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STRATEGY: Interactive Read-Alouds

Explanation: An interactive read-aloud is an engaging instructional approach in which the teacher reads a text aloud while actively involving students in the reading process. The teacher reads with expression and strategically pauses to ask questions and prompt student discussion. This method not only models fluent reading and supports classroom discourse but also fosters meaningful connections between teacher and student. Although interactive read-alouds support vocabulary development and cultivate a love of reading, they do not replace systematic and explicit phonics instruction, which is necessary for developing word reading. Instead, interactive read-alouds demonstrate for learners how proficient and fluent readers think about and discuss concepts, reason verbally, and make meaning from text.

Why this is impactful: Interactive read-alouds provide a meaningful way to engage students in texts beyond what they could read independently, therefore giving them access to new ideas, rich vocabulary, and complex sentence structures. They also create a warm and shared literary experience, which supports a positive classroom environment. Additionally, students witness their teacher's enthusiasm for reading, which reinforces the value of engaging with text.

How this fits in the GRR: Interactive read-alouds align with the guided instruction phase of the GRR model because the teacher pauses to ask questions and uses student responses to gauge understanding and inform instructional next steps.

Checks for Understanding:

- Listen to student responses in whole-class conversations, small groups, or in partner discussions.
- Observe whether students ask questions that clarify their understanding.
- See the last step in the Implementation section of this book for more ideas about other checks for understanding that are connected to the reading or writing that students engage with after the interactive read-aloud.

Variations:

- Interactive read-aloud can be used with fiction and nonfiction texts.

Related Strategies:

Shared Writing
Questioning
Universal Response

Think-Alouds
Text-Dependent Questions

STEP BY STEP

Preparation:

1. **Choose a text** that is engaging for students, connected to the unit of study, and challenging enough that students could not read the text independently.
2. **Practice reading the text aloud** to ensure fluency and appropriate expression.
3. **Plan stopping points** for discussion and comprehension checks.

Implementation:

- **Establish a purpose for the read-aloud.** For example, introduce a comprehension strategy by saying, "This text contains a lot of information, so we'll use the strategy of stopping to summarize to help us retain key ideas."
- **Read the text fluently and expressively.** Model accurate decoding, appropriate pacing, and animated expression.
- **Pause to pose questions.** Facilitate student discussions through partner talk, table group conversations, or whole-class sharing.
- **Connect to writing or independent reading.** Here are some examples:
 - If students have practiced monitoring their comprehension and rereading when meaning is lost, they can apply this strategy to independent reading.
 - Students can strengthen fluency by rereading a selected passage from the text.
 - Students can write a journal response that requires textual evidence.
 - Students can summarize key ideas.

Notes
