

The Strategy Use of Struggling Readers in the First-Year Composition Classroom: What We Know and How We Can Help Them

Alex Poole
Western Kentucky University

Reading in First-Year Composition Programs: Its Importance, Instructor Attitudes toward It, and Students' Ability to Do It

The proliferation of composition readers alone is evidence that reading plays an important role in first-year composition programs. In my experience, most instructors use them and other texts to stimulate students' interest in a topic, model rhetorical patterns, and generate essay ideas. In short, instructors recognize the intrinsic connection between reading and writing and desire for their students to do the same. Linda Adler-Kassner and Heidi Estrem's assertion that "good reading" "is evidenced by a dialogue between the writer's ideas and those in the text she is using, as well as demonstrated through writing, of the conventions of source use—from interpretation to citational practices" (37) highlights this symbiosis of language comprehension and production and their indivisibility in first-year writing curricula. Not surprisingly, research has shown that college students who enjoy reading and view themselves as strong readers generate more grammatically-varied and content-rich essays than those who dislike reading and find it difficult (Daane 185).

Given the centrality of reading in first-year courses, it would seem counterintuitive for instructors to reject reading instruction as part of their pedagogical responsibilities. However, Lisa Bosley's review of reading instruction in English departments shows such rejection to be

widespread. In her own investigation of seven English professors at a large southern university, she found that they often deny explicitly teaching reading. Bosley's results suggest such a position could be caused by simplistic notions of reading pedagogy—i.e., teaching students bottom-up skills such as how to decode words (296)—and the expectation that incoming students will already possess “the reading skills necessary to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate complex academic texts” (286).

While Bosley acknowledges that both her participants and composition instructors across the country probably do provide some sort of reading instruction, she asserts that the inability of first-year students to comprehend texts and evaluate their contents necessitates that it be done more explicitly (298). Several studies support her contention that this demographic is unable to contend with the rigors of first-year reading assignments. In 1996, The National Center for Education Statistics reported that 30% of college students took a reading or study strategies course (Martino and Hoffman 310). Of the students who started college in the year 2000, 11% enrolled in remedial reading courses, and more than half of all undergraduate institutions offered them (Parsad and Lewis tables 1 and 2). Finally, a report recently issued by the Alliance for Excellent Education estimates that roughly 33% of first-year college students need remedial work in math, English, or reading (Spak par. 3).

Struggling vs. Successful Readers: What Is the Difference?

In light of the above-cited statistics on remedial education and the legions of composition instructors on discussion boards, at academic conferences, and in departmental meetings who bemoan first-year students' reading skills, it is clear that many students are unable to converse with text and accurately reflect that conversation in their own writing. While the end goal of reading instruction should indeed be to see assigned texts accurately and critically represented in writing—as Adler-Kassner and Estrem assert (37)—students first need to comprehend what they read. How do we help them do that? The answer to this question is multifaceted, but one important action involves helping them make better use of reading strategies, which are the “deliberate, goal-directed attempts to control and modify the reader’s efforts to decode text, understand words, and construct meanings out of text” (Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris 15). In short, “successful” college readers comprehend texts better than their “struggling” counterparts due to their effective use of strategies, and thus tend to have better grade point averages (GPA), standardized test scores, and comfort levels with academic reading (Poole, “Fiction,” 91-92). Specifically, successful readers tend to “engage in deliberate activities that require playful thinking, flexible strategies, and periodic self-monitoring. They think about the topic, look forward and backward in the passage, and check their own understanding as they read” (Paris and Jacobs 2083). Successful readers also concentrate on understanding the text as a whole (Saumell, Hughes, and Lopate 131) and have been found to re-read (Sheorey and Mokhtari, “Differences,” 443) establish reading goals, and use their prior knowledge to aid their comprehension (Taraban, Rynearson, and Kerr, “College,” 294-295) significantly more than struggling readers.

Struggling readers, in contrast, are inflexible in their use of strategies (Mokhtari and Sheorey 3), cannot overcome comprehension problems (Falk-Ross 280), and frequently fail to monitor their comprehension (Mokhtari, Sheorey, and Reichard 45). As opposed to successful readers, struggling readers have been found to fixate on how much time is required to read a text and are impeded from focusing on main ideas due to their poor lexical knowledge (Saumell, Hughes, and Lopate 131). Such students have also been found to highlight important information, review what they have read, and connect different parts of the text significantly less than successful readers (Taraban, Rynearson, and Kerr, “Metacognition,” 14).

