

- it could lead to first hand experience of the publishing process;
- it could provide a sense of satisfaction in seeing a project through from beginning to end;
- it could provide a life-long memory of the experience;
- it would ensure experience of everything in the N.C. document for English:
 - Speaking and Listening – sharing ideas; interviewing; planning; negotiating; presenting reports and feedback.
 - Reading – a variety of information texts from which to extract information; own written pieces to assess effectiveness; other texts to match language used.
 - Writing – the whole writing process; gathering ideas; engaging; drafting; re-drafting; revising; collaborative writing; editing; publishing.
- it would involve all the technological skills of identifying a need; planning and designing; making; evaluating; re-designing; and testing.
- it could help to develop an awareness of the format of information books more clearly;
- it would provide opportunities for meaningful research; note-taking skills;
- it would provide opportunities for developing appropriate language for a specific audience;
- the children would have opportunities for developing awareness of proportion, colour and presentation in layout work;
- and finally I felt that it would provide opportunities to experience the 'real world' of book-making and all the demands and considerations that this involves.

How many other projects taking place in schools could claim as many worthwhile justifications!

The whole project was a long process and required many hours of hard work, but the experience and knowledge gained by both myself and the children has been tremendous. I hope that children and teachers find the books useful. I still believe the originals are nearer to the original concept of children as authors answering questions raised by younger children than the published books.

For example, one child asked, "How many trees and flowers are there in the countryside?" and the written response in the original book was, "Nobody knows because they are impossible to count. If somebody did try to count them they would get very annoyed because more flowers grow every day."

"How do the trees and flowers grow?"

"They grow by spreading their seeds. To make seeds plants need to be pollinated. Insects like bees spread pollen from one plant to the next. They grow naturally and because no-one plants these flower seeds they are called wild flowers."

The publishers in their wisdom did not see the potential of such dialogue.

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The Scaffolded Reading Experience: A Flexible Framework for Helping Students Get the Most Out of Text

Michael F. Graves and Bonnie B. Graves

How can teachers effectively help all students read, understand, and apply the ideas and information in the variety of texts they read – from poetry to physics? One way is to provide them with a Scaffolded Reading Experience – a set of activities specifically designed to assist a particular group of students to successfully read, understand, learn from, and enjoy a particular selection.

The Scaffolded Reading Experience (SRE) developed out of a perceived educational need and has its roots

in common sense, classroom experience, and research. The thinking behind SREs is fully described in *Scaffolding Reading Experiences: Designs for Student Success* (Graves & Graves, 1994). Here, we describe the two central principles motivating SREs – the notion of scaffolding and the importance of student success.

We believe that the term *scaffolding* was first used in its educational sense by Harvard psychologist Jerome Bruner, who used it to characterize mothers' verbal

interaction when reading to their young children. In sharing a picture book with a child and attempting to assist the child in reading the words that label the pictures, a mother might at first simply page through the book, familiarizing the child with the pictures and the general content of the book. Then, she might focus on a single picture and ask the child what it is. After this, she might point to the word below the picture, tell the child that the word names the picture, ask the child what the word is, and provide him or her with feedback on the correctness of the answer. The important point is that the mother neither simply told the child the word nor simply asked him or her to say it. Instead, she has built an instructional structure, a scaffold, that assists the student in learning. Scaffolding, as Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) have aptly put it, is "a process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task, or achieve a goal which would be beyond his [or her] unassisted efforts" (p. 90). This is precisely the way we use the term.

As Harold Herber (1970) pointed out some years ago and as the research on teaching effectiveness has repeatedly verified (Brophy, 1986), if students are to become both proficient and avid readers – children and later adults who voluntarily seek out reading as a road to information, enjoyment, and personal fulfillment – then successful reading experiences are vital. Children need to succeed in the majority of reading we ask them to undertake. Importantly, this does not mean that they should be spoon fed. As Frank Smith

(1976) noted nearly 20 years ago and as recent research (Perkins, 1992) has verified, unless students undertake some challenging tasks, unless they are willing to take some risks and get feedback on their efforts, there is little room for learning. In order to develop as readers, children need to be given some challenges, but they also need to be given the scaffolding necessary to meet these challenges.

