

# Instructional Strategy: Self-Regulated Strategy Development

## For Elementary Universal Instruction and Secondary Intervention

**Description:** Writing researchers identified what good writers do: plan, monitor, evaluate, revise, and manage the writing process. Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) is an instructional approach designed to help students learn, use, and adopt the strategies used by skilled writers. It is an approach that adds the element of self-regulation to strategy instruction for writing. It encourages students to monitor, evaluate, and revise their writing, which in turn reinforces self-regulation skills and independent learning. SRSD is explicit, direct, and guided so that strategies become integrated into the overall learning process. Instruction begins as teacher-directed but with a goal of empowering students to be self-directed. The self-regulation element addresses negative self-talk or perceptions of self-as-learner through replacement with positive self-talk, self-instructions, and new habits with which to approach learning tasks. It is a process to use with ANY writing tool or strategy, with gradual release and revisiting of strategies until they are independently used.

### Steps for using the Strategy:

1. **Discuss It.** Set the stage. Discuss when and how learners might use a strategy to accomplish specific writing tasks and goals. Talk about the benefits of becoming a more proficient and flexible writer. Address any negative self-talk or negative beliefs the learner holds, and ask the learner for a commitment to try to learn and use the strategy. Discuss how the learner should track progress to document the use and impact of the strategy.
2. **Model It.** Model the strategy using think-alouds, self-talk, and self-instruction as you walk through the steps. Discuss afterwards how it might be made more effective and efficient for each individual, and have learners customize the strategy with personal self-statements. Ask students to set specific writing goals. Model the strategy more than once with various sample texts; for example, use a graphic organizer to demonstrate how to comprehend various texts of a similar genre (persuasive arguments or editorials).
3. **Make It Your Own.** Strategies are composed of multiple steps, similar to a checklist. When steps are captured in a mnemonic or acrostic sentence, they are easier to remember. Paraphrasing or re-naming the steps in a mnemonic or creating a new mnemonic is fine, provided that the learner is able to remember the steps that the names represent. Customizing the checklist or mnemonic helps learners make it their own.
4. **Support It.** Use the strategy as often as possible, in as many ways as possible. Instructors and other students can be supports, offering direct assistance, prompts, constructive feedback, and encouragement. When you introduce a new type of application (a new genre or writing frame, for example), it may be appropriate to model the strategy again. Learners can rely on charts and checklists too, as they learn the strategy and make it their own, but all of this should fade as learners become familiar enough with the strategy to set their goals, monitor their use of the strategy, and use self-statements independently.
5. **Independent Performance.** Learners come to use the strategy independently across a variety of tasks. For example, learners may begin to draw graphic

organizers without being prompted as a means to help them comprehend and plan. THINK: Gradual Release!!

### STRATEGIES TO TEACH THROUGH THE SRSD PROCESS:

All strategies must be taught explicitly for learners to generalize and apply them when faced with a new task. Teach each step through the sequence described in the previous section.

## RAP

Example

**Read, Ask, Put in my own words**

**1. Read the text (silently or out loud)**

**2. Ask**

**What is the main idea?**

- What is the text about?
- Look at the first sentence
- Look for repeated words

**What are the important details?**

- Answer who, what, where, when, why, and how

**3. Put the main idea and key details into your own words**

Write the main idea as a complete sentence.

Write the key details in complete sentences.

Re-read and make sure your words are not exactly the same as the text.

Active comprehension requires self-monitoring and self-regulation. Explain to students that RAP means Read, Ask, and Paraphrase, as in the following: *Read* a paragraph or passage. Ask yourself, “What is the topic?” “What is the most important thing it tells me about that topic?” “What are the most important details?” *Paraphrase*, or put it in your own words. Now start by introducing a paragraph. After students have mastered identifying the main idea and important details at the paragraph level, you can increase the amount of text. Students will vary in how much practice they need. All students should practice with a variety of types of text, increasing in challenge, to identify topics in passages where main ideas are not explicitly stated. In the Ask step, the student first identifies the topic. Prompt students to check their thinking by asking whether they think that the whole paragraph is about the topic they have chosen. After they have identified the topic, ask them to determine the main idea—that is, what the author wanted to say about the topic. Finally, ask them to determine details that are essential to capture important information. Then, ask students to describe their understanding of the passage in their own words. Set the text aside and explain. When students are comfortable using the RAP strategy for comprehension, you can extend it to helping them write summaries.

## POW+TREE



The POW+TREE strategy helps writers approach an essay-writing task and check their work as they become more independent.

The first part, POW, represents and emphasizes the importance of the planning process: *Pick* my idea and pay attention to prompt; *Organize*; *Write* and say more.

The TREE acronym is a memory and visualization tool that helps writers structure their essays: the *Topic* sentence is like the trunk of the tree that supports the whole argument; *Reasons* (at least three) are like the roots of the argument; *Explain* is a reminder to tell more about each reason; and finally, *Ending* is like the earth that wraps up the whole argument.

Think sheets or graphic organizers shaped like stylized trees that learners write in as they brainstorm and plan can prompt the internalization of this strategy.

### Steps for using the Strategy:

1. Don't forget to utilize this strategy within the [SRSD process](#) of writing.
2. Walk through each of the steps above, using a visual that works for your classroom
3. Facilitate TREE using a [graphic organizer](#) (this is just one option of many, depending on the topic).

## [TEMPLATE](#) for Evidence-Based Writing Tasks

### Research and Theory:

A large body of research demonstrates that strategy instruction can be effective for improving writing and for boosting learners' planning, editing, and overall written product quality (De la Paz, 2007; De la Paz & Graham, 2002; Englert, 2009; Graham, 2006; Graham & Perin, 2007; Perin, 2007). Moreover, when taught systematically, strategy use by learners can be retained and applied beyond the immediate instructional setting (De la Paz & Graham, 2002; Graham & Perin, 2007). Strategy instruction has been found to be particularly supportive of adults with learning disabilities (Berry & Mason, 2010; Ellis & Scanlon, 1996; McArthur & Lembo, 2009; Mellard & Scanlon, 2006).

De La Paz, S. (1999). Self-regulated strategy instruction in regular education settings: Improving outcomes for students with and without learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 12(2), 92–106.

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