

Talk, Read, Talk, Write

WHAT IS TALK, READ, TALK, WRITE?

Talk, Read, Talk, Write (TRTW) is a classroom process that gives students an alternate and compelling way to access content area information. Think of it as the “anti-lecture” format. At its core, students read academic text rather than listen to academic lecture in order to gain and to deepen content understandings. Surrounding that core are structured opportunities to talk and write about content understandings. There are four main parts to a TRTW formatted lesson: Talk #1, Read, Talk #2, Write. These parts are outlined below.

Talk #1 Students engage in brief, structured conversations with each other and the teacher for the purposes of engaging with the topic, building necessary background, and setting the purpose for reading.

Talk #1 is...	Talk #1 is NOT...
brief (2-5 minutes).	long (anything more than 5 minutes).
structured so that all students get the opportunity to talk (ex: partners, table talk, etc.).	the teacher talking with 4-5 students who shout out and/or raise their hands to answer.
open-ended.	a search for one correct answer.
an opportunity for students to create, apply, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize.	retelling basic facts, knowledge, or memorization.
relevant, novel, and authentic.	an oral recap of yesterday’s lesson.
non-threatening exposure to new terms/ideas.	listing new terms/ideas and asking students to look up the definitions.

Read Students actively read an academic text. The selected text provides students with the information they need to meet the content goal of the lesson. This text replaces the majority of direct instruction the teacher would provide.

The Read section is...	The Read section is NOT...
students reading the text.	the teacher reading the text aloud while students follow along.
each student reading individually, although partner reading may be applicable in some cases.	Round Robin reading –students taking turns reading sentences/sections aloud while other students follow along.
each student reading the entire selection.	Jigsaw Reading –each student reading only one section of the text and then explaining it to others.

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Talk #2 Students dialogue with each other in order to process what they just read and also to prepare for upcoming writing.

Talk #2 is...	Talk #2 is NOT...
shared responsibility among all students.	individuals working on separate tasks within the same group.
supported by clear expectations.	delivering ambiguous directions, such as, "Go to your groups and discuss Chapter 8."
well-paced, most often brief (5-10 minutes).	extended dialogue, although some exceptions can apply.
small groups of students, usually 2-4 discussing content concepts.	teacher-led whole class discussion.

Write Students write about the content topic in order to deepen their understanding.

The Write section is...	The Write section is NOT...
students generating their own thoughts.	copying notes or information from resources.
students writing to explain a topic or to make a compelling argument.	one word responses, fill in the blank, or answering a series of questions.
students writing complete thoughts/sentences.	students recording bulleted or fragmented lists.

The **Talk, Read, Talk, Write** lesson format offers content area teachers a straightforward classroom process to help students deepen their content knowledge and increase their ability to communicate understanding. When students have regular opportunities to talk about, read about, and write about what they are learning, the quantity and quality of their learning increases. When these strategies are implemented consistently, the end result is obvious. Entire classrooms of students become readers, writers, and, most importantly, problem-solvers because they are actively thinking through each academic concept.