

# *the* RESEARCH *for*

## Reading for Information

SRA's *Reading for Information* teaches and reinforces the three key elements of reading informational text: recognizing text structures, understanding text features, and using strategies to develop vocabulary, including content-specific and academic vocabulary. Students in grades 2–6 learn and apply these key elements as they read about core science and social studies topics and gain familiarity with different genres of informational text.

The National Reading Panel research, as well as other studies, fully supports the fundamental concepts and instructional design of *Reading for Information*. The report was published in April, 2000, by The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development NIH Pub. No.00-4754.

### Text Comprehension Instruction

Research shows that many elementary students struggle when reading instruction shifts to reading for information beginning in Grade 2. A solution to this problem is to provide explicit instruction in the comprehension skills and strategies students need to understand informational text. Examples of research supporting the text comprehension instruction in *Reading for Information* include the following:

- Armbruster, B.B., Anderson, T.H., Armstrong, J.O., Wise, M.A., Janisch, C., and Meyer, L.A. 1991. Reading and questioning in content-area lessons. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, 23, 35–60.
- Dreher, M.J., and Sammons, R.B. 1994. Fifth graders' search for information in a textbook. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, 26, 301–314.
- Dye, G.A. 2000. Graphic organizers to the rescue! Helping students link—and remember—information. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 32(3),
- Harvey, S., and Goudvis, A. 2000. *Strategies at work: Teaching comprehension to enhance understanding*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Helfeldt, J.P., and Henk, W.A. 1990. Reciprocal question-answer relationships: An instructional technique for at-risk readers. *Journal of Reading*, 33, 509–514.
- Keene, E.O., and Zimmerman, S. 1997. *Mosaic of thought: Teaching comprehension in a readers' workshop*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- McGee, L. 1982. Awareness of text structure: Effects on children's recall of expository text. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 17, 581–589.
- McLaughlin, M., and DeVoogd, G.L. 2004. *Critical literacy: Enhancing students' comprehension of text*. New York: Scholastic.

- Nichols, J.N. 1983. Using prediction to increase content area interest and understanding. *Journal of Reading*, 27, 225–228.
- Robinson, D.H. 1998. Graphic organizers as aids to text learning. *Reading Research and Instruction*, 37, 85–105.
- Yopp, R.H., and Yopp, H.K. 2004. Preview-predict-confirm: Thinking aloud about the language and content of informational text. *The Reading Teacher*, 58, 79–83.

### Vocabulary Development

Effective strategies for learning and retaining new vocabulary are critical to comprehending informational text. *Reading for Information* provides explicit instruction in these strategies and focuses on building students' science and social studies vocabularies, as well as their academic vocabularies. The following research supports the vocabulary instruction in *Reading for Information*:

- Baker, S.K., Simmons, D.C., and Kameenui, E.J. 1995. *Vocabulary acquisition: Curricular and instructional implications for diverse learners*. Technical report no. 13. University of Oregon: National Center to Improve the Tools for Educators.
- Baumann, J.F., Edwards, E.C., Font, G., Tereshinski, C.A., Kame'enui, E.J., and Olejnik, S. 2002. Teaching morphemic and contextual analysis to fifth-grade students. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37, 150–176.
- Blachowicz, C.L.Z., and Fisher, P. 2000. Vocabulary instruction. In M.L. Kamil, P.B. Mosenthal, P.D. Pearson, and R. Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. III, pp. 503–523). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Blachowicz, C.L.Z., and Fisher, P. 2002. *Teaching vocabulary in all classrooms* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Marzano, R.J. 2005. *Building background knowledge for academic achievement: Research on what works in schools*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Vacca, R.T., and Vacca, J.L. 1999. *Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Longman.

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### Reading Instruction

Best practices in reading instruction are incorporated into *Reading for Information*. Lessons in the Teacher's Guide include pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading activities, guided reading, and readers' workshop. Strategies for English language learners are also included. Examples of research supporting the reading instruction in *Reading for Information* include the following:

- Brown, R., El-Dinary, P., Pressley, M., and Ogan, L. 1995. A transactional strategies approach to reading instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 49, 256–258.
- Burke, J. 2000. *Reading reminders: Tools, tips, and techniques*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Daniels, H., and Bizar, M. 1998. *Methods that matter: Six structures for best practice classrooms*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Early, M., and Tang, G.M. 1991. Helping ESL students cope with content-based texts. *TESL Canada Journal*, 8(2), 34–44.
- Krashen, S.D. 1987. *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kristo, J.V., and Bamford, R.A. 2004. *Nonfiction in focus: A comprehensive framework for helping students become independent readers and writers of nonfiction, K–6*. New York: Scholastic.