Chelsey Sands
SERP 511B
Spring 2013
Dr. Mather
IRIS Module #1

CSR: A Reading Comprehension Strategy

1. Describe the differences between a good reader and a poor reader.

Good readers use various strategies to help them organize and remember what they have read. Specifically, before, during, or after reading, good readers clarify their purpose for reading, make a plan for how to read the text, connect information to their prior knowledge, ask questions about the text, and monitor their comprehension.

Poor readers lack the strategies that good readers perform. Often, poor readers focus on decoding words, do not see connections among parts of the text, do not realize that they do not understand what they have read, and do not understand the concept of reading for meaning.

2. Name four elements that can be used to teach comprehension. Explain how CSR addresses these four elements.

> **Prior knowledge** — Students are taught to think about what they already know about a particular topic. Next, students are asked to try to make a connection between their prior knowledge and the text they are reading.

> **Vocabulary development** — Students are taught to use diagrams or graphic organizers to help them to learn and remember the meanings of new words.

> **Questioning techniques** — Students are taught to generate questions before, during, and after reading. Students are asked to predict what they are going to read, to ask themselves during reading whether what they have read makes sense, and to generate questions about the text after reading.

> **Opportunities to practice new skills** — Students are given ample time in the day for independent reading and are encouraged to share what they have read.

> CSR addresses these four elements by using four reading strategies that maximize students' reading comprehension and engagement.

3. What are the four reading strategies that make up CSR? Explain each.

Preview	Students activate *prior knowledge* and make predictions about what they will learn from the text.
Click and Clunk	Students monitor their comprehension of vocabulary as they read, applying fix-up strategies to infer the meaning of unknown words by their context.
Get the Gist	Students identify the most important information contained within each section of text.
Wrap Up	Students generate questions and answers based on the information in the passage they have just read.

4. Imagine that you are a fifth-grade social studies teacher. Having decided to implement CSR, you have divided your students into groups of five. Of the six roles described in this module, which five would you select for the groups? Explain.

- **Leader:** helps the group to use the four reading strategies and reminds each of the

  group members when to do his or her particular job

- **Clunk Expert:** reminds students of the steps to follow to figure out the meaning

  of a difficult word or concept

- **Gist Expert:** reminds the other group members of the steps to follow to figure out

  the main idea for each section of the text

- **Announcer:** calls on members to read or to share an idea; he or she makes sure

  that everyone takes part and that only one person talks at a time

- **Timekeeper/Encourager:** helps the group to complete the reading assignment

  within a certain amount of time *and* watches the group and tells everyone that

  they are doing well and explains how they can work better together next time

I assigned the fifth role as a joint timekeeper and encourager so that all six roles are addressed, despite the fact that there are only five students per group. The timekeeper/encourager can perform both functions, as I believe it would be important to incorporate all six roles within the groups made up of five-students each.

5. In this module, you learned about two methods of teaching group roles.
a. Identify and describe both methods.
b. Select the method you would use to teach group roles. Explain your preference.

1. Teaching the roles independently in "expert" groups:

Step 1. Pull together all of the students who are going to assume the role of Leader. Explain to them the purpose of the role and how they will interact with other students in the group.

Step 2. Review their responsibilities and model how they should implement them. It may be beneficial to give each student in the group a copy of the cue card for that respective role.

Step 3. Allow each student the opportunity to practice the role and ask other students to offer feedback.

Step 4. Continue with each "expert" group until all students know and have had an opportunity to successfully demonstrate how they would implement their roles.

2. Teaching group interaction through class critique:

Step 1. Pull together one cooperative learning group that includes students representing each role. Work with this group to develop proficiency in performing their roles.

Step 2. When the students have developed a certain level of proficiency, ask them to demonstrate to the rest of the class.

Step 3. Critique the group's performance. Be sure to praise what was done correctly far more than you criticize what was done incorrectly.

Step 4. Rotate groups, allowing another group to perform the roles for the class while the rest of the class critiques its performance.

Personally, I would choose to teach the roles independently in "expert" groups because it seems more efficient and relevant for the students. This method allows students the opportunity to work as a team, socially interacting with their peers to share ideas and demonstrate/model skills needed for the activity/role assigned.

Chelsey Sands
SERP 511B
Spring 2013
Dr. Mather
IRIS Module #2

<u>Improving Writing Performance: A Strategy for Writing Persuasive Essays</u>

1. Struggling writers have difficulty with multiple elements of the writing process. Identify two examples of difficulties struggling writers may experience. For each example, explain which element of the writing process is likely to be impacted.

