Modeling: One Teaching Technique Not to Scrimp On

When we think of modeling, we think of role models, modeling for a career, car and truck models, and maybe modeling clay. Perhaps one of the most important pedagogical techniques is modeling for your students: modeling professional expertise in the field.

Faculty and staff model without much forethought as we help students read and complete a survey, complete a form, or pick apart directions on a complex task. When the modeling is intentional and scaffolded, it is possible for students to make significant strides in expanding their ways of reading and their breadth of comprehension. Modeling across four dimension makes for a rich learning environment for students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Goal of Dimension</th>
<th>Opportunities for Modeling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Personal  | • Develop reader identity  
• Develop metacognition  
• Develop reader fluency and stamina  
• Develop reader confidence and range. | • Model your Personal History  
• Pose a question to the group or table and model how to derive an answer as a field expert.  
• Note taking, outlining, listing and grouping when modeled highlight the ways an expert thinks in the field  
• Express whether you got slowed up or puzzled and model how you clarified the task or reading  
• Show students how you draft an evidence log. |
| Social    | • Provide a safe learning environment  
• Discuss the relationship between literacy and power  
• Share content via book talk  
• Notice and appropriate others’ ways of reading  
• Share reading processes, problems, and solutions. | • Share the reading processes to learn how others read and make meaning from text  
• Model how to Pair and Share  
• Model professional collaboration  
• Model your Think Aloud sharing  
• Model how you take ideas from the Reading Strategy List and use them to approach texts. |

Hey, she said “scrimp” not “shrimp”!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Goal of Dimension</th>
<th>Opportunities for Modeling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cognitive     | • Provide the big picture  
• Break down the parts  
• Monitor comprehension  
• Use problem solving strategies to restore comprehension  
• Set reading purposes and adjusting reading processes. | • Model how you use the discipline specific text features and structures in your texts  
• Model how you problem solving with text  
• Show students how to skim, scan and preview for overall content, then read  
• Create a teaching graphic from the text passage  
• Reread the passage to clarify confusion. |
| Knowledge-Building | • Use and build text structures  
• Develop content knowledge  
• Expand schemata for the discipline  
• Work on field content. | • Model how you question content  
• Demonstrate knowledge via the textual features  
• Model new ways of using the information  
• Create a gallery walk using the texts and its graphics  
• Model how you employ signal words or key concept. |

Modeling is transformative.

Faculty members sometimes feel that they are doing too much modeling. This is not the case. The more and the more varied the modeling is the better. As you apprentice students in learning how to read for the field you are passing on to them your ways of reading, thinking and problem solving, which, in turn, are the ways of the profession.

Modeling is sometimes a messy show; students can benefit from seeing their faculty struggle to think about text, restate summaries, and question the organization and logic of the passage as well as question its content. Student apprenticed in this way learn that reading can be problematic at times and by watching their faculty work to comprehend the text, it will help encourage them to persevere.

**For More Info**

For more information about modeling and other Reading Apprenticeship (RA) routines and topics, visit the RTC Library’s LibGuide about Reading Apprenticeship® and RATs at [http://libguides.rtc.edu/rats](http://libguides.rtc.edu/rats). At the LibGuide, click on the **RA Routines & Topics** drop down menu and then on the desired option.