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It is important to keep our brains working and active through explicit instruction - along with maintaining and increasing *interaction* in instruction. Reading gives a learner the means to exercise his or her brain to expand word meaning and vocabulary knowledge (The Learn About Module).

Therefore, it is critical to discuss how **reading about content** (The Read About Module) helps improve a learner's understanding of that content. And, remember, content can be *pre-academic, academic, life skills, social communication, or vocational . . .*

But what if the learner has reading challenges?

Developing a *library of accessible resources* for our learners of any ability to use in their explicit instruction establishes and sets up **independent learning**

opportunities and formats for review and practice of material.

There are countless tools to use to make text accessible for learners of any age or ability so that the text is read to them. By turning “reading” activities into “listening” activities, learners of any ability can acquire knowledge despite the literacy challenge.

We have web tools, apps, software programs, and more . . .

I would like to share some **inexpensive and practical strategies** that my teams are using that are *simple and very effective to build solid understanding of content*. And, we all know that if something is SIMPLE and PRACTICAL, it will be used over and over again – it will be used consistently.

These strategies could be used with both **fiction and nonfiction books, sequence lists, timelines, recipes, and job tasks**. I hope as you continue to read this, that you think of your own ideas of how to use these strategies and realize that you can put them into place right now.

Here are examples of strategies implemented related to books used in a special education high school general English class:

PROBLEM: Previously, the students could not listen to the instructor read each chapter of the book (as each student held their own copy of the book) because the text was too long and too complex for meaningful understanding.

SOLUTION: Now, the instructor has a “class” copy of the book that has **chapter summaries** accessible with a **recorded pen** (*PenFriend*). The focus is on “**beginning, middle, and end**” for each chapter.



Beginning, Middle, and End Summaries for Each Chapter

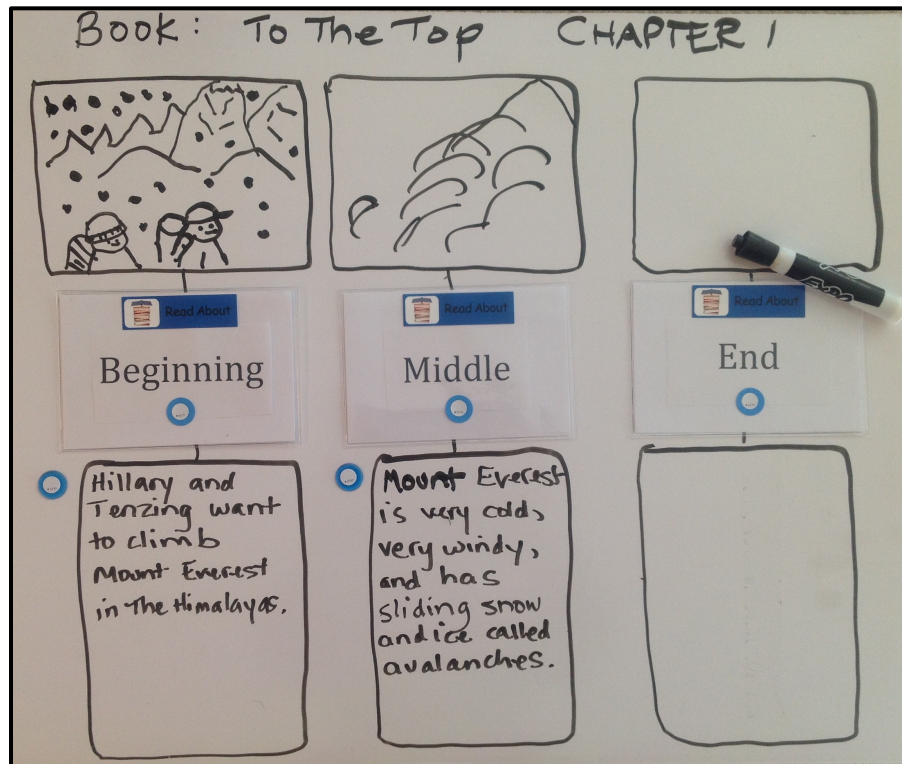
Each segment of the chapter – beginning, middle, and end - is **summarized in 3-4 sentences** and **recorded** into talking labels on the page at the start of the chapter. The talking labels are displayed in sequence, from left to right, and **coded “B, M, E”** to represent each segment.

PROBLEM: Previously, there was limited learner participation and engagement.

SOLUTION: Now, a **simple interactive spinner**, containing photos of each of the learners in the English class, is used to **pass “reading turns”** in the lesson. The accessible book is passed to the learner and he or she uses the talking pen to access one of the segments of the chapter to read to the class.

PROBLEM: Previously, the learners did not have visual anchors throughout the literacy lesson to “build” the book as a study guide.

SOLUTION: Now, after each segment of the chapter is read and listened to, the instructor creates a segment of a **“Read About Timeline” on the whiteboard** – containing both **illustrations and a summary statement** for “beginning, middle, and end” for each chapter of the book. Once each segment is completed, a **learner records the summary statement onto the whiteboard timeline. A *photo of the whiteboard timeline is taken*** and then printed out for each learner to archive.



Read About Chapter Timeline

These “Read About” strategies are:

- ✓ **Simple**
- ✓ **Cheap**
- ✓ **Effective**

We need to offer learners the types of activities that aid them in transferring and generalizing what they learn in reading activities.

The research-based methodology of **T.H.E. P.A.C.T.**
simplifies learning for learners of any age; which in
turn, **simplifies teaching for teachers.**

With warm wishes,
Phyl