

READINGrockets®

Classroom Strategies

Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA)

The Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) is a comprehension strategy that guides students in asking questions about a text, making predictions, and then reading to confirm or refute their predictions. The DRTA process encourages students to be active and thoughtful readers, enhancing their comprehension.

 **Share your examples!**

Why use directed reading thinking activity?

- It encourages students to be active and thoughtful readers.
- It activates students' prior knowledge.
- It teaches students to monitor their understanding of the text as they're reading.
- It helps strengthen reading and critical thinking skills.

When to use:	Before reading	During reading	After reading
How to use:	Individually	With small groups	Whole class setting

How to use directed reading thinking activity

Teachers should follow the steps below when creating a DRTA.

1. Determine the text to be used and pre-select points for students to pause during the reading process.
2. Introduce the text, the purpose of the DRTA, and provide examples of how to make predictions.

Note: Be aware of the reading levels of each student, and be prepared to provide appropriate questions, prompts, and support as needed.

3. Use the following outline to guide the procedure:

D = DIRECT. Teachers direct and activate students' thinking prior to reading a passage by scanning the title, chapter headings, illustrations, and other materials. Teachers should use open-ended questions to direct students as they make

predictions about the content or perspective of the text (e.g., "Given this title, what do you think the passage will be about?").

R = READING. Students read up to the first pre-selected stopping point. The teacher then prompts the students with questions about specific information and asks them to evaluate their predictions and refine them if necessary. This process should be continued until students have read each section of the passage.

T = THINKING. At the end of each section, students go back through the text and think about their predictions. Students should verify or modify their predictions by finding supporting statements in the text. The teacher asks questions such as:

- What do you think about your predictions now?
- What did you find in the text to prove your predictions?
- What did you we read in the text that made you change your predictions?

Download blank template

See DRTA in action ■ >

Examples

Language Arts

Use a DRTA with the children's book *The Amazing Bone*

See example >

Use a DRTA with the children's book *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*

See example > (68K PDF)*

Differentiated instruction

For second language learners, students of varying reading skill, students with learning disabilities, and younger learners

- The reading should be broken into small sections so that the students have time to think about and process information.
- The amount of reading should be adjusted to fit the purpose and the difficulty of the text.
- Writing may be included as part of the DRTA. As students become more comfortable with

this strategy, have each student write predictions in a learning log or on a piece of paper. Then, in small groups, students can discuss their predictions and share their thinking processes. Next ask students to write summary statements about how their predictions compared to the passage.

See the research that supports this strategy

AdLit.org. (2008). **Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA).**

Jennings, C. & Shepherd, J. (1998). *Literacy and the key learning areas: successful classroom strategies*. Eleanor Curtain Publishing.

McKenna, M. & Robinson, R. (2002). *Teaching through text: Reading and writing in the content areas* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Murdoch, K. (1998). *Classroom Connections: Strategies for Integrated Learning*. Eleanor Curtain Publishing.

Stauffer, R. G. (1969). *Directing reading maturity as a cognitive process*. New York: Harper & Row.

Strategy Swap

Teachers, have you used any of the strategies from our library in your lessons — especially in science, social studies, and other content areas? We'd love to share some of your real-world examples with our readers.

Submit your examples here >

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