In the remainder of this article, we describe the SRE framework, discuss the possible components of an SRE, and give some brief examples of SREs.

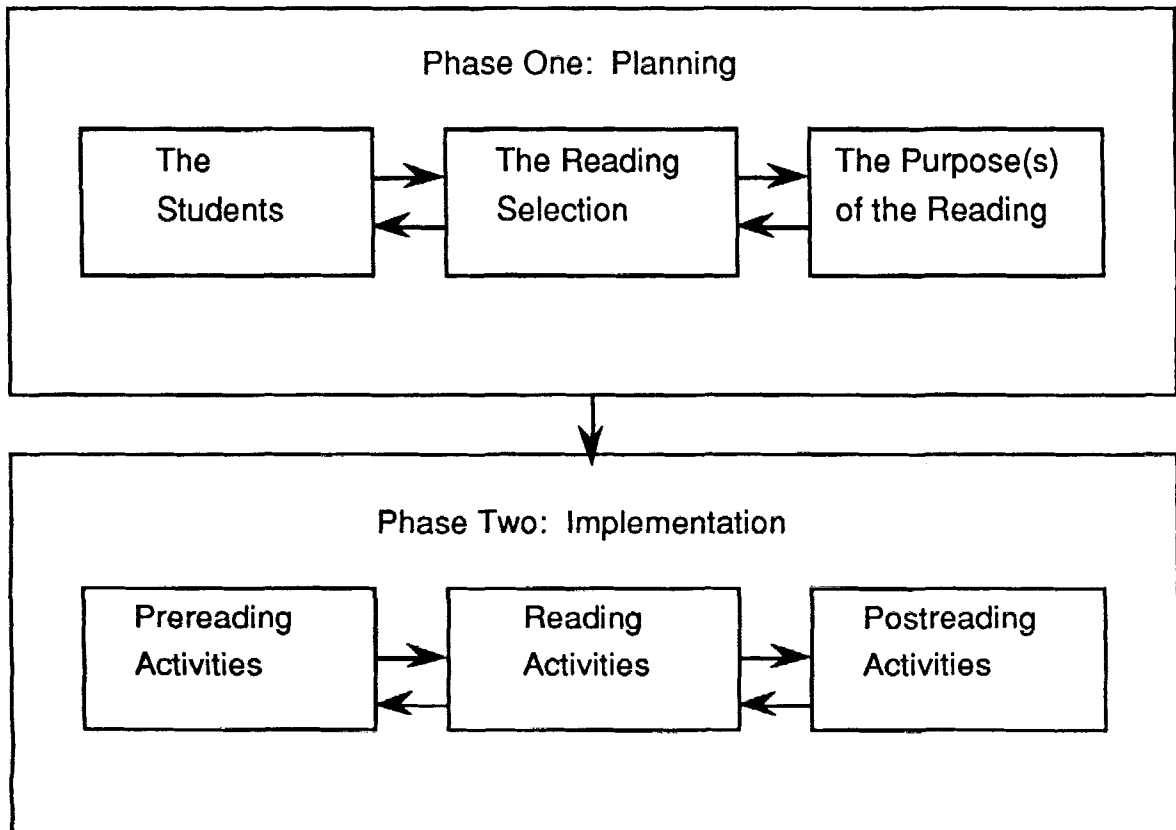
The Scaffolded Reading Experience Framework

As shown in the figure below, the SRE has two major phases – the planning stage and the implementation phase.

Phase One: Planning

In the planning phase, the teacher considers

- the students – their needs, concerns, interests, strengths, weaknesses, background knowledge, anything that might influence their success (or failure) in reading a particular selection
- the selection – its topics and themes, its potentially difficult vocabulary or other stumbling blocks, and the opportunities it presents for instruction



- the purpose or purposes for reading – What is it the student is to gain from the reading experience? For what purposes is he or she reading?

These three factors are interrelated, and decisions made about any one factor influence the decisions that can be made about the other two.

