

BOX 7.17

Reciprocal Teaching Role Cards in Science

Will Brown adapted reciprocal teaching roles for the team reads his students do in chemistry. Each student in a group of four has a particular *facilitation* role, but the whole group participates, regardless of whether the conversation is about predicting, clarifying, questioning, or summarizing.

PREDICTION FACILITATOR



Your job is to help the team members predict what they will read about next by using clues in the reading. You also help the team review earlier predictions to see why they were or were not accurate.

You might ask questions like these *before* your team reads:

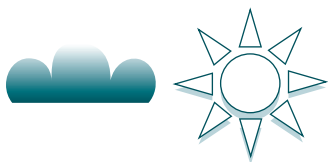
- What are your predictions about what this next section will tell us?
- How were you able to guess? What information did you use?

You might ask questions like these *after* your team reads:

- What were our predictions about this section? Were any of them correct? What information or clues turned out to be the most helpful?
- What do you think we will read about next?

Good science readers make predictions about what is upcoming in the text by using text information as well as their own knowledge of science, science methods, and science genres. Predicting is a way to surface relevant schema, focus the reading, and check understanding to stay engaged.

CLARIFICATION FACILITATOR



Your job is to help team members point out parts of the reading that were not clear to them. You also ask the team to help find ways to clear up these problems.

You might ask questions like these:

- Which parts were confusing or unclear as you read?
- Can anyone explain that part?
- What strategies did you use to clarify that part?
- What can we do to try to understand this?

Good science readers look for the parts of a text that are confusing them and use fix-up strategies such as rereading, scanning ahead, thinking back, identifying unknown vocabulary, chunking words or phrases, and using their own knowledge of science topics, science methods, and science genres.

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QUESTION FACILITATOR

Q:A Q:??

Your job is to help the team ask and answer questions about the text. These can be questions to help remember things about the text or questions that the text makes team members wonder more about.

You might ask team members questions like these:

- What does the text make you wonder about? How can you put it in a question? What can we do to find the answer?
- What question can you ask that will help us remember something important about the text? Can someone please answer it?

Asking questions, or inquiry, is the heart of science. Good science readers ask and answer questions as they read to help build interest and stay engaged. They also ask questions to help remember what they read. These questions may be about topics, methods, claims, and evidence. Science questions can address the credibility and relevance of the ideas in the text.

SUMMARIZATION FACILITATOR

a + b + c = ?

Your job is to help each team member restate the main ideas and key facts in the reading in his or her own words. Then it is your job to help the team come up with one summary for the group.

You might ask questions like these:

- Which ideas do you have to understand to be able to summarize this text? (Which ideas could be left out and still get the point across?)
- Can you use your own words or a diagram or picture to tell the main ideas?
- How can we combine ideas into one overall summary?

Good science readers paraphrase, visualize, and summarize while reading to check for understanding, to help themselves remember, and to get the big ideas. When they write summaries, they have been thinking about what is important all along. These summaries are not found in the text, but are formed by the reader from their thinking.

When introducing reciprocal teaching, some teachers model the various facilitation roles with the whole class many times before setting groups off on their own. Janet Ghio puts the students in her grade 9 academic literacy class into a classroom “fishbowl,” giving alternating groups publicly coached practice in carrying out the reciprocal teaching procedure. In Classroom Close-Up 7.9, Janet’s students have just spent two class periods in these fishbowl sessions and now are working independently in groups for the first time. In a short visit with one group, students demonstrate an early but promising level of independence not only in identifying comprehension problems in the reading but also in helping each other solve them.