

Increasing Research Based Comprehension Practices: From Theory to Practice

May 4, 2005

International Reading Association

Mary C. Norton, Ed.D.

New York University, Metro Center

The Story

Once upon a time there was.....

A PROBLEM

in the kingdom.

The kingdom

- A large city school district with many underperforming schools

The problem

- From 50% to 85% of the children in the kingdom were struggling to understand what they read based on State wide standard based assessments.

The Setting: 3 urban schools

Similarities

- Hi-poverty, low SES
- Over 90% of students receive free lunch
- 99% minority, 8% ELL
- 13% recent immigrants (Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana)
- Over 30% teachers have less than 2 years experience

The Plot

- To improve the reading comprehension of the children of the kingdom and have students read text with understanding
- To translate research based reading comprehension knowledge into practice in the schools of the kingdom

The Characters

MAIN CHARACTERS

- **CLASSROOM TEACHERS**
- **STUDENTS**
- **BUILDING PRINCIPALS**
- **PROJECT CONSULTANTS/
COACHES**

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

- Project Director
- School Literacy coaches
- Support/special teachers
- District office staff

Problem Solving Actions

- Needs Assessment
- Use of existing student data
- Identify focus areas
- Provide 2 tiers of support
- Select comprehension research based on school data
- Some of research used in Literacy Institutes in 2 schools

Partnership and Collaboration Goals

- Increase the internal capacity of school staff in reading instruction.
- Use common research based knowledge to improve ELA instructional coherence from grade to grade
- Develop cadre of literacy leaders in schools to share and increase total ELA expertise