According to Sheorey and Mokhtari (“Introduction,” 2), discovering the strategic differences between successful and struggling readers is beneficial because they show us the steps the former take to comprehend texts, which we can then teach to the latter. However, previous empirical research on strategy use among college students has not specifically focused on first-year composition classrooms. Such a lack of emphasis makes its direct applicability to this context questionable, and leaves writing instructors with few tools with which they can help their students not only comprehend texts, but also ultimately reflect such comprehension in their own written products.

Purpose

Thus, the following study seeks to fill this gap by comparing the strategies of successful and struggling readers in first-year composition classes. My hope is that by shedding light on these group differences, composition instructors will be able to develop pedagogical tools to help struggling readers use the strategies their successful peers utilize to comprehend assigned texts.

Institutional differences and individual abilities inhibit me or any other teacher-researcher from guaranteeing that successful and struggling readers in other contexts will be identical to the participants in the current study; however, the results will show first-year composition instructors which differences are *plausible*, thereby helping them anticipate which strategies they may need to address in their own classes.

Participants and Setting

The participants in the study consisted of 302 freshmen (male=138; female=164) at a large southern university who had completed at least one semester of study. Their average GPA was 3.0, and their average ACT Composite score was 21, as were their average ACT Reading and English scores. All participants were enrolled in a first-year composition course, which is one of the three writing courses required by the university's general education curriculum. Students must have attained a minimum ACT English score of 18 to register; those who have not achieved this score must take a semester-long section of developmental English before they can take the course. The catalogue description states that first-year composition "emphasizes writing for a variety of rhetorical situations with attention to voice, audience, and purpose." In addition, it "provides practice in development, organization, revision, and editing," and "introduces research skills." Instructors—who are a mix of graduate assistants, part-time instructors, full-time instructors, and tenured and tenure-track faculty of various ranks—must include non-fiction texts that "lead to discussion of how and why authors make rhetorical and stylistic choices," and "develop critical thinking, reading, writing, and research skills."

Instrumentation and Procedure

In various sections of first-year composition, participants spent 15-20 minutes filling out an instrument consisting of two parts. The first part was a demographic profile which asked them about their age, GPA, gender, ACT scores, and estimated number of weekly hours spent reading academic and leisure materials. The second part was a 30-item quantitative survey called the *Metacognitive Assessment of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARS)*. The MARS is a self-report survey designed to calculate the strategies native speakers of English use when they read academic materials. It contains three types of strategies: *global strategies*, *support strategies*, and *problem-solving strategies*. *Global strategies* (N=13) are strategies that aid students in planning and managing when and how they read and monitor their comprehension of texts. Determining the value of a text and establishing a reading rationale are examples of global strategies. The second type of strategies consists of *support strategies*. Support strategies (N=9) are procedures and devices students use to foster comprehension, and include note-taking and underlining important parts of a text. The final eight items are *problem-solving strategies*. Such strategies involve the steps students take in order to overcome comprehension problems when reading. Re-reading and changing one's reading speed because of a text's difficulty are common problem-solving strategies (Mokhtari, Sheorey, and Reichard 46-51).

The MARS uses a Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 ("I never use this strategy") to 5 ("I always use this strategy"). On each item, I asked the students to circle the number that best represents the frequency with which they used each strategy when reading for their college classes. Scores of 2.4 or less indicate low strategy use, scores between 2.5 and 3.4 indicate

moderate strategy use, and scores of 3.5 or above indicate high strategy use (Mokhtari, Sheorey, and Reichard 53).

