

# Save Me A Seat

by Sarah Weeks and Gita Varadarajan

Joe has lived in the same town all his life. He is doing just fine until his best friends move away and leave him on his own. Ravi’s family just moved to America from India, and he’s finding it hard to figure out where he fits in. Joe and Ravi don’t think they have anything in common—but soon enough, they realize they are both victims of the biggest bully in their class. Joe and Ravi then unite on a common mission: to take control of their lives over the course of a single crazy week. Told in alternating chapters through Joe’s and Ravi’s points of view, this book brings to life two memorable characters.

### Create Successful Reading Habits

What Works Clearinghouse defines **reciprocal teaching** as, “an interactive instructional practice that aims to improve students’ reading comprehension by teaching strategies to obtain meaning from a text” (p. 1).\* **Reciprocal teaching** increases comprehension and helps students derive meaning from a text by engaging them in intentional dialogic instruction.

**Reciprocal teaching** helps students utilize four different comprehension strategies when reading. The four strategies are: predicting, clarifying, summarizing, and generating questions about what they read. These strategies require readers to engage in repeated readings of the text, have meaningful conversations, and think critically about the information presented. When implementing **reciprocal teaching**, educators should use explicit instruction to model each strategy as well as provide opportunities for guided and independent practice of each comprehension strategy.

\* U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, What Works Clearinghouse. (n.d.). Practice Guides. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuides>

## SCIENCE OF READING – CONNECTING RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

### What is the Science of Reading?

The **science of reading** refers to the body of evidence that underlies what we know about how children learn to read. It stems from decades of research in educational and developmental psychology, linguistics, cognitive science, and neuroscience. It outlines:

- how reading develops
- what happens in the brains of students with reading difficulties
- the instructional strategies and content that should be taught to support this development

The **science of reading** is the knowledge that comprises all of these things.

## STANDARDS ALIGNMENT FLORIDA’S B.E.S.T. STANDARDS

The Florida B.E.S.T. standards emphasize the importance of providing explicit instruction as a way to help students read and understand grade-level academic vocabulary words. One important aspect of providing vocabulary instruction is determining which words require direct instruction and which words students can determine for themselves using context clues or morphology. (p. 198)

Look for standards alignment in each section of this guide.

# WORD WORK – PHONICS AND WORD ANALYSIS

Help students practice word-analysis skills by breaking down words encountered in the text. Guide students in identifying word parts to help them decode the word and then add those parts to read the whole word smoothly.

**ELA.5.F.1.3: Use knowledge of grade-appropriate phonics and word-analysis skills to decode words.**

**a. Apply knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology to read and write unfamiliar single-syllable and multisyllabic words in and out of context.**

When students are trying to decode longer words, they can use their understanding of syllable types to help them break apart the word. Guide students in identifying the following syllable types:

Say to students, “Syllables are a word or part of a word pronounced as a unit and contain one vowel sound.”

A **closed syllable**:

- ends with one or more consonants
- has a **short-vowel** sound that is spelled with one vowel letter

An **open syllable**:

- ends with a vowel
- has a **long-vowel** sound spelled with one vowel letter

A final **-e and vowel team syllable**:

- has a vowel followed by a consonant and the vowel e
- has a **long-vowel** sound

A **consonant -le syllable**:

- has a consonant followed by the letters *le*
- has *-le* is at the the end of the syllable
- final vowel e is silent

Here is an example of how to identify words with **open syllables** and **closed syllables** in this book:

