Students retell text in pairs

After Reading –

- Students Reflection

1/ What they have learnt? Why?

2/ What do you know now that you didn't know before?

3/ How and when can you use what you have learned in new tasks?

Appendix E

Picture Boxes

To be used with the RIDER strategy - Students draw their image.

R

Read



I Image



D

Describe



E Evaluate



R

Read

On