Data Analysis

I used statistical averages and one-way ANOVA to compare the strategy use of successful and struggling readers. One-way ANOVA determines if the averages of two or more groups are statistically different (Shavelson 371-373). In the current study, I could determine whether participants were successful or struggling based on either ACT scores (Composite, English, Reading) or GPA. I ruled out ACT scores because most students in this university take this test during their junior year of high school, and thus the results would have reflected their abilities at least two years prior to survey administration. My second option was to use participants' GPA. I felt this was also problematic, for factors unrelated to literacy (e.g., financial stability, level of social support, motivation levels) have an impact on students' academic performance (Robbins et al. 274-277). However, previous studies have shown that college GPA correlates with strategy use (Poole, "Fiction," 99; "Relationship," 8), and college readers with higher GPAs significantly differ from their peers with lower GPAs (Kardash and Amlund 128; Taraban, Rynearson, and Kerr, "College," 292; "Metacognition," 14). In addition, due to the fact that this course is required for freshmen, most participants were probably in their second semester of college, and thus their first-semester GPA was probably the most accurate gauge of their reading abilities that was available to me. For these two reasons, I decided to separate successful and struggling readers according to GPA. I used the top 25% ($N=53$, $3.45 \geq$) to represent successful readers, while I used the bottom 25% ($N=53$, $2.6 \leq$) to represent struggling

readers. Comparing groups that differ so greatly in GPA decreased the possibility that participants of similar abilities would be in both of them.

Results

Table 1 shows that successful readers' overall use of strategies was high, as was their use of global strategies. In contrast, struggling readers' overall strategy use was moderate, as was their use of global strategies. Successful and struggling readers reported using support strategies with moderate frequency. In addition, successful and struggling readers reported using problem-solving strategies with high frequency. Even though both successful and struggling readers reported using problem-solving strategies with high frequency and support strategies with moderate frequency, the former used these two strategy types significantly more than the latter. Successful readers' overall strategy use was also significantly higher than that reported by their struggling peers, as was their use of global strategies.

Table 1 also shows that successful readers used seven strategies significantly more than struggling readers (global=2, problem-solving=2, support=3). Successful readers used both global strategies ("I have a purpose in mind when I read," and "I check my understanding when I come across conflicting information") with high frequency, while struggling readers used them with moderate frequency. However, both groups used one problem-solving strategy with high frequency ("When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I'm reading"). Successful readers used the other one with high frequency ("I stop from time to time and think about what I'm reading"), while struggling readers used it with moderate frequency. Finally, both groups used two support strategies ("I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the

text,” and “I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it”) with moderate frequency. While successful readers used one (“I take notes while reading to help me understanding what I read”) with moderate frequency, struggling readers used it with low frequency.

Table 1: Differences between Successful and Struggling Readers

Strategy	Successful	Struggling	<i>F</i>	P-Value
GLOB I have a purpose in mind when I read.	3.91	3.36	3.24	.00
SUP I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read.	2.68	2.21	4.57	.04
GLOB I check my understanding when I come across conflicting information.	3.79	3.30	5.93	.02
SUP I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it.	3.26	2.62	5.82	.02
SUP I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the text.	3.26	2.67	7.17	.01
PROB When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I'm reading.	4.32	3.94	4.89	.03
PROB I stop from time to time and think about what I'm reading.	3.60	3.17	4.80	.03
Mean	3.54	3.25	7.32	.01
Global	3.52	3.23	5.24	.02
Problem-solving	4.07	3.77	7.53	.01
Support	3.11	2.81	4.64	.03

Similarities to Other Studies

The results of this study are similar to other survey-based research with successful and struggling college readers. In another MARSII-based study, Poole found positive correlations between GPA and strategies used while reading fiction on both of the support strategies that distinguished successful from struggling readers in the current study (“Fiction,” 99). Poole previously used a modified version of the MARSII to measure the strategies college students use when reading online for general academic purposes and found positive correlations between GPA and both of the global strategies and one of the problem-solving strategies (“When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I’m reading”) that distinguished successful from struggling readers in the current study (“Relationship,” 8). In a non-MARSII study, Taraban, Ryneerson, and Kerr also found that college students with high GPAs more frequently had a purpose in mind when they read and underlined/circled information than did students with low GPAs (“Metacognition,” 14).

Explanations and Pedagogical Recommendations:

Establishing a Reading Purpose

The similarities between this study and others show patterns that distinguish successful from struggling readers, regardless of the types of texts they are reading and the formats in which they are presented; nevertheless, it is not entirely clear why such readers would differ in their use of these specific strategies. It could be that successful readers more frequently have a purpose in mind when they read because they possess more background knowledge, which affects their

level of motivation. This explanation is supported by Smith's study of science graduate students. All were exceptional students; however, those with scant knowledge of particle physics—the topic of the article she had them read—lacked motivation to complete the assigned text, spent little time on it, and may have only acquired a superficial understanding of it. She suggests that the researcher's tight control over the purpose of the reading and the steps involved in it may have confused the participants with scant knowledge of the topic as well as prevented them from establishing goals that might have helped them overcome such confusion (293-300).