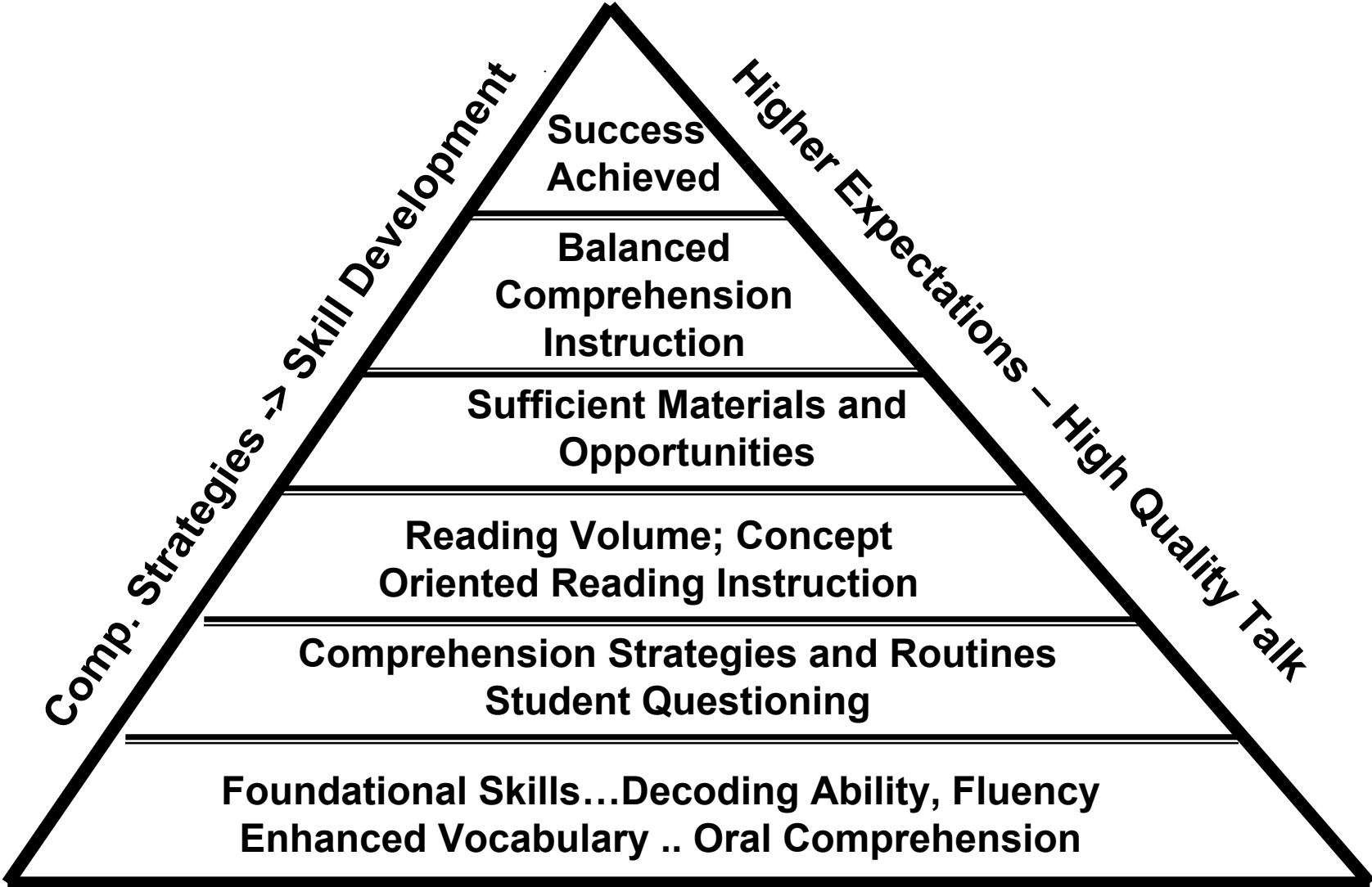
Institutes and Meetings

Used the following research to develop:

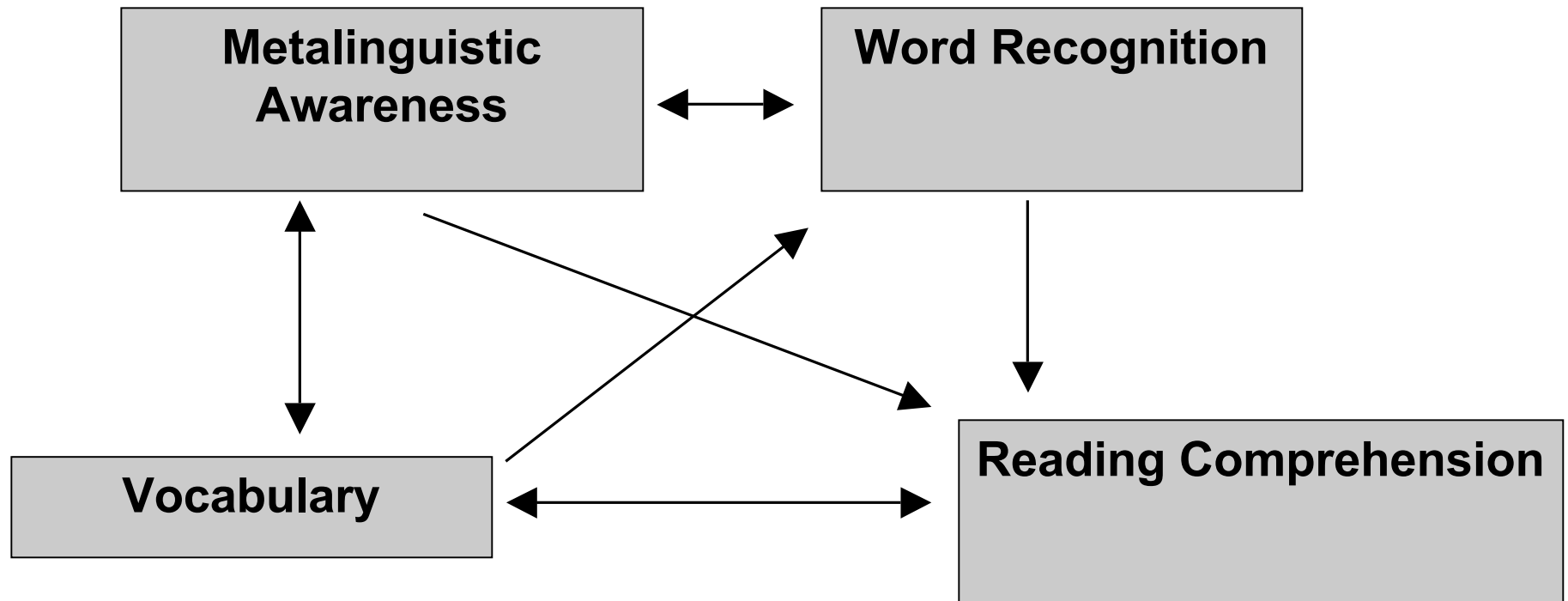
- K-5 common knowledge of essential components of reading across grades.
- Vertical understanding of ELA Standards by all staff
- Entry expectations and exit outcomes based on standards and ELA assessment
- Practical application to Balanced Literacy

