

Research Supporting Shift 2: Using Evidence from Text

Primary Research

1. McKeown, M. G., Beck, I. L., & Blake, R. G. (2009). Rethinking reading comprehension instruction: A comparison of instruction for strategies and content approaches. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 44(3), 218-253.

Relevant findings:

- Compared an approach focused on the content of the text (i.e. evidence from text) with a strategy-based approach and a traditional basal approach in a low-performing urban district. Authors found a variety of benefits from the content approach including:
 - Length and quality of student recall was higher. (pg. 230-231)
 - Student discussion was dramatically more text-focused (97% vs. 66%). (pg. 237)
 - Length of student response was nearly triple. (pg. 237)
- Notably, students given strategies-based instruction were no more likely to use comprehension strategies than students given the content-based approach. (pg. 243)
- The study includes samples of classroom transcripts from differing approaches. (pg. 238 - 239)

Excerpt from Classroom Transcript using Strategies-Based Approach

Kyle: Maybe you could like to tell if it's a date or what. Just like if it's a date, you could um, see how many years from now it is.

Teacher: In the future, good. You made an inference. Did the author once say this is taking place in the future? Did the author state that?

Students: No.

Source: McKeown, Beck, & Blake (2009), pg. 238

Excerpt from Classroom Transcript using Content-Based Approach

Teacher: So what's, what's this all about? What's going on here? What's going on? Tajae, what's going on?

Tajae: Tommy found a book and they're looking in it and they're saying the pages are crinkly and stuff and they're thinking that if you read the book, you can go back in and it will be totally different about it but it's all still the same and they say that after you read it one time, you might as well throw it away cause you'll, cause if you read it and you know what it's about, if [inaudible] TV one cause if you turn on the TV and then you watch something, the next day it won't be the same page.

2. Willingham, D. (2010). Why do student remember everything that's on television and forget everything I say? *In Why don't students like school: A cognitive scientist answers questions about how the mind works and what it means for the classroom* (pp. 53-86). Jossey-Bass.

Relevant findings:

- Synthesis of research in cognitive science demonstrating that we understand and remember that which we pay attention to and think about. (Chapter 3)
- Implies that attending to evidence in the text, including the information and vocabulary within it, will lead to understanding and retention of that content.

3. **Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates of the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California, (2002) Academic literacy: A statement of competencies expected of students entering California's public colleges and universities. Sacramento, CA: Author**

Relevant finding:

- College instructors consider identifying, evaluating, and using evidence to support or challenge a thesis one of the most important skills expected of incoming college students. (pg. 15)

4. **The Vermont Writing Collaborative. (2008). *Writing for understanding*. Strafford, VT: The Vermont Writing Collaborative.**

Relevant findings:

- Identifies lack of understanding of content as one of the key reasons for poor quality student writing.
- Teaches how to write using evidence.

For additional research, see also:

- Baker, E., McKeown, M. (Producers). (2009, September 7). *Comprehension instruction: Focus on content or strategies* [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <http://www.voiceofliteracy.org/posts/34422>
- The Vermont Writing Collaborative: Writing for understanding. (n.d.) Retrieved November 7, 2014, from <http://www.vermontwritingcollaborative.org/>