**crick** - **et** (p. 5) **qui** - **et** (p. 7) **puke** (glossary) **set** - **tle** (p.14)

- Write the words *cricket*, *quiet*, *puke*, and *settle* on the board.
- Say the word *cricket* and have your students clap the syllables.
- Say, “How many syllables are there in *cricket*?” (two)
- Ask your students to point to the vowel *i* in the syllable *crick*.
- Say, “The consonants *ck* after the *i* makes this a *closed syllable*, so the vowel does *not* sound like its name. It has a short-vowel sound.”
- Ask students to point to the vowel *e* in the syllable *et*.
- Say, “The consonant *t* after the *e* makes this a *closed syllable*, so the vowel does *not* sound like its name. It has a short vowel sound.”
- Help your students read the whole word *cricket*.
- Repeat the steps for *quiet*.
  - The first syllable in *qui* ends with the vowel *i*. Since it is not followed by a consonant, it is an **open syllable**, and the vowel sounds like its name. It has a long-vowel sound.
  - The vowel *e* in the second syllable *et* is followed by a consonant. It is a **closed syllable**, and the vowel does not sound like its name. It has a short-vowel sound.
- Repeat the steps for *puke*.
  - The syllable *puke* has the vowel *u* followed by a consonant and the vowel *e*. It has a long-vowel sound.
  - It is a final **-e and vowel team syllable**, so the *e* is silent and the vowel sounds like its name.
- Repeat the steps for *settle*.
  - The first syllable *set* has the vowel *e* followed by a consonant. It is a **closed syllable**, and the vowel does not sound like its name. It has a short-vowel sound.
  - The second syllable *tle* is a **consonant -le syllable**, so the *e* is silent.

You can help students identify more open syllables and closed syllables in words by selecting a few words throughout the book to practice with them. You may repeat words or point out new words.

## ELL and SWD suggestion:

Students who need additional practice identifying syllable boundaries can benefit from clapping syllables, saying a written word aloud while clapping for each syllable. Repeating this process can help students gain more confidence in identifying syllable boundaries. Remind students that every syllable contains one vowel sound. For consonant *-le*, the vowel is silent.

## TALK ABOUT NEW AND INTERESTING WORDS

**ELA.5.V.1.1: Recognize and appropriately use grade-level academic vocabulary in speaking and writing.**

To increase students' vocabulary knowledge, provide them with explicit instruction around Tier Two vocabulary words. These are high-frequency words that can be used across multiple texts and content areas and are spoken by more mature language users. One piece of explicit vocabulary instruction includes providing student-friendly definitions to commonly encountered academic-level words that can help them to make meaning of the text.

**pronounce** (p. 3): When you **pronounce** a word, you say it in a certain way. Many people in America do not **pronounce** Ravi's first or last name the right way.

**twitching** (p. 3): If a part of your body **twitches**, it makes a little jumping movement. Mrs. Beam's eyebrows **twitch** a little when she is nervous or unsure about something.

**virtue** (p. 4): **Virtue** is thinking and doing what is right and trying not to do things that are wrong. Ravi's mum says being patient with people who cannot say his name is a **virtue**, and he should not be cross with them.

**genius** (p. 5): A **genius** is someone who is very clever and talented. Ravi's school is named after a **genius** who loved science.

### **ELL and SWD suggestion:**

Provide students with a Frayer Model graphic organizer. This organizer can be used to help students clarify the meaning of words they encounter in texts. The model is used to define target vocabulary and generate examples and non-examples using synonyms, antonyms, and other characteristics of the word through drawings and pictures to demonstrate a deep understanding of the target words. The information is placed on a table divided into four sections to provide a visual representation through words and pictures of the target vocabulary.

## READ FOR MEANING – RECIPROCAL TEACHING

**Reciprocal teaching** is a research-based best practice that can be implemented to support student comprehension. **Reciprocal teaching** explicitly shows students that good readers generate questions, summarize, clarify, and make predictions about what they read. This interactive strategy engages students and teachers in a meaningful dialogue about the text and develops students' vocabulary and content knowledge. This strategy will be introduced through the use of explicit instruction and follows the gradual release process of modeling, guided, and independent practice.

