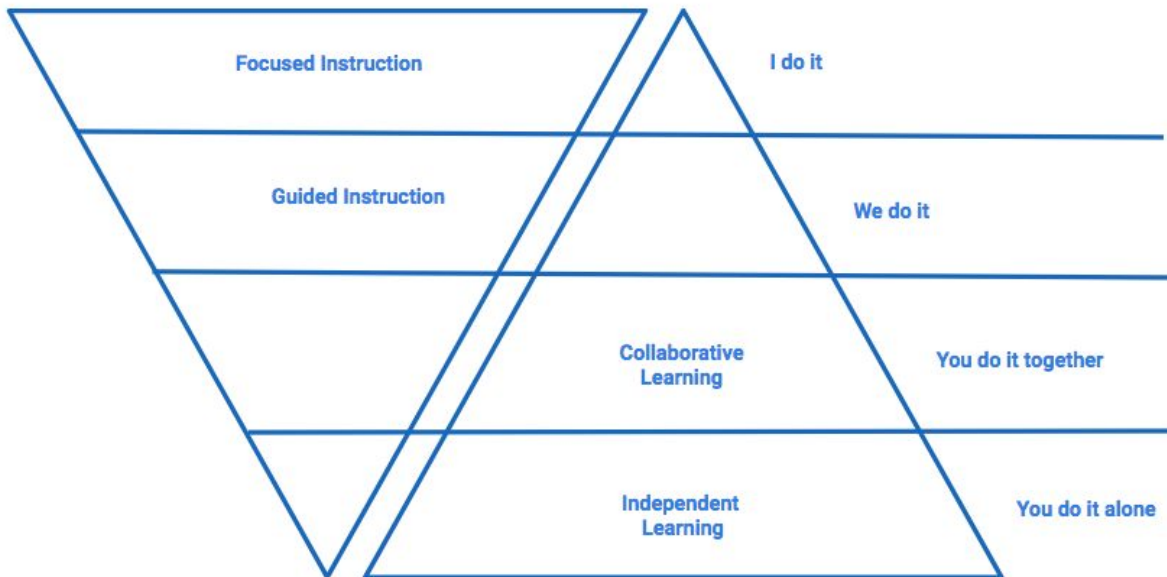


Gradual Release of Responsibility with ThinkCERCA



Fisher & Frey, 2013

Focused Instruction:

I do it

Focused instruction is whole class instruction. Typically a brief mini lesson (5-15 minutes) it sets the stage for the lesson. As equally important, *it provides a model for students*. What is important to note, though, is that the gradual release of responsibility model is recursive, as such focused instruction may happen at multiple points throughout a lesson, at the beginning, the middle, the end. The purpose is to establish the purpose, set the stage, and provide guidance through modeling.

Instructional Activities:

1. Lead the Direct Instruction. Model your thinking.
2. Model the “connect” step in a Writing Lesson.
3. Pre-write a response to a Writing Lesson and model your annotation.
4. Complete a Reading Practice comprehension check in front of your students, thinking out loud.
5. Explicitly state the connection between different lessons, concepts, and skills.

Guided Instruction:

We do it

Guided instruction consists of small groups, determined by data, focusing on a consistent skill that the teacher can explicitly support. The key here is *differentiation*. As Tomlinson & Imbeau (2010) have stated, this can include content, process, and product. In other words, using data to determine what is best for students to reach the stated goals of the lesson is critical. Bringing in other resources, allowing students to engage with a variety of supports (like graphic organizers or technology), and encouraging students to share their learnings in different ways are encouraged.

Instructional Activities:

1. Use the data from comprehension checks to group students. Assign relevant Skills Lessons to students.
2. Use a full Writing Module to differentiate content for students based on readiness level. Pull students in small groups for targeted instruction.
3. Build upon focused instruction and model thinking for students in small group.
4. Encourage students to present their learnings in writing, drawings, or response to oral discussion prompts.
5. Lead students through a Writing Lesson, modeling your thinking while encouraging students to share their thoughts as well.

Collaborative Learning: **You do it together**

As suggested by its name, collaborative learning is just that: purposeful and thoughtfully planned opportunities for students to collaborate with one another. This allows students to build upon what they learned during focused and guided instruction to develop their own understanding of a topic. A goal of collaborative learning is for more understanding to be gleaned, in other words, develop discussion prompts that require students to not only share what they know, but also question what they do not yet know, such as “could you describe more of what you mean”?

Instructional Activities:

1. Direct students to review the text overview and begin to discuss their thoughts with a KWL chart.
2. After students write their summary in the Writing Lesson, encourage them to engage in a conversation to dig deeper into their main ideas and supporting details.
3. Before students finalize their response to the Writing Lesson Question, have them work in groups to defend their claims, evidence, and reasoning.
4. Set up a socratic seminar in your classroom. Have students support and coach one another, eventually leading to ownership in a socratic seminar.

Independent Learning: **You do it alone**

The goal of our instruction is so that students can “independently apply information, ideas, content, skills, and strategies” (Fisher & Frey, 2013). We want our learners to be critical thinkers, who are able to synthesize, collaborate, and make sense of new learning. Therefore the independent learning stage of the Gradual Release of Responsibility framework requires students to engage in relevant, authentic, and readiness-appropriate tasks. Building upon the three other components of this framework, students should be provided with tasks that can share their learning as well as application of concepts and skills.

Instructional Activities:

1. During the final step of a Writing Lesson, provide students with additional resources to expand upon their writing.
2. Develop a rubric for project-based learning where students can engage in responding to tasks in a variety of ways.
3. Provide students with the opportunity to analyze their comprehension check responses and engage in an error analysis with peers to expand their understanding of a topic.
4. Encourage students to synthesize their learning from Writing Lessons, Skills Lessons, and any longer texts they may be reading.