






**Embedded Learning Strategy  
Instruction:**  
*Story-Structure Pedagogy in Secondary Classes  
for Diverse Learners*  
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## Problem/Background


- Two-thirds of secondary students lack reading skills for success in school and world of work
- Literacy is less and less part of the curriculum in MS/HS
- Language arts teachers shoulder major burden for comprehension instruction
- Educators are in search of evidence-based practices to close the performance gap while challenging all levels of learners



## Components of Instruction that build Comprehension

1. Vocabulary knowledge
2. Knowledge of text/discourse structures
  - ✓ Narrative
  - ✓ Expository
3. Domain/Background knowledge
4. Cognitive Strategies
5. Increase motivation/engagement

e.g., Gersten et al., 2001; Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Torgeson et al., 2007




## Study Design

- Control-group Design with Random Assignment
- 79 students including 14 SWD
- Six 9th-grade summer school literature classes (3 Experimental and 3 Control)
- Researcher conducted all instruction
- *Time:* 120 minutes per day (9 days total)
- *Material:* *The InterActive Reader* (McDougal Little, 2001)




## Materials

1. Pedlar of Swaffham
2. Raymond's Run (Toni Cade Bambara)
3. A Mother in Mannville (Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings)
4. The Ransom of Red Chief (O. Henry)
5. The King of Mazy May (Jack London)
6. The Bet (Anton Chekhov)
7. The Treasure of Lemon Brown (Walter Dean Myers)
8. The Tell-Tale Heart (E.A. Poe)
9. The Monkey's Paw (W.W. Jacobs)





## Procedures: Experimental

### Strategy Package

1. Self-Questioning
2. Story-Structure Analysis
3. Summarizing

### Instructional Practices

- 3 Classes of Embedded Story Structure
- Teacher-mediated to Student-mediated Instruction

## Self-Questioning

- **Who** is the main character?
- **What** is the central conflict and how does it begin?
- **When** does the story take place?
- **Where** does the story take place?
- **Which** decision or event is the turning point?
- **How** does the central conflict end/resolve?
- **Why** did the author tell us the story in this way?

## Story Structure Analysis

Climax      Central Conflict

Initiating Event

☺ Protagonist  
☹ Antagonist  
🕒 Time  
🏠 Place

Resolution  
Theme

## Summarizing

1. This story is about how (main character) struggles with (central conflict).
2. The struggle begins when (initiating event) and takes place (time & place).
3. The story climaxes when (climax) and the conflict is resolved by/when (resolution).
4. I think the author is trying to tell us that (theme).

## Procedures: Control

### Strategy Package

1. Question-Answer Relationships (QAR)
2. LINC S Vocabulary Instruction
3. Semantic Mapping

### Instructional Practices

- 3 Classes of Research-Based Instruction
- Teacher-mediated to Student-mediated Instruction

## Question-Answer Relationships

- Text-based Questions
  - Right There: What is Charley's job?
  - Think and Search: What are some of the challenges that Charley faces when trying to join the army?
- Knowledge-based
  - Author and You: Whom does Charley remind you of and why?
  - On My Own: What is a tough decision you have had to make?

(Raphael, 1982; 1986)

## LINC S Vocabulary Strategy

- List the Parts
- Identify a reminding word
- Note a LINCing story
- Create a LINCing picture
- Self-Test

Front of card

pavilion

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million

Back of card

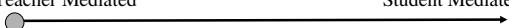
Building used for show or recreation.

A million people showed up to watch the band perform.



## Large Group Instruction Learn by Watching (I Do It!)

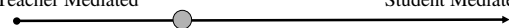
- **Introduce the steps of the strategy**
  - Explain how it will help students learn
  - Specify what students need to do
- **Carryout & guide self-instruction in a think-aloud**
  - Verbalize problem-solving
  - Attack the challenge in different ways
- **Perform all steps**

Teacher Mediated  Student Mediated



## Large Group Instruction Learn by Sharing (We Do It!)

- **Co-construct and use the strategy**
  - Ask students to perform strategy steps with you
  - Ask students to explain what they observed and how they're thinking about strategy steps
  - Shape student responses
  - Engineer Success
  - Evaluate student understanding
  - Re-instruct if necessary

Teacher Mediated  Student Mediated



## Cooperative Instruction Learn with Partners (Y'all Do It!)

- **Learning together**
  - Assign student partners purposefully
  - Students explain how they're thinking to each other; partners problem-solve
  - Establish positive and cooperative environment
  - Circulate to student groups for additional instruction and corrective feedback
  - Evaluate student understanding

Teacher Mediated  Student Mediated



## Large Group Instruction Learn by Practicing (You Do It!)

- **Learning independently**
  - Expect students to perform independently
  - Give brief, specific, constructive feedback
  - Identify categories of errors to identify the focus for the next day's session
  - Have students record their grades on a progress chart

Teacher Mediated  Student Mediated



## Measures: Formative

- **Strategy-use Test:**
  - Student actual use of strategic approaches to reading
  - Given several 300-word passages to read from ARI:
    - Self-questions
    - Label components of Story Structure Diagram
    - Writing a Summary

