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Adaptations of Manzo's Guided Reading Procedure

Dixie Lee Spiegel*

*University of North Carolina

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Dixie Lee Spiegel

Abstract

In 1975 Manzo described the Guided Reading Procedure, which was designed to “improve reading comprehension by stressing attitudinal factors- accuracy in comprehension, self-correction, and awareness of implicit questions, as well as cognitive factors, unaided recall and organizational skills” (pp. 291). As developed by Manzo, the Guided Reading Procedure (GRP) is to be used after the reading of a common selection. However, the GRP can easily be adapted as a pre-reading activity and as a post-reading activity when students have read different materials.

ADAPTATIONS OF MANZO'S GUIDED READING PROCEDURE

Dixie Lee Spiegel
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

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The original Guided Reading Procedure involved seven steps:

- (1) The students are told to read the selection in order to remember everything.
 - (2) The students dictate to a recorder (usually the teacher) all that they can remember. This information is recorded on the chalkboard, without correction.
 - (3) When the students can remember nothing more, they may return to the reading selection in order to correct inconsistencies and add important information that was not recalled spontaneously.
 - (4) The class reviews all recorded recalls and organizes them into an outline, pattern, or other format that shows the relationships of the ideas.
 - (5) The teacher asks questions only as needed to develop full understanding
- (1) The students are told to read the selection in order to remember everything.
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 - (4) The class reviews all recorded recalls and organizes them into an outline, pattern, or other format that shows the relationships of the ideas.
 - (5) The teacher asks questions only as needed to develop full understanding of the selection. These questions should usually be beyond the literal level and serve as a model to the students of questioning techniques.
 - (6) Short-term memory is tested by using a matching, multiple-choice, essay, or unaided recall format. This step is important for the students' own feedback and reinforcement.

- (7) (Optional) After studying the material further, medium and/or long-term memory is assessed.

As a Pre-Reading Activity

To adapt the GRP as a pre-reading assignment, the teacher should identify a unit or topic of study that is fairly narrow in scope, such as *photosynthesis*, *the Constitution*, or *spiders*. Following the original GRP, the students tell the recorder(s) everything they already know about the topic, before any lecture or reading assignments have been made. After the unedited bits of information have been recorded, the students identify conflicting information and also identify areas in which no information has been provided. (“Hey, we don’t know what spiders eat!”) At this pre-reading stage no effort is made to resolve the conflicts or to provide missing information. Next, the outline is created. Conflicting information is listed side by side: “have 6 legs/ have 8 legs.” Areas in which no information is known are listed by headings in the outline. (See Figure 1.) Both kinds of problems are keyed by question marks. The teacher may wish to suggest sub-topics so that full coverage of the major topic is ensured. The outline is either put on permanent display or is reproduced so that each student has a working copy.

FIGURE 1

Outline for GRP as Pre-Reading Procedure

Spiders

- I. How They Look
 - ?A. Have 6 legs/have 8 legs
 - B. Have 2 body parts
 - ?C. Antennae
- II. How They Live
 - ?A. What they eat
 - B. Spin webs
 - 1. Made of silk
 - 2. Lots of different kinds of webs
 - 3. Sticky
 - ?a. What makes them sticky
 - ?b. Why doesn't the spider get stuck

Using the GRP as a pre-reading procedure has many advantages for the students. One advantage is that clear purposes for the unit of study are identified by the students before study begins. The class becomes aware of the gaps in their understanding of the topic. They also become alerted to areas of misconceptions and conflicting information. Far from being a discouraging factor, misconceptions may actually serve as a positive force as individual students seek to prove that their own information was accurate.

Supplying the missing information and untangling conflicting information become the purposes and motivation for further study of the topic. The students have the responsibility for creating a complete, accurate outline by the end of the unit. Their task has been set based on *their* needs and level of information.

On a more abstract level the pre-reading GRP can help provide ideational scaffolding for the new concepts to be presented in the unit (Ausubel, 1964). By bringing to mind what the students already know about the topic and by organizing this information into an outline, the pre-reading GRP builds a framework to which new ideas can be attached. Without this framework in mind, new concepts are likely to be quickly forgotten because they do not fit into any overall scheme of information.

This procedure also has many advantages for the teacher who is truly interested in teaching to identified needs rather than to assumed needs. The pre-reading GRP allows the teacher to assess the level of background knowledge of the class. He or she may find the students lack even the most basic concepts about the topic or are very confused about these concepts. If this is the case, the teachers can then plan to make sure these building-block concepts are presented to the class, either through lecture or through reading assignments before more sophisticated ideas are introduced. Much as it may hurt, the teacher may have to abandon plans for teaching the techniques of the giant slalom and move back to the bunny slope. Otherwise the risk of casualties, either in terms of frustrated students or of compounding misconceptions, is too great.