- **ELA.5.R.1.1: Analyze how setting, events, conflict, and characterization contribute to the plot in a literary text.**
- **ELA.5.R.3.2: Summarize a text to enhance comprehension.**
- **ELA.5.V.1.3: Use context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the meaning of multiple-meaning and unknown words and phrases appropriate to grade level.**
- **ELA.K12.EE.2.1: Read and comprehend grade-level complex texts proficiently.**

### **Before: Making Predictions**

- Before reading the text, explicitly model how to make predictions about a text. Introduce the story by making predictions about the content using the title and cover illustrations.
- Next, invite students to make their own predictions. Then, tell students that you will check your prediction against the text after you read the first chapter. Consider providing sentence stems to help students make predictions.

### **During:**

- While reading the first few chapters, continue to model how to use each comprehension strategy when reading. Use think alouds to show students your thinking, and invite them to share their own thinking and the connections they are making to the information you are modeling. As you go through the chapters, build upon each strategy below so that students learn to use all four when reading.

# READ FOR MEANING – RECIPROCAL TEACHING

## Chapter 1: Summarizing

- After reading chapter one, summarize the plot by focusing on the literary elements of setting, events, conflict, and characterization. Model writing a good summary while using think-aloud strategies to show students your thought process. Encourage students to add to the summary and discuss why certain information may or may not be included in their summaries.
- Next, refer students back to the predictions they made before reading to check if their predictions are correct. This helps students to monitor their comprehension of the text.

## Chapter 2: Clarifying

- While reading chapter two, clarify any unknown vocabulary words or concepts that may impede students' ability to comprehend the text. Model different ways to clarify the meaning of words or phrases by using context clues, known words, morphology, background knowledge, etc.
- Write a chapter summary with students. Continue to confirm and make predictions about what will happen in the next chapter.

## Chapter 3: Generating Questions

- While reading, continue to model clarifying unknown vocabulary words with students.
- After reading chapter three, model how to formulate text-dependent questions. By modeling the strategy of asking and answering questions, you can facilitate a discussion about the text and encourage students to think critically about the content.
- Include multiple levels of questioning, and consider using sentence stems with students to help them generate their own questions about the text.
- Once students have engaged in a discussion about the text, summarize the chapters with them, and make/confirm predictions about the text.

## Chapters 4 – 30: Guided Practice

- While reading these chapters, students will continue to practice applying the four comprehension strategies for reciprocal teaching as a predictor, clarifier, summarizer, or questioner in whole or small groups.
- If focusing on one or all strategies, make sure to assign each student a role as either a predictor, clarifier, summarizer, or questioner.
- Provide opportunities for each student to use all four strategies as often as possible.

## Chapters 31 – 49: Independent Practice

- Allow students to practice applying these strategies independently.
- Assign specific strategies for each chapter or allow students to choose. Monitor responses, and provide feedback on independent practice.

## After: Text to Writing Connection

Have students respond to the novel by writing a book summary that incorporates the most important information about the plot and literary elements presented in the text. This can be in the form of a book review, book blurb, or using a strategy like "Somebody, Wanted, But, So, Then."

### ELL and SWD suggestion:

Make a simile for each of the different strategies so that students can associate a pictorial representation with each strategy. Then use those images to cue students to remember to use each strategy and the role it plays when reading. Use the following examples or create ones with your students:

- a clarifier looks at things like a magnifying glass
- a summarizer wraps things up like paper wraps presents
- a predictor sees into the future like a magic 8 ball
- a questioner is like a detective

When you show a picture of a magnifying glass, students will know to clarify vocabulary words. If you display a picture of a present, it will remind students to summarize what they read.

### Definition

- **Twitching** is when muscles in your body suddenly move or jump.

### Characteristics

- sudden movement
- muscles move in a jerking way
- jiggling, shaking, fidgeting

## Twitching

### Examples

- muscle spasms
- blinking
- tremors
- shivering when you're cold
- shuddering when you're scared

### Nonexamples

- not moving
- sitting or standing perfectly still
- voluntary movements like clapping, jumping, nodding your head