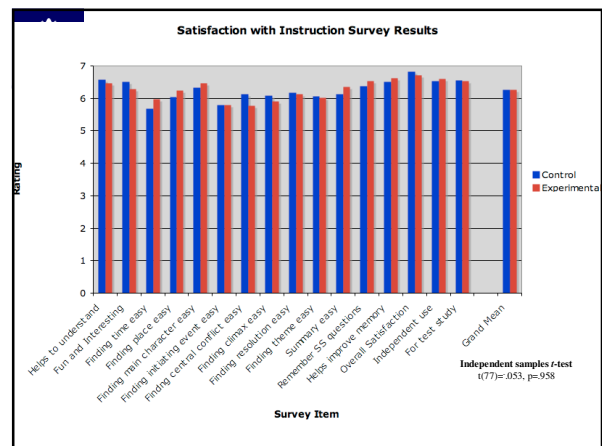
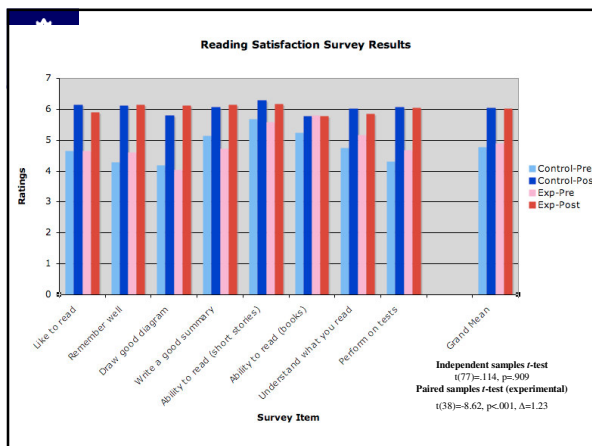
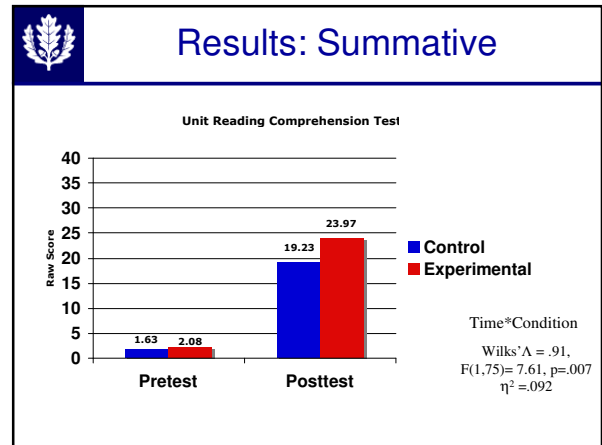
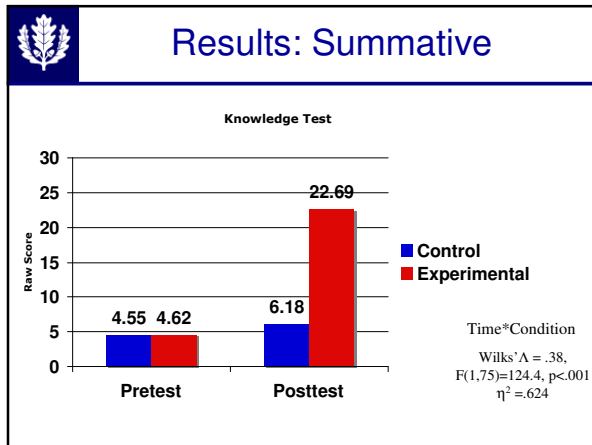
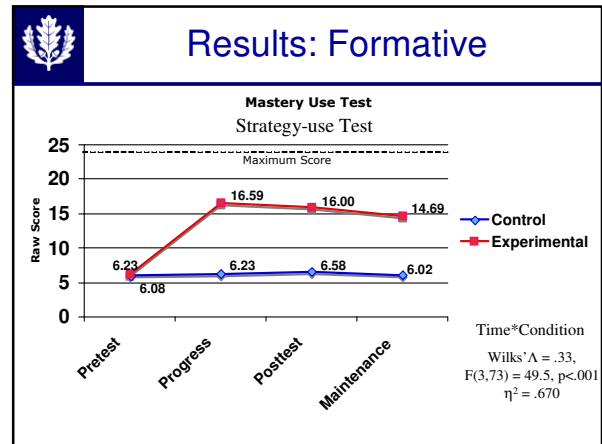


## Measures: Summative

- **Pre/Post Knowledge Test:**
  - Student knowledge of the strategic process involved in comprehending stories
  - Demonstrate written recall of the mnemonic device and corresponding exploration self-questions
  - Basic Language Arts Knowledge (types of conflict, characterization components)
- **Pre/Post Unit Reading Comprehension Test:**
  - Student knowledge of story content
  - 40 question fill-in-the-blank unit test
  - 40% of questions were higher-order

## Measures

- Social Validity
  - Reading Satisfaction Survey
  - Satisfaction with Instruction Survey
- Fidelity
  - Quality teacher performance checklist





## Conclusions I

- *The Embedded Story Structure Routine* is an effective intervention for improving reading comprehension of diverse learners in inclusive classrooms
- Experimental students outperformed control students on measures of strategy use, strategy knowledge and reading comprehension
  - ✓ Equivalent gains regardless of disability/no disability category
  - ✓ Improvement from pretest to both posttest and maintenance



## Conclusions II

- Socially significant findings across all survey measures are positive indicators of ESS Routine palatability
  - ✓ Regardless of group, students were more satisfied with their reading skills
  - ✓ Instruction was believed to be helpful, fun, interesting, and likely to be used independently



## Limitations

- Researcher as instructor
- Effects of the use of optimal conditions of effective learning strategy instruction (Swanson, 2001) yet unknown
- Generalizability of findings for students with LD



## Limitations II

- Experimental Unit Reading Comprehension scores not educationally significant in isolated instruction
- Short number of instructional days
- Lack of standardized reading comprehension measures



Thank You!

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