Struggling writers experience greater writing anxiety and decreased motivation, which affects the *planning* element of the writing process. Also, struggling writers focus on mechanics rather than on clarity and organization, which impacts the *writing* element of the writing process.

2. Describe two ways that transcription and grammar skills can affect the quality of a student's writing assignment?

Students who have to concentrate on transcription or grammar may be unable to think about higher order skills during the writing process. Additionally, students who have not yet mastered the formal structure of language will find it difficult, if not impossible, to construct coherent written compositions.

3. Describe what you do at each step of the POW+TREE Strategy.

Pick an idea or opinion: Formulate an opinion and state that opinion clearly.

Organize and generate notes and ideas for each part of the "TREE": Organize notes with a graphic organizer.

    Topic Sentence: Formulate a topic sentence expressing an opinion.
    Reason: Give at least three reasons to support the topic sentence.
    Explanation: Explain your reasons.
    Ending: Formulate a statement to summarize the topic sentence.

Write and say more: Write a complete paragraph. Follow the plan developed using the TREE strategy.

4.   Give two reasons why teaching students a strategy such as POW+TREE would be beneficial, and offer an explanation for each reason.
    1. Teaching a strategy such as POW and TREE gives students a structure to follow when writing. It gives them an easy mnemonic to remember for each step of the writing process.
    2. Strategies such as POW and TREE help students with at least the first three steps in the writing process (planning, organizing, and writing). These easy-to-remember steps give students more independence to work on and challenge their writing skills by themselves.

Chelsey Sands
SERP 511B
Spring 2013
Dr. Mather
IRIS Module #3

<u>High-Quality Mathematics Instruction: What Teachers Should Know</u>

   1.   *Name and describe the components of high-quality mathematics instruction.*

High-quality mathematics instruction includes standards-based curriculum, which is important content/skills needed for students to learn. Common Core Standards are one example of standards-based curriculum. Another component of high-quality mathematics instruction includes evidence-based instructional strategies; these strategies are proven through research to be effective for teaching students skills and concepts needed to succeed. Examples of evidence-based instructional strategies include explicit instruction, peer tutoring, and cooperative learning.

   2.   *Describe the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. Be sure to include their*
purpose as well as their strengths.

The Common Core State Standards for mathematics provide the skill set requirements that students should master by the end of each grade level. The standards consist of rigorous content with an emphasis on higher-order thinking skills. The Common Core Standards were developed by several groups consisting of teachers, educational leaders, and experts in the field, to provide clear and concise requirements across states. There is an underlying consistency of mathematical skills that transfer across grade levels and mathematical concepts. The purpose of the Common Core State Standards for mathematics is to ensure all students have the knowledge and skills necessary to not only be successful in school and graduate from high school, but also to be successful in post-secondary environments such as college, employment, etc. and compete in an ever-expanding, global economy.

3. View the video clip below and identify the evidence-based teaching strategy being implemented. Additionally, identify any effective classroom practices being used. Describe how each helps to build conceptual understanding of the topic being taught.

The evidence-based teaching strategy being used in the video clip is cooperative learning. There are many effective classroom practices being used in the video clip. The teacher grouped students in small groups of four students to work together to solve the problem. Working with peers develops social skills as well as helps students who are "teaching" their peers and students that might be struggling to understand the concept or problem. The teacher also used a manipulative by providing students with a hard copy of the room/problem. Additionally, the teacher monitored understanding of the student groups by walking around the room and asking questions about *how* the students came up with

their solution as well as offered encouragement and positive reinforcement for the work they had done to reach the solution.

4. Of the effective classroom practices discussed in this module, select two. Describe their importance for teaching mathematics. Discuss how you plan to use those practices in your own classroom.

Using manipulatives is a great strategy for teaching mathematics. Manipulatives are effective for a variety of mathematical concepts, from very simple to more complicated. Students have a visual for the problem they are trying to solve. Also, this strategy helps students who are tactile/kinesthetic learners and like to use their hands to solve problems. As a Special Education teacher, I use manipulatives when teaching mathematics, as it helps students to *see* the concept with something tangible. I use something of high interest for students who struggle with motivation if math is a challenging subject for them. For example, with a student who really likes cars or trucks, I use small cars/trucks or car/truck stickers to work on mathematics.