Phase Two: Implementation

The implementation phase of an SRE also has three components – prereading, during reading, and postreading activities. Based on a particular group of students, a particular text, and particular purposes that students will accomplish in reading the text, the teacher selects those pre-, during-, and postreading activities that will lead these students to success.

Possible Components of an SRE

As the framework indicates, possible components of an SRE include prereading, during reading, and postreading activities.

Prereading Activities

Prereading activities can serve a number of functions, including getting students interested in reading a selection, reminding students of things they already know that will help them understand and enjoy a selection, and preteaching aspects of a selection that students may find difficult.

Prereading options for an SRE include

- Motivating
- Activating background knowledge
- Building text-specific knowledge
- Relating the reading to students' lives
- Preteaching vocabulary
- Preteaching concepts
- Prequestioning, predicting, and direction setting
- Suggesting comprehension strategies

Motivating Activities include any activities designed to interest students in the upcoming selection and entice them to read it. Although many prereading activities can be motivational as well as accomplishing some other purpose, it is worth considering motivating activities as a separate category because it is often appropriate to do something solely for the purpose of getting students interested and excited about a selection.

Activating Background Knowledge involves prompting students to bring to consciousness already known information which will be helpful in understanding the upcoming text. For example, before reading an

article on the Mississippi River, students can discuss what they know about rivers in Great Britain or on the Continent.

Building Text Specific Knowledge involves giving students information that is contained in the reading selection itself. Providing students with advance information on the content of a selection – for example, giving students the seven topics discussed in an article on whales – may be justified if the selection is conceptually difficult, contains a great deal of new information, or is densely packed with information.

Relating the Reading to Students' Lives serves both to engage students and to facilitate their understanding. Thus, for example, before reading a story in which the main character is discriminated against because of a handicap, it would make good sense to have students think about and discuss times when they felt misunderstood or mistreated.

Preteaching Vocabulary consists of teaching words that are new labels for concepts that students already know. For example, teachers would generally be teaching vocabulary – a new label – if they taught junior school students the word *crimson*, meaning “red.”

Preteaching Concepts consists of teaching new and potentially difficult ideas. Teaching the meaning of *velocity*, for example, usually requires teaching a new and complex idea. It is important to distinguish between teaching new labels and teaching new ideas because, while it often makes sense to take five minutes and preteach half-a-dozen new labels before an upcoming selection, teaching new and difficult concepts takes significant amounts of time.

We have listed *Prequestioning, Predicting, and Direction Setting* together because they are similar activities. With any of them, what teachers are doing is focusing students' attention and telling them what is important to look for as they read. Such focusing is often necessary because without it students may not be able to distinguish essential matters from peripheral ones.

In the final prereading activity listed, *Suggesting Comprehension Strategies*, the key word is *suggesting*. SREs are not designed to *teach* strategies. Teaching comprehension strategies – actually instructing students in how to use strategies such as determining what is important and summarizing – almost always requires more time than is typically given to SREs (Graves, Watts, & Graves, 1994). However, it is often appropriate to suggest as part of an SRE that students use strategies they already know. Thus, if the teacher has already taught students how to make visual representations of texts as an aid to understanding them, the teacher may want to point out that the

chapter students are about to read is a good one to represent graphically.

During-Reading Activities

During-reading activities include both things that students themselves do as they are reading and things that teachers do to assist them as they are reading.

During-reading options for an SRE include

- Silent reading
- Reading to students
- Guided reading
- Oral reading by students
- Modifying the text

We have deliberately listed *Silent Reading* first because we believe strongly that it should be the most frequently used during-reading activity. Most of the reading students do in life will be silent reading, and the road to proficiency in silent reading is to read a lot. If teachers choose appropriate selections for students to read and adequately prepare them to read the selections, then students will often be able to silently read the selections on their own.

Reading To Students can serve many functions. Hearing a story or piece of exposition read aloud is a very pleasurable experience for many youngsters and presents students with a model of good oral reading. Reading the first chapter or the first few pages of a piece aloud can help ease students into the material and serve as an enticement for them to read the rest of the selection silently.