PYRAMID OF COMPREHENSION SUCCESS

Improved Student Reading Achievement



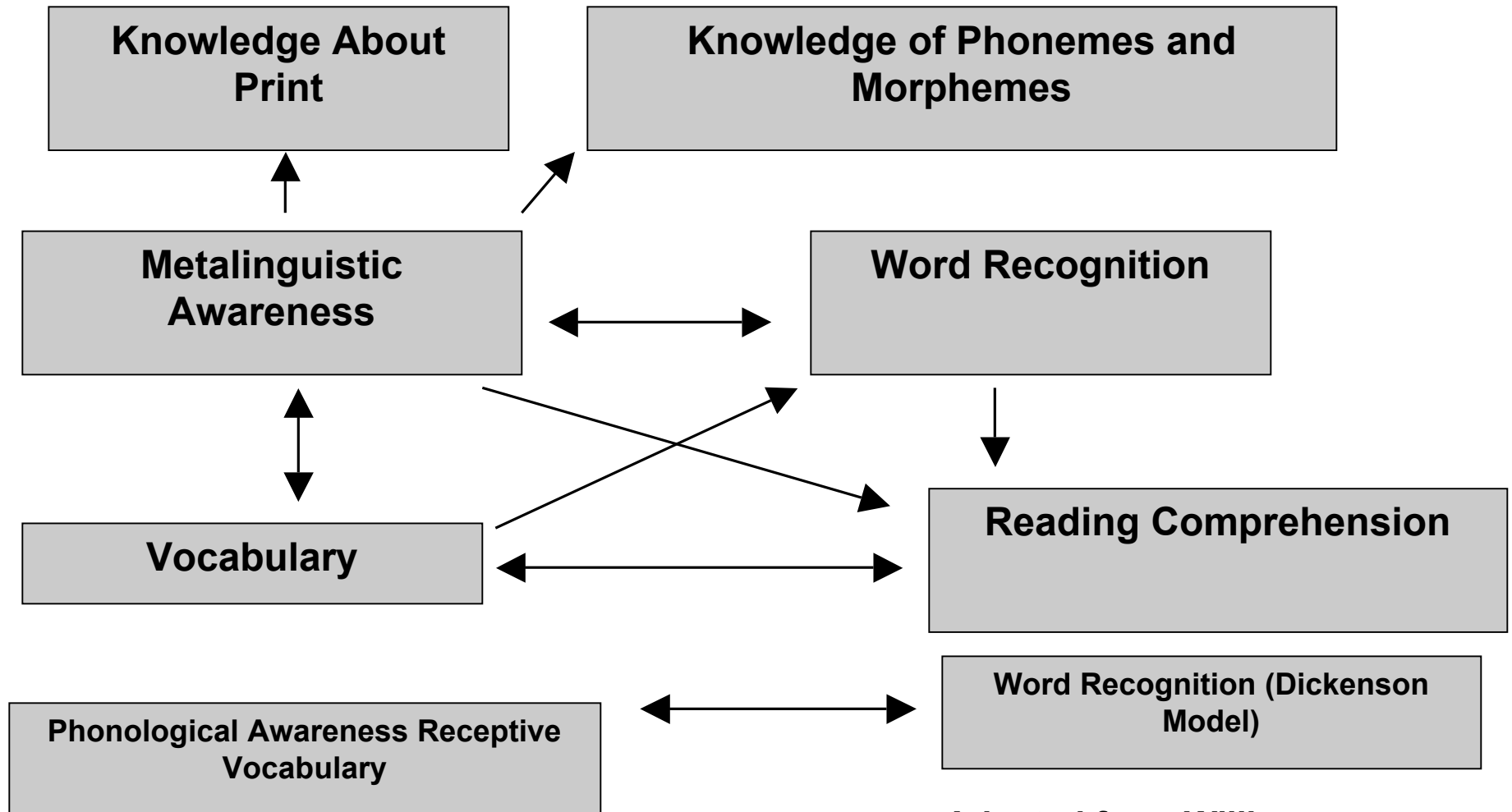
Some of the Causal Links Between Vocabulary Knowledge and Reading Comprehension



Graves

William Nagy