Nist and Holschuh claim that if we furnish students with information about reading topics that are unknown to them, not only will they probably comprehend more texts, but they will also probably be more motivated to read them (89-90). Moreover, if we obligate students—especially our struggling readers—to establish their own reading goals, we may increase their motivation to engage the text. Such goal-oriented reading concentrates “people's attention on relevant task features and the strategies that will help them accomplish this task” (Schunk par. 23). In other words, it spawns even further strategy use.

In order to foster and reward ownership of one's reading purpose, composition instructors could provide some background on a topic, have the students skim the assigned reading, and then ask them to engage in a classroom discussion of the possible reasons the instructor selected it. By taking these steps, we push struggling students to connect course texts with course/instructor objectives and habituate them to this strategy. We could cultivate individual reading goals by requiring students to maintain reading journals in which they list their reading goals, explain how they sought to fulfill them, and evaluate their success in reaching them.

Taking Notes

Another strategy that struggling readers reported using significantly less than successful readers was taking notes. This strategy is of particular concern because the former used it with low frequency. As far as why successful readers take notes to improve their text comprehension more than struggling readers, a previous study by Poole has shown that this gap is likely connected to time (“Fiction,” 102). He found that there was a positive—albeit moderate—correlation between the amount of academic reading per week and note taking, and argues that since note taking is such a time-consuming activity, those who read less are less likely to take notes. Many freshmen underestimate the amount of reading required in college—and suffer academically as a result. A 2006 study showed that 48% of college instructors estimated that their students should do at least six hours of homework each week, yet this number was only 17% for high school teachers (Talbert, par. 2). Not surprisingly, the 2012 *National Survey of Student Engagement* found that “of first-year students who earned mostly C’s, only 15% spend more than 20 hours per week preparing for class while twice as many did so among those who earned A’s” (12).

In the current study, it seems that time was also a factor in participants’ decision to take notes, since successful readers spent more time reading than struggling readers (6.9 vs. 4.5), even though the differences were not significant. Unfortunately, many students will procrastinate or not complete reading assignments, at all, unless there is some immediate grade attached to doing so (e.g., quizzes, summaries) (Lei, Bartlett, Gorney, and Herschbach 226). Composition instructors could increase the time students devote to taking notes—and to reading, overall—by requiring them to turn in their notes for a grade.

However, given the low frequency with which struggling readers engaged in note taking, it seems that simply lacking motivation is not the only problem; these participants also probably do not know how to take notes. Taking notes is not a simple process. As Stefanou, Hoffman, and Vielee remind us, this strategy does not merely involve the verbatim copying of information, but rather “constructing knowledge.” In the context of lectures, they show that a multiplicity of skills are necessary to take good notes: “In constructing knowledge, students must decide to attend to the lecture, decide on what is important to note and what is not, and make connections among the concepts in the lecture and between those concepts and prior knowledge” (2). Such knowledge construction is also necessary when taking notes on written texts, and thus probably beyond the abilities of struggling readers. In a review of college-level note taking research, Caverly, Orlando, and Mullen found that students who cannot identify main ideas benefit very little from taking notes, leading them to conclude that we should avoid teaching it until students can achieve such rudimentary comprehension (115).

Fortunately, we can help struggling readers by introducing them to various methods of taking notes. Of course, there are many to choose from, but over forty years ago, Palmatier pointed out that to be effective, any approach must be relatively simple for students to understand, malleable enough that it can be applied to a wide-range of content, and conducive to text comprehension (36). One simple schema he proposed involves detaching main ideas from supporting details through indentation, numbering, and the use of different spaces on the paper on which they take their notes. Initial notes should be relatively short, and details should be elaborated on after the rough outline of the material has been made. Completing the latter can fortify students’ understanding of the content. Even though he does not prescribe a particular

format, Palmatier urges students to use the same one for both classroom and individual notes. Having two sets of notes on the same text gives students access to information they may have missed when reading and listening. Using the same format for both sets will presumably make missing information easier to access (37-39).

