

Step by Step Guide on How to Use Shared Strategic Reading

This **guide** has been prepared to allow any clinician, teacher, teacher aide or parent to competently *begin* using **Shared Strategic Reading**.

As with any new skill it is vital that you learn in small **achievable steps**, much like a baby beginning to walk - baby steps. In time, once you have practiced these techniques several times you will be able to expand your skills and discover things that even I may not have thought of. That's the beauty of **Shared Strategic Reading**...

Shared Strategic Reading may look daunting initially, but once you have learnt some **basic skills**, and can use them in the correct sequence, you will find that it is very simple to use well.

Before beginning, it is vital that you **familiarize** yourself with the Shared Strategic Reading chart. Please note that the boxes have been **colour coded**. The colours represent that though the techniques are similar, they are in fact still quite different, but can be used interchangeably.

I have included a **detailed case study** example of a Shared Strategic Reading session that was completed with

a language impaired 10 year old boy. In the example, I use all the techniques outlined in the recommended sequence for **Shared Strategic Reading**.

Give it a go. Once you have mastered these techniques you may never again have to scratch your head and think *'what do I do now for my language impaired child?'* Anyone with access to a library with good picture books will have access to a great resource of therapy materials.



A scene from Shaun Tan's picture book, **The Arrival**.

Recommended Sequence for Shared Strategic Reading

1. **Select** the book to be used in therapy. Briefly discuss the title and first page. *(You don't need to do this if you've used the book with the child before)*. Begin with **preparatory set**. Use the **Semantic Map's** for key words.
2. The child reads the chosen passage. Select a 2-4 block of sentences to begin with, or 1-2 paragraphs. **Reread** the target passage to the child and point out **key** words.
3. Use **paraphrasing** to reword difficult or complex sentences or ideas. **Extensions** can be used to focus attention on a particular part of the passage. Use **fact, interpretive** or **inference** question to expand on key points in the text.
4. **Acknowledgement** can be used to confirm that both the child and you understand the story.
5. **Cloze procedures** should be used when the child has difficulty reading a particular word or passage. Go over the passage and reread the problem word or words as often as the child needs to.
6. **Semantic Cues** - provide a definition to the child of a difficult or new word by looking in a **dictionary**. Write down the words meaning and look for synonyms of the word in a **thesaurus**.
7. Use **choice and contrast** questions to help focus the child.
8. Use **association** techniques to link ideas between sentences or paragraphs. **Association** helps the child to understand a story's cohesion.
9. **Generalization** should always be used to help compare the events of a story to a child's own experiences.
10. To **summarize** is vitally important. Always do this at the **end** of the session. Simply recount to the child what you've both gone over during the session.
11. Keep a record of the words you have learnt by writing them in the **Vocabulary Scoring Chart**.

Case Study – Example of Shared Strategic Reading

Chosen Book:	Big Little Book of Happy Sadness
Author:	Colin Thompson
Clinician:	David Newman
Student:	10 year old boy, Billy (<i>Name Changed</i>)
Fry's Readability Graph:	Grade 5-6
Session Duration:	30 mins

Why did I select this text?

Colin Thompson's **Big Little Book of Happy Sadness** is a beautifully written story about *George*, an orphaned child, who saves a three legged dog, that nobody wants, from being 'put to sleep' at the local dog pound.

The story was selected because of its descriptive language and themes of alienation, loneliness, empathy and compassion. The **illustrations** are highly descriptive and add to the tone of the story.



A scene from Colin Thompson's **Big Little Book of Happy Sadness**

What follows on the next few pages is an example of a recent 'true to life' language intervention session that took place between myself and a 10 year old language impaired child named Billy (name changed).

The case study is an example of **shared strategic reading**. The goals were to increase Billy's **semantic word and world knowledge** (vocabulary) using the text as the primary therapy tool.

David Newman

Case Study – Example of Shared Strategic Reading

Case Study Notes – Shared Strategic Reading

Selected Text: “Most Friday afternoons on his way home from school, in that time before the weekend when lonely people realise just how lonely they are, George visited the dog shelter.”

“And he always seemed to end up by the last cage in the last aisle....The last cage was where the dogs no one wanted went for a final week before their journey to heaven. George felt at home there. In the dark gloom, he found a place where everything seemed lonelier than he was.” From the ‘**The Big Little Book of Happy Sadness**’

Clinician’s notes

Billy read the text passage with reasonable fluency, but had difficulty decoding the words **realise, aisle, journey,** and **gloom.**

I read the story passage to Billy and traced my finger along the text and highlighted (*with my voice*) what I thought were key phrases...

Clinician: ‘You had some trouble with these words. (*realise, aisle* etc) Do you know what they mean?’

Billy, ‘I don’t know. I’m not sure.’

Clinician: ‘That’s ok; we may have a look at them later.’