Guided Reading refers to any activity that teachers use to focus students' attention on particular aspects of the text as they read. Often, with guided reading activities, students' goal is to learn something from their reading. Thus, guided reading activities are frequently used with expository material. However, it is also possible to guide students in appreciating and enjoying narratives. Thus, a teacher might suggest that students pause at several points in an adventure story and write a diary entry from the point of view of the protagonist.

Oral Reading by Students should generally be less frequent than silent reading. As previously mentioned, most of the reading students do outside of school is silent reading. Nonetheless, oral reading has its place. Poetry is often best and most effective when read orally. Also, poignant or particularly well written passages of prose are often appropriate for oral reading. Moreover, reading orally can be helpful when the class or a group of students is studying a passage and trying to decide on alternate interpre-

tations. Finally, students often like to read their own writing orally.

Modifying the Text is sometimes necessary to make the material more accessible to students. This may involve using an audio or video tape, changing the format of a selection, or shortening a text. Modifying the text is called for in situations in which reading selections present too much of a challenge because of their length or difficulty. Students may not gain as much from hearing a text, reading part of it, or reading an altered version of it; but success at one of these tasks is certainly preferable to failure with the original text.

Postreading Activities

Postreading activities serve a variety of purposes. They provide opportunities for students to synthesize and organize information gleaned from the text. They provide opportunities for students to evaluate an author's message and the quality of the text itself. They provide opportunities for both teachers and students to evaluate students' understanding of the text. And they provide opportunities for students to respond to a text in a variety of interesting ways.

Postreading options for an SRE include

- Questioning
- Discussion
- Writing
- Drama
- Artistic, graphic, and nonverbal activities
- Application and outreach activities
- Reteaching

Questioning is a frequently used and frequently warranted activity. Questioning activities give teachers an opportunity to encourage and promote higher order thinking – to nudge students to grapple with the material, to interpret, analyze, and evaluate what they read. Sometimes, of course, it is appropriate for students to read something and not be faced with some sort of accountability. However, in many cases, neither teachers nor students will be sure that students have gained what they need from the reading without students answering some sort of questions. Of course, teachers are not the only ones who should be asking questions after reading. Students can ask questions of each other, they can ask teachers questions, and they can ask questions they plan to answer through further reading.

Some sort of *Discussion* – whether it takes place in small groups or involves the entire class – is also very frequent and often very appropriate. Certainly, if there is a chance that some students did not understand as much of a selection as they need to, discussion is warranted. Equally importantly, discussion

gives students a chance to offer their personal interpretations and responses to a text.

Writing is a postreading task that probably ought to be used more frequently than it is. In recent years, there has been a good deal of well-warranted emphasis on the fact that reading and writing are complementary activities and ought often to be dealt with together. In brief, writing can be a powerful adjunct to reading.

Drama offers a range of opportunities for students to get actively involved in responding to what they have read. As defined here, drama refers particularly to informal performances involving action, movement, and speech. Short plays, skits, and Readers Theatre are among the many possibilities. Drama has the potential for showing students that language can be transformed, that ideas can be seen, heard, and felt.

Artistic, Graphic, and Nonverbal Activities constitute additional possibilities. This broad category includes visual art, graphics, music, dance, and media productions such as videos, slide shows, and audio tapes, as well as constructive activities that one might not typically think of as artistic. Probably the most frequent members of this last category are graphics of some sort – maps, charts, trees, diagrams, schematics, and the like. Other possibilities include constructing models or bringing in artifacts that are somehow responses to the selection read. Artistic and nonverbal activities are often particularly useful because they are fun, may be a little different from typical school tasks, and provide opportunities for students to express themselves in a variety of ways, thus creating contexts in which students of varying talents and abilities can excel.

Application and Outreach Activities include both direct applications – cooking something after reading a recipe – and less direct ones – attempting to change some aspect of student government after reading something about state government. This category also includes activities that extend beyond the campus – planning a drive to collect used coats and sweaters after reading a news article on people in need of winter clothing or taking a field trip to a local art museum after reading about one of the artists represented there. Obviously, there are many options here.

