

Profile of Xtreme Reading

Publisher: Center for Research on Learning at Kansas University

Program Website: <http://www.xtremereading.com>

Striving Readers Projects Using this Program: Portland School District, OR and Springfield and Chicopee Public Schools, MA

Overview

Key features: *Xtreme Reading* has a reading instruction core that is aimed at helping students develop accurate word recognition and increased fluency. It is also designed to include a linguistic comprehension instruction core that teaches the skills and strategies expected to bring meaning to reading. The program includes supports to help students focus and attend to academic work, and explicit instruction in social skills for cooperative groups and partnership activities. *Xpect to Achieve*, *Talking Together*, and *Score* are classroom management modules that are intended to help students understand and follow clear guidelines for appropriate behaviors for classroom situations including lectures, discussions, independent study, and small-group work. Students are intended to participate in the *Possible Selves* program, in which they analyze their current lives and then set and work toward goals intended to enhance their future lives.

Grades: Students in grades 6 - 9

Target students: Students who are reading above the 3.5 grade level and who have deficits in reading

Duration: 45 minutes per day; a year-long course

Class size: 12 – 15 students

Content

Fluency: Although *Xtreme Reading* does not include an explicit focus on fluency, one stage in reading strategy instruction, paired practice, sometimes involves students reading to each other and checking accuracy and fluency on timed oral reading passages, while the teacher monitors the pairs and provides feedback.

Comprehension: *Xtreme Reading* uses a meta-cognitive approach that is built on 7 reading strategies. Four strategies focus on comprehension: Self-Questioning, Visual Imagery, Paraphrasing, and Inference Strategies. The Self-Question Strategy is intended to teach students to ask themselves questions, make predictions, and talk about answers while reading. The Visual Imagery Strategy is intended to teach students to make pictures in their minds while reading. The Paraphrasing Strategy is intended to help students put main ideas and details in their own words. The Inference Strategy is designed to help students ask and answer thoughtful questions as they read, infer, and predict information.

Strategy instruction is expected to follow 8 stages: (1) Describing--the teacher provides rationale and describes steps for the strategy; (2) teacher modeling—the teacher demonstrates the strategy by thinking aloud and gradually involving students; (3) verbal practice—students verbally rehearse the steps of the strategy until they can understand and name the strategy steps; (4) guided practice—the teacher models expert reading behaviors using current and previously

learned strategies and prompts students to use strategy steps; (5) paired practice—students practice the strategy with a peer using materials at their instructional level and provide feedback to each other, sometimes reading to each other, checking accuracy and fluency on timed oral reading passages, and the teacher monitors the pairs and provides feedback; (6) independent practice—students apply the reading strategy to a passage using a worksheet to record their use of the strategy, and students then take a reading comprehension test; (7) differentiated practice—students apply the reading strategy to individual oral reading with the teacher, and the teacher provides more specific individual feedback (during independent practice time); and (8) integration and generalization—students apply strategies to text from other classes and participate in class discussion of strategy use.

Vocabulary: Three of the learning strategies, LINC'S Vocabulary, Word Mapping, and Word Identification, are designed to focus on vocabulary development (although the LINC'S model focuses on learning the meaning of new words through memorization, as well as on advanced phonics and decoding for multi-syllabic words). The LINC'S Vocabulary Strategy is intended to teach students new ways to remember the meaning of vocabulary. The Word Mapping Strategy is intended to help students remember the meaning of vocabulary words. The Word Identification Strategy is intended to help students learn how to pronounce multisyllabic words.

Decoding/Phonics: The Word Identification Strategy is designed to help students in decoding the multi-syllable words that students are likely to encounter in secondary course textbooks and other materials.

Writing: *Xtreme Reading* integrates writing strategies such as Paragraph Writing and Theme Writing into reading instruction. The writing strategies are designed to focus on the writing process and emphasize planning, writing, providing or accepting feedback, and editing.

Organization

The first four weeks of the program begin with units that address behavior (*Xpect to Achieve, Talking Together, Score*) and motivation (*Possible Selves*) to teach students about how to create a productive learning environment. The program then shifts to the seven reading strategies.

The form of instruction is expected to vary depending on the needs of students and may include teacher-led whole-group discussions and guided-practice activities as well as lessons in which students work independently at stations set up throughout the classroom. Station activities might include the following: the teacher meets with one student to measure his or her progress, a pair of students practice a targeted reading strategy aloud, students work individually at computers using the interactive programs that support reading instruction, pairs of students engage in fluency activities, students design memory aids and study cards for vocabulary words and test each other over the words.

Use of Technology

None indicated in available documents.

Student Motivation

Collaborative learning is intended to encourage reading motivation and self-directed learning. The texts are intended to be of high interest for adolescents, and the self-selection of texts by the students is intended to build motivation. *Possible Selves* is a component of *Xtreme Reading* that is designed to increase student motivation by engaging students in thinking about important goals for the future.

Formative Assessment

Progress monitoring is built into the program. Progress measures are to be gathered as part of instruction for each strategy. These data ideally allow the teacher to make decisions with regard to when a student has mastered a strategy. Scores for each practice session are plotted on a progress chart graph, and the student and teacher discuss the student's progress and goals for future practice attempts.

Text Materials

All parts of instruction provide students with reading materials that are selected because they are intended to be of high interest to adolescents.