Checking Understanding

In order to take useful notes, struggling readers will have to resolve conflicting information. Before they can do this, they must first check their understanding of such conflicting information. In the current study, they used this strategy significantly less than successful readers. According to Baker, many readers are able to check their comprehension of a text, yet are unable “to ensure that the process continues smoothly, including taking remedial action when comprehension fails” (365). Struggling readers in the current study may have reduced or eliminated their use of this strategy due to their inability to subsequently resolve textual conflicts.

Ironically, one way to help struggling students more effectively execute this strategy could be by telling them to avoid it. Pitts claims that not all comprehension difficulties have to be resolved because not all content is essential to overall text comprehension (521). We can conclude from this statement that instructors should teach students to focus on understanding conflicting information that meets the goal of overall text comprehension. If students determine that conflicting information is essential, yet still cannot understand it, instructors should encourage them to generate what Pitts calls a *tentative hypothesis*—i.e., an educated guess—continue to read, and see whether or not the text confirms or rejects the hypothesis. If this does

not help, Pitts states that we should urge students to seek input from skilled peers or the teacher (521).

A third way to help students resolve conflicting information is by doing a modified version of what Salvatori calls *a difficulty paper*. Such an activity teaches students “to recognize that what they perceive as ‘difficult’ is a feature of the text demanding to be critically engaged rather than ignored” (448). Students first compose an essay that explains the approach they used to resolve conflicting parts of a class text. The teacher then selects several essays in which conflicting information is successfully resolved and has the whole class read them. This is followed by a classroom discussion of the papers in which their authors elaborate on them and field questions from peers. Such an activity would not only provide struggling readers with opportunities to practice this strategy, but it would also present them with models of how successful readers utilize it (448-449).

Highlighting Information to Remember It

A strategy that students could use to help them remember which parts of the text conflict is highlighting. Unfortunately, we have all seen many student texts in which the majority of the text is highlighted with a neon pink or yellow marker. In such cases, they clearly cannot distinguish essential from non-essential information (Caverly, Orlando, and Mullen 110). Therefore, many struggling readers are likely to dismiss this strategy as futile and abandon it, which could explain why they used it significantly less than successful readers in the current study.

Schellings and van Hout-Wolters assert that we can help struggling readers better determine what to highlight by specifying the reading task. Specifically, instead of merely assigning them a particular text, we must tell students the purpose behind reading the text and draw attention to the information they should focus on (754). Another approach to teaching this strategy is offered by Salvatori, who requires students to explain their motivation for highlighting. By doing this, instructors demonstrate that successful readers do not indiscriminately highlight disparate passages, but rather mark information that helps them articulate their own interpretation of the text (448).

Asking Oneself Questions about Text

It seems plausible that students not only highlight texts in order to remember their main points, but also to recall questions they had about them. According to Simpson and Nist, when formulating questions, readers “are actively processing text information and monitoring their understanding of that information” (532). In addition, readers must be equipped to answer their own questions or locate people and resources to help them do so. Struggling readers may feel unprepared to deal with such cognitive demands, which possibly explains the significant differences between successful readers and them. However, instructors can help students use this strategy by placing them into groups in which they engage in reciprocal teaching. In these groups, students ask and answer a required number of questions about a text, thereby simultaneously practicing the strategy and modeling it for others (532-533). King also advocates reciprocal teaching, yet her approach involves the instructor giving students general questions or “stem questions” (e.g., “What is the author trying to say?” “What don’t I understand?”) and

modeling how they can formulate more specific questions from them. Students are then put into groups in which they are required to do the same with a text (670). Regardless of the technique we use, we must be mindful that the timing and nature of questions we teach struggling students serve different functions. While pre-reading questions trigger schema, during reading questions can encourage them to attend to specific content. Questions that require readers to connect text with their experiences and knowledge facilitate deeper processing than mere factual inquiries (Nist and Mealey 68-69).