Students working in small (cooperative) groups is also a very effective strategy for teaching mathematics. Peers can help explain things at a level that sometimes even teachers have trouble explaining effectively. This strategy allows the teacher more time and flexibility to move around to various groups, checking for understanding and/or assisting groups or students who may need extra instruction. As a Special Education teacher, providing instruction in small groups is very effective, as students may find it challenging to follow along with the entire class during mathematics instruction. In a small group, I can see every student's paper or white board and can provide direct instruction more effectively and efficiently. Also, students with disabilities often feel discouraged and unsuccessful in the classroom environment when a challenging subject is being taught. In a small group setting, students who understand a given concept feel successful when they can help explain the concept to a peer who is struggling.

Chelsey Sands
SERP 511B
Spring 2013
Dr. Mather
IRIS Module #4

SRSD: Using Learning Strategies to Enhance Student Learning

1. Suggest at least three ways that strategies can help students in the classroom.

Three ways that strategies can help students in the classroom include reducing disruptive problems in the classroom, empowering students by allowing them to reinforce their own behavior, and allowing teachers to have more time to work with small groups or individual students who require extra assistance.

2. Compare the characteristics of strategic learners with those of non-strategic learners.

Characteristics of strategic learners include: analyzing a problem and developing a plan, organizing multiple goals and switching flexibly from simple to more complicated goals, accessing their background knowledge and applying it to novel tasks, developing new organizational or procedural strategies as the task becomes more complex, using effective self-regulated strategies while completing a task, attributing high grades to their hard work and good study habits, and reviewing the task-oriented-goals and determining whether they have been met.

Characteristics of non-strategic learners include: unorganized, impulsive, unaware of where to begin an assignment, unaware of possible steps to break the problem into a manageable task (possibly due to the magnitude of the task), exhibiting problems with memory, unable to focus on a task, lack of persistence, experiencing feelings of frustration, failure, or anxiety, and attributing failure to uncontrollable factors.

3. List the six research-validated stages of SRSD. What aspects of each would you emphasize as the most important?

- **Develop Background Knowledge**
  I think the most important aspect of "Develop Background Knowledge" is to help students develop the necessary skills (such as vocabulary, etc.) they may need to learn the academic and self-regulation strategy

- **Discuss It**
  I think the most important aspect of "Discuss It" is to emphasize the importance of student effort, motivation, and self-talk. These are important skills that students can use in many areas of school and life to help them succeed.

- **Model It**
  I think the most important aspect of "Model It" is to demonstrate to students the reasons the steps in a strategy are necessary. If students do not understand the reason behind what you are asking them to do, the strategy is far less effective.

- **Memorize It**
  I think the most important aspect of "Memorize It" is to help students become fluent in the steps of a strategy so they can use them without having to stop and think about what step comes next. This will help them become more fluent in the process so that it becomes like second-nature for them in the future.

- **Support It**
  I think the most important aspect of "Support It" is to offer constructive feedback, guidance, and positive reinforcement. If students feel some success and positive reinforcement is motivating for them, they will be more likely to work hard when continuing the process.

- **Establish Independent Practice**
  I think the most important aspect of "Establish Independent Practice" is to incorporate activities in lesson plans to allow students to maintain and generalize their new writing strategy skills in various settings and across several tasks.

4. *Imagine you are a fifth-grade teacher. Mary Ann, a student in your class, understands*
why she should use an instructional strategy that you are teaching, but she is not yet
ready to use the strategy independently. Explain how you would help prepare her to do
so.

Depending on how much time was available for instruction, I would offer Mary Ann extra support via one-on-one instruction, small group instruction, or peer tutoring. If I had another strong student in the class that I could pair Mary Ann with, I would probably offer that strategy first, as I think peer assistance can sometimes be the most effective strategy, especially at the age and social-peer maturity of most fifth graders. If I had enough time as the classroom teacher, I would work with Mary Ann on a one-on-one basis and try to pinpoint exactly where she was struggling and offer extra practice, with exposure to many different examples.

5. *You've followed along as Mr. Carter introduced the four self-regulation strategies in a way that was appropriate to the needs of his students. Can you describe an alternate way to introduce the self-regulation strategies?*

Personally, I am a big believer in using games for instruction. An alternate way to introduce the self-regulation strategies would be to create a game with the class. Depending on the grade level, there could be incentives set up for each "stage" or strategy that the class completed/mastered.