Teaching and testing reading skills

with the help of
Question-Answer-Relationship Method
Content

• What is „reading“?
• National standards linked to CEFR
• How to make the reading process visible?
• Vygotsky‘s space and cognitive apprenticeship model
• Question-Answer Relationships
• Six-step model lesson planning guide
• Hands on: independent application
Passage reading

Is a very complex constructive process:

- Activate your prior knowledge
- Recognize difficulties
- Activate inferences, patterns
- Mental models
- Choose a strategy according to the difficulty
- Self-monitoring / comprehension check
Before reading

Put together the knowledge of the world

Activate what you already know

Purpose of reading

Text formats
It is proposed that efficient passage reading requires the expeditious location of relevant information wherever that information is stored in the brain, thus requiring instantaneous, implicit, and imperceptible “switching” among various strategies and brain systems.

The reader who continues to use decoding and/or individual word identification as the primary vehicle for passage reading struggles because his brain is locked into a linear, self-limiting, and inefficient strategy.
Read aloud– a simplified model
Phonological skills

In simple language, **sound comes before sight.**

One of the biggest mistakes made by untrained teachers of reading is to show children the letters of the alphabet prematurely.

….by measuring the phonological skill differences between good and poor readers we have been able to isolate phonological skills as an essential component of learning to read

Sanja Wagner, Innsbruck 2011
Using & controlling reading strategies

Goal:

• If we want our pupils to use strategies while reading we must explicitly show them first, what strategies there are and how to use them – in all subjects

Make the unvisible visible

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PISA result

- prior knowledge
- metacognitive skills in choosing appropriate learning and reading strategies

are reliable predictors for good reading skills
Question-Answer Relationships

• or QAR, is a reading comprehension strategy developed to "clarify how students approach the tasks of reading texts and answering questions" (Raphael 1986).

• It encourages students to be active, strategic readers of texts.

• QAR outlines where information can be found
  ⇒ Right There,
  ⇒ Think and Search,
  ⇒ Author and Me,
  ⇒ On My Own.

What is an easy question, what a difficult one?

Sanja Wagner, Innsbruck 2011
The Core Question Answer Relationships

In my head

my knowledge

primary sources

the text

in the book

right there

think and search

In my head

text and me

on my own

Sanja Wagner, Innsbruck 2011
Right There

• The answer is in one sentence of the text; the question and answer usually have the same wording. Answers usually are one-word or short-phrase responses. There is usually only one right answer to Right There questions.

Who is...?  
Where is...?  
What is...?  
When is...?  
How many...?  
When did...?
Think and search

• The answer is found in several parts of the text. The question and answer have different wordings.

For what reason...?  
How did...?  
Why was...?  
What caused...?
Author and me

• Students must use their prior knowledge to answer these types of questions.

• The answer to the question comes from both clues in the text and students' prior knowledge. Students must synthesize the text to fully understand the question.

Would you...?  
Which character...?  
Did you agree with...?  
What did you think of...?

Sanja Wagner, Innsbruck 2011
On My Own

The answer comes entirely from students' prior knowledge. These questions require **inferential and evaluative thinking**. Answers do not require information from the text but do require that students make some type of judgment about or relate to the topic of the text.

Do you know...?  
Have you ever...?  
Would you ever...?
Vygostsky’s space

**Public - Individual**
- sharing the outcomes
- new strategies
- teacher and learner assess their work
  + feedback

**Public - Social**
- modelling,
- think aloud,
- demonstrate

**Private - Individual**
- individual work
  (no support)
- Innovative use of what they have learned
- Internalized knowledge

**Private - Social**
- learners practice
- partner work
- teacher coaches
- whole class lesson

Sanja Wagner, Innsbruck 2011
„The cognitive apprenticeship“ Model

SIX-STEP INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

High teacher control

Expliccit instruction
Modeling
Guided practise
Coaching / Scaffolding
Independent application

Self-assessment & goal setting

responsibility: teacher

responsibility: pupils

high student activity
| Ich kann beim Lesen von einfachen Texten wichtige Informationen entnehmen,  
| z. B. in Kinoprogrammen  
| auf Speisekarten  
| auf Homepages  
| in Broschüren  
| Wenn ich einfache Zeitschriftenartikel mit Bildern lese, kann ich die wichtigsten Informationen verstehen.  
| Ich kann unbekannte Wörter eines Textes aus dem Zusammenhang verstehen, wenn ich weiß, worum es geht.  
| Ich kann Einzelheiten von einfachen Zeitschriftenartikeln oder Sachtexten verstehen, wenn ich ein Wörterbuch verwende.  
| Ich kann private Briefe, Karten und E-Mails verstehen, in denen Gefühle, Wünsche und Erlebnisse beschrieben werden.  
| Ich kann vereinfachte Originaltexte (Erzählungen, Theaterstücke, Reiseberichte, …) im Großen und Ganzen verstehen.  
| Ich kann einfache Liedtexte im Großen und Ganzen verstehen.  
| Ich kann Formulare so gut verstehen, dass ich sie ausfüllen kann, z.B. ein Bestellformular für Bücher oder CDs im Internet.  

Sanja Wagner, Innsbruck 2011
The benefits of the method:

• How does QAR strategy contribute to foster comprehension?
• How does it influence us teachers?
• What impact does it have on creating own questions as test-items?
• How does it influence our diagnostic assessment?
Thank you for your attention!

One caution:

“Teachers should be aware of the difference between showing student what to do and telling them what to do. Modeling and coaching encourage higher levels of thinking while telling and recitation reinforce lower levels of thinking. (T.-Raphael)
Literature:


  – Material for classroom practise: Notting Hill Gate, Workbook 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B, Diesterweg 2010