Paying Closer Attention to Difficult Text

Unlike asking questions, it is more difficult to concretize increasing attention to a difficult text. Even though both groups used it with high frequency, successful readers used it significantly more than struggling readers. This difference could be attributed to the latter's limited vocabulary. Struggling readers' lack of vocabulary impedes deep text comprehension and blocks them from using their attentional resources to overcome comprehension difficulties (Joshi, 211). Thus, some participants might find paying closer attention to texts of little use if they contain impenetrable vocabulary. In order to help such readers, instructors should encourage them to use context to infer the meaning of unknown words (Na and Nation 33). In addition, they should show students how to properly use dictionaries, for many cannot understand definitions in context (McCreary 194-199).

Stopping and Thinking about Reading

The final strategy successful readers used significantly more than struggling readers – stopping and thinking about what one is reading—is perhaps the most important one because the efficacious application of all of the above-mentioned strategies depends on first using it. Again, it seems likely that time was a factor in participants’ decision to use this strategy. As noted, successful readers devoted more time to reading than their struggling peers, which probably allowed them the opportunity to mull over the ideas put forth in the text. If instructors can convince struggling readers to spend more time with text via quizzes, summaries, and other graded work, they may naturally start using this strategy more (Lei, Bartlett, Gorney, and Herschbach 226).

General Strategic Recommendations

A more specific way of teaching students to stop and think about what they are reading is via the *think-aloud* technique. This is when an instructor “verbalizes his/her thoughts during the reading task, reporting underlying thinking while engaging in a task, according to cognitive psychological processing and reader response theory” (Dolly 54). In this case, the instructor utilizes authentic texts (i.e., texts students actually read in the course) in order to demonstrate how to use reading strategies. In her classes, Dolly models a strategy while reading a passage and explains her rationale for doing so. Then she has students read a portion of the text aloud and demonstrate the strategy, themselves. She claims that many students forget to verbalize their thoughts, and thus teachers need to prompt them to do so. Next, the students get into pairs in which one student reads aloud while the other verbalizes his/her thoughts. For homework, she

has students make recordings of themselves while reading aloud and verbalizing their thoughts (55).

If composition instructors do not have specific strategies in mind, but still want to impart some sort of strategy instruction, they can teach a variety of strategies by having students fill out the MARSII during class. After doing so, instructors can have students explain why and how they use some or all of the strategies the instrument contains. According to Mokhtari, Sheorey, and Reichard, such explanations and modeling can help struggling readers understand the importance of strategies and clarify how they should apply them (55).

I have also assigned the MARSII as homework in order to obtain a more detailed picture of students' strategic knowledge. Specifically, I require them to justify their responses. If I observe a pattern of confusion regarding specific strategies, I will reserve instructional time to explain their purposes and model them. Such an activity has the added benefit of collecting data from students who may feel uncomfortable speaking in class.

Whenever teaching strategies, instructors should remember that reading comprehension is a phenomenon that consists of additional elements, such as phonemic awareness (Jackson and Doellinger) vocabulary knowledge and fluency (Landi 712, 714). Therefore, instructors should not expect that strategy instruction alone will solve every student's comprehension difficulties. While we cannot predict how each of these elements will affect students' text comprehension, we can examine whether strategy use contributes to it. For example, if an instructor has two classes struggling with text comprehension, he/she can impart strategy instruction to one and use the other as a control group. If the treatment group improves significantly more than the control group, instructors can assume that strategy use is a major contributor to text comprehension. If

such improvement does not occur, instructors will then need to investigate the contributions of other factors in order to develop appropriate pedagogical interventions.

Final Thoughts

While the MARSI is a solid instructional tool, Mokhtari, Sheorey, and Reichard point out that the MARSI's one-time, self-report nature does not ensure that students consistently use the strategies as often they report (57). Nevertheless, in this study, the instrument has shown that successful and struggling readers differ significantly in their strategy use. Successful readers used strategies significantly more than struggling readers, overall and on the global, support, and problem-solving subscales. In addition, successful readers used seven individual strategies significantly more than their struggling peers: establishing a reading purpose, taking notes, checking one's understanding of the text, highlighting information to remember it, asking questions about the text, paying closer attention to difficult text, and stopping and thinking about reading.

Fortunately, such differences can be pedagogically addressed, as I have noted. Thus, this study represents a first step in helping first-year composition instructors discover the reading strategies their struggling readers may lack and pedagogically address them. Further research will hopefully help give us more insight into how to assist struggling readers comprehend academic texts and incorporate them into their own writing.

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