The pre-reading GRP may also identify the opposite problem to the one described above. That is, the class may *already* know nearly everything the teacher planned to present about photosynthesis or the Constitution. If the GRP is done enough ahead of time or if the teacher has a repertoire of potential reading assignments on hand, he or she can then make reading assignments at a higher level of sophistication than those originally planned. Rather than bore the students with "everything you already know about photosynthesis," the teacher can move on to the more difficult concepts, secure in the knowledge that the students already possess the necessary background of information.

Of course, in most instances the students' backgrounds will fall somewhere between the two extremes. They will have some gaps in their knowledge, but the class will not be a *tabula rasa*, and they will have some incorrect information. The pre-reading GRP can aid the teacher in identifying precisely the needs of the students and lectures and reading assignments can be prepared to take care of these problems.

As A Post-Reading Activity

The GRP was originated for use when all the students read the same selection. However, the post-reading GRP can also be very effective when students have gathered information from a variety of sources.

Many teachers resist making individualized assignments in the content

areas because they are concerned that all students will not develop an understanding of certain core concepts. In addition, they are often afraid that information from a wide variety of sources will be so diverse that students will be unable to synthesize the bits and pieces into a useful whole. The post-reading GRP can help overcome these concerns.

When used as a procedure after students have searched a variety of information sources, the GRP should proceed as Manzo has described it through Step 5. However, the learning outcomes, both for the students and the teacher, will be slightly different. For example, rather than being limited to a specific set of details and generalizations, the class can draw on a large body of diverse information in supplying recalls. Because not everyone has read exactly the same material, *each* student can contribute something to the outline, not just the Sam or Sally Sunshines who think the fastest or speak the loudest. If, as Johnson (1977) has urged, each suggested source of information, regardless of readability level, has a unique piece of data (instead of just being a watered-down version of the “grade level” assignment), all students can have the status of being a contributor. The high school junior who has read the sixth grade science text may be the only one who knows why spiders don’t stick to the web themselves.

Another important outcome from using the GRP with different sources of information is that students will learn to deal with the fact that everything in print is not necessarily true. When attempting to reconcile conflicting information during Step 3, both contributors may be able to point to exact quotations from their own sources to back up their information. When this happens, the teacher may introduce some of the important aspects of critical reading, such as investigating the qualifications of the author, the date of the publication, and the audience for whom the material was written. Such conflicts can also point out the value of seeking information from several sources rather than relying on a single source. Using the GRP after several different materials have been consulted almost ensures that opportunities to teach critical reading will arise naturally in response to a real need.

As with the original GRP, the GRP based on different sources can serve as a review and summary. The value of the GRP as a summarizing activity when used at the end of an entire unit is even greater than when used after the reading of a short, common selection. The students can use this activity as a self-assessment of their understanding of the unit. They can fill in the gaps resulting from their own limited reading by referring to the class outline: they can identify misconceptions they have, due either to their unclear understanding of what they read or to conflicting information. They can organize and synthesize the various pieces of data they have into some sort of a meaningful framework.

The teachers can also use the GRP for assessment. Rather than identifying the students’ missing concepts and misconceptions by a test which half the students fail, the teacher can use the GRP to identify concepts that need to be re-taught *before* the test.

The teacher also gains two other important and related advantages by

using the GRP in this way. First, the teacher is free to individualize assignments because he or she knows that each student will not be limited only to the concepts in the individual assignment. A student who simply cannot handle the grade level text is not doomed to the frustration and embarrassment of facing an assignment he or she can't read (and therefore learning next to nothing), or the frustration and embarrassment of learning just the "babyish" ideas. Furthermore, the teacher no longer needs to be concerned that the students will develop only partial concepts and learn isolated pieces of information. The GRP draws together the pieces and organizes them. The major headings (the Roman numerals and capital letters in the traditional outline format) can be identified as the important pieces that *all* students must learn. The minor headings can be viewed as "icing" either information that is interesting but not necessary or that is necessary for a grade of *A* on the unit but not for a *B* or *C*.

Summary

Manzo has identified an important instructional aid in the Guided Reading Procedure. By adapting the GRP as a pre-reading activity and as a post-reading activity when individualized assignments have been made, teachers can treble the usefulness of this effective procedure.

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