The final postreading activity considered is *Reteaching*. When it becomes apparent that students have not achieved their reading goals or the level of understanding the teacher deems necessary, reteaching is often in order, and the best time for reteaching is usually as soon as possible after students first encounter the material. In some cases, reteaching may consist simply of asking students to reread parts of a selection. In other cases, teachers may want to present a short lesson on some part of the text that

has caused students problems. And in still other cases, students who have understood a particular aspect of the text may assist other students in achieving similar understanding.

Some Sample SREs

In all, the SRE framework presents 18 possible activities, far too many to be used with a single selection. Again, however, this is a list of *options*. From this set of possibilities, the teacher chooses only those that are appropriate for his or her particular students reading a particular text for a particular purpose. In general, with less proficient students, more difficult selections, and more challenging purposes, more scaffolding is needed; while with more proficient students, less difficult selections, and less challenging purposes, less scaffolding is needed.

For example, a straightforward narrative with characters and a setting that are familiar to students may require the teacher merely saying, "This is a terrific story. Read and enjoy it!"

An article on Newton's first law, however, might require that a teacher prepare a diverse group of junior school students with several pre-, during-, and postreading activities. Prereading activities might include activating students' background knowledge by relating Newton's Laws to their everyday experiences. Prereading activities might also include preteaching the concepts of FORCE, FRICTION, and INERTIA. As a during reading activity, students might write summaries of each section or create examples of concepts that are similar to those the author gives, but are ones the reader has experienced personally. Postreading activities might include discussion, making models, and preparing demonstrations of Newton's first law to present to another group of students.

As another example of a complete SRE, suppose you are working with a class of primary school students reading a trade book on Loch Lomond, and their goal is to learn the most important information in the text. In this situation, you might provide prereading instruction that includes a motivational activity, the preteaching of some difficult vocabulary, and a questioning activity. Next, for the during-reading portion of the lesson, you might read part of the book orally and then have students read the rest silently, looking for answers to their questions. Once students have finished the selection, they might break into discussion groups of three or four and answer the questions they posed during prereading. Finally, the groups might come together as a class and share their answers. Here is a list of the activities.

Prereading:	Motivating Preteaching Vocabulary Questioning
During Reading:	Reading to Students Silent Reading
Postreading:	Small Group Discussion Answering Questions Large Group Discussion

Examples of the types of activities teachers might use to create an SRE are found in abundance in professional books and journals. In scanning the November 1992 issue of *Reading*, for example, we located several. In "Primary School Study Reading," David Pryke suggests a number of pre-, during-, and postreading activities to use with primary school children when reading informational texts. Similarly, in "Information Skills in the Primary Classroom," Karen Baldwin presents an example of discussion, questioning, and focusing prereading activities to help students extract key ideas from text. Placing activities such as these within the SRE framework and modifying them to fit a particular group of students, text, and purpose, the teacher can create a custom-tailored reading experience.

Conclusion

To summarize, the purpose in planning and carrying out any SRE is a straightforward one: The objective is to do everything possible to ensure that students have a successful reading experience. A successful reading experience is one in which students understand the selection, learn from it, enjoy it, and achieve the goals the teacher and they have set. Moreover, a successful reading experience leaves students realizing that they have been successful, recognizing that they have dealt competently with the selection because that is exactly what they have

done. As we have repeatedly emphasized, if students are to become successful readers – adults who can and do read, both to gain information and for the pleasure and satisfaction that reading can provide – the vast majority of their reading experiences must be successful ones.

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Extending Children's Reading Through Newspapers

Mike Huggins

Introduction

The importance of the experience of story in helping children to be hooked on reading lies at the heart of many of the articles in *Reading*. However, far fewer articles deal with the need to provide children with a

wider set of reading experiences which involve a whole range of texts. Such experiences need to be set in meaningful contexts which can help our pupils make meaning out of reading in a more effective way. The more functional texts found in the children's own environment, which reflect 'real world' literacy