

DRTA—Directed Reading Thinking Activity

The DRTA is a strategy that guides the student by asking questions about a text, making predictions, and then reading to confirm or refute their predictions. The DRTA activity strengthens reading comprehension and critical thinking skills by encouraging the student to be active and thoughtful readers. It can be used with a variety of subjects and reading levels.

D – DIRECT - Teacher directs and stimulates the student’s thinking prior to reading a passage by scanning the title, chapter headings, illustrations, and other explanatory materials. Then the teacher uses open ended questions to direct the student as he/she makes predictions about the content.

Example:

- What do you think this passage/story will be about?
- Why do you say that? (The student should be encouraged to justify their responses and activate prior knowledge.)

R – READING – Have the student read up to pre-selected stopping points in the text and prompt with questions.

T – THINKING – As the student is reading, he/she should think about the predictions made. The teacher is asking questions that prompt the student to go back through the text and think about their predictions to verify or modify the accuracy of their predictions by finding supporting statements in the text.

Example:

- What is the passage/story about?
- What do you think will happen next?
- Why do you say that? (Encourage student to justify his response and activate prior knowledge)

Read through the next stopping point.

- What has happened?
- How did your predictions turn out?
- What do you think will happen now?
- Why do you say that? What in the story gave you a clue?
- What else might happen?

Read through the next stopping point.

- What else has happened?
- How did your prediction turn out?
- How do you think this passage/story will end?
- Why do you say that?
- How else might it end?

Writing may be included as part of the DRTA. As the student becomes more comfortable with this strategy, have him/her write predictions and justifications. Then ask the student to write a summary statement about how his/her predictions compared to the passage.