Preparatory Set (1 – 2)

Clinician’s notes:

The preparatory set is introduced to set the scene for discussing this particular text and illustration. I target the **first** sentence in the passage. ‘*Most Friday afternoons...*’

Clinician: ‘We can tell from the way this is written that George is probably a lonely kid. And he likes to go to the **dog shelter.** It sounds like a sad, lonely place.’

Case Study – Example of Shared Strategic Reading

Preparatory Set (1 – 2)

Clinician's notes

I used a **Semantic Map** to explore what we might find at the dog shelter. Semantic maps help to firmly place the child in the environment the author describes by linking several different aspects of a theme together.

Clinician: 'So we know from the semantic map that dog shelters are where lost dogs and dogs nobody wants go to be looked after. Sometimes stray dogs are 'put to sleep if they're not claimed by somebody.'

Billy: 'Yep, poor dogs'

Paraphrasing (3)

Clinician's notes

I reworded some difficult text, *'when lonely people realise just how lonely they are...'*

Clinician: 'I think what the author is saying is that sometimes lonely people forget that they're lonely. It may take a certain memory, or in George's case, 'Fridays' for him to remember that he's lonely. He's lonely because it's Friday. He visits the dog shelter on Friday's. Why do you think he's lonely?'

Billy: 'He doesn't have friends'

Clinician: 'I think you're right.'

Extensions (3)

Clinician's notes

I interpreted the text in a certain way and invited Billy to voice his thoughts.

Clinician: 'Yes, I think George struggles to find friends and is looking for something. We don't really know what yet, but he may find it in the dog shelter.'

Case Study – Example of Shared Strategic Reading

Why might George find it hard to make friends?
(Inference question)

Billy: Don't know. He may be really quiet.

Clinician: Yeah, could be.

Clinician's notes

I could take this information any number of directions but for the purposes of this exercise we'll return to the shared reading techniques.

Acknowledgement (4)

Clinician's notes

Billy **rereads** that long first sentence (a little more fluently the second time round). I then use the technique of **acknowledgement** to make sure Billy understands what we've discussed so far.

Clinician: 'Ok, good reading Billy. Nice job. We know that when George walks home from school on Fridays,

he visits the dog shelter. He may be looking for something, or he may just be lonely.'

Cloze Procedure (5)

Clinician's notes

I recognized that Billy had difficulty decoding the word **realise**, so we returned to it.

Clinician: Let's break that word down into its syllables. It has two syllables **/real/** and **/ise/** (clapping out the syllables). 'When lonely people **real...**'

Billy: 'realise'

Semantic Cue (6)

Clinician's notes

We move on to the next sentence and talk about the word **aisle**. Aisle is a word that Billy had trouble with. We then look up the

Case Study – Example of Shared Strategic Reading

word in the **dictionary** together and write down its definition. We then refer to the illustration in the book and discuss what an **aisle** is in the context of the picture. Billy then rereads the sentence.

We then use a **thesaurus** to find synonyms of **aisle**. We discover that *passageway*, *corridor* and *hallway* are synonyms of **aisle**. We then discuss how the author may have chosen and used those words instead of aisle. We use the **Vocabulary Worksheet** to explore the synonyms of **aisle**.

Choice and Contrast questions (7)

Clinician's notes

I use choice and contrast questions frequently. It tends to speed up the child's decision making process, which can be useful when pressed for time.

Clinician: 'Why does George always end up at the last cage in the last aisle? Is he just sad or is he looking for something?'

Billy: 'I think he's sad.'

Association (8)

Clinician's notes

Association makes links between a sentence currently being read and previous sentences. It demonstrates the texts cohesiveness.

Clinician: 'George ends up at the last cage in the last aisle, which makes sense because George is lonely and that place at the dog shelter is equally sad and lonely.'

Generalization (9)

Clinician's notes

I like to use generalization because it helps a child to link events in a story to their own real life experiences.

Clinician: 'Have you ever been to a dog shelter? Can you remember a time in your own life that you felt a

Case Study – Example of Shared Strategic Reading

bit lonely, or perhaps know someone who is a little like George?’

Billy: I know someone on my bus that’s like George. He’s always quiet.’

Summarize (10)

Clinician’s notes

It’s very important to summarize the areas you have worked on. Both the student and I review what we discussed and learnt over the course of the session.

Clinician: Ok, we have learnt that George is quite lonely and a little sad, and that he likes to go to the dog shelter. We have a good understanding of what a **dog shelter** is because we used a semantic map to explore dog shelter in some detail.

We did some extra work on words such as **realise** and **aisle**, and discovered some synonyms for aisle. So we now know what an aisle is; it’s a type of passageway. When we look at the picture we can see that George is indeed standing in an aisle.

Billy: Yeah, George is sad and he likes to go to the dog shelter on Friday.

Vocabulary Scoring Chart (11)

Clinician’s notes

The target words **aisle** and **realise** are entered onto the vocabulary scoring chart. I mostly enter words here that a child has difficulty with, or that are slightly unusual. It helps to chart a child’s progress in learning new words and concept.