

What is the reciprocal teaching model?

From: "Reciprocal Teaching" by Elizabeth Foster and Becky Rotoloni

Palincsar and Brown used the findings of their research studies to create a model of reciprocal teaching they used to teach procedures that good readers use internally when they read. In the model, four reading strategies normally taught separately are combined in an instructional package. Students are taught to think about what they are preparing to read and make predictions, to develop self-questioning strategies, to recognize and clarify words and passages that they do not understand, and to summarize passages after they read. These practices employed by good readers are normally taking place inside the reader's head so they are not visible and therefore are difficult to teach. The process must be made visible through modeling, thinking out loud and participating in dialogue about those thoughts. Student learning is intensified by their own verbalization of that learning for others and by observing the learning process of their peers. Repeated external use and understanding of the reading strategy package becomes an internal way of thinking about reading.

The teacher's role in this instructional procedure changes as the strategies are taught to the students. The teacher starts the instruction of each strategy as "the sage on the stage" and ends up as "the guide on the side." The teacher has to be proficient in modeling these strategies to the students and then gradually fade away and let the students take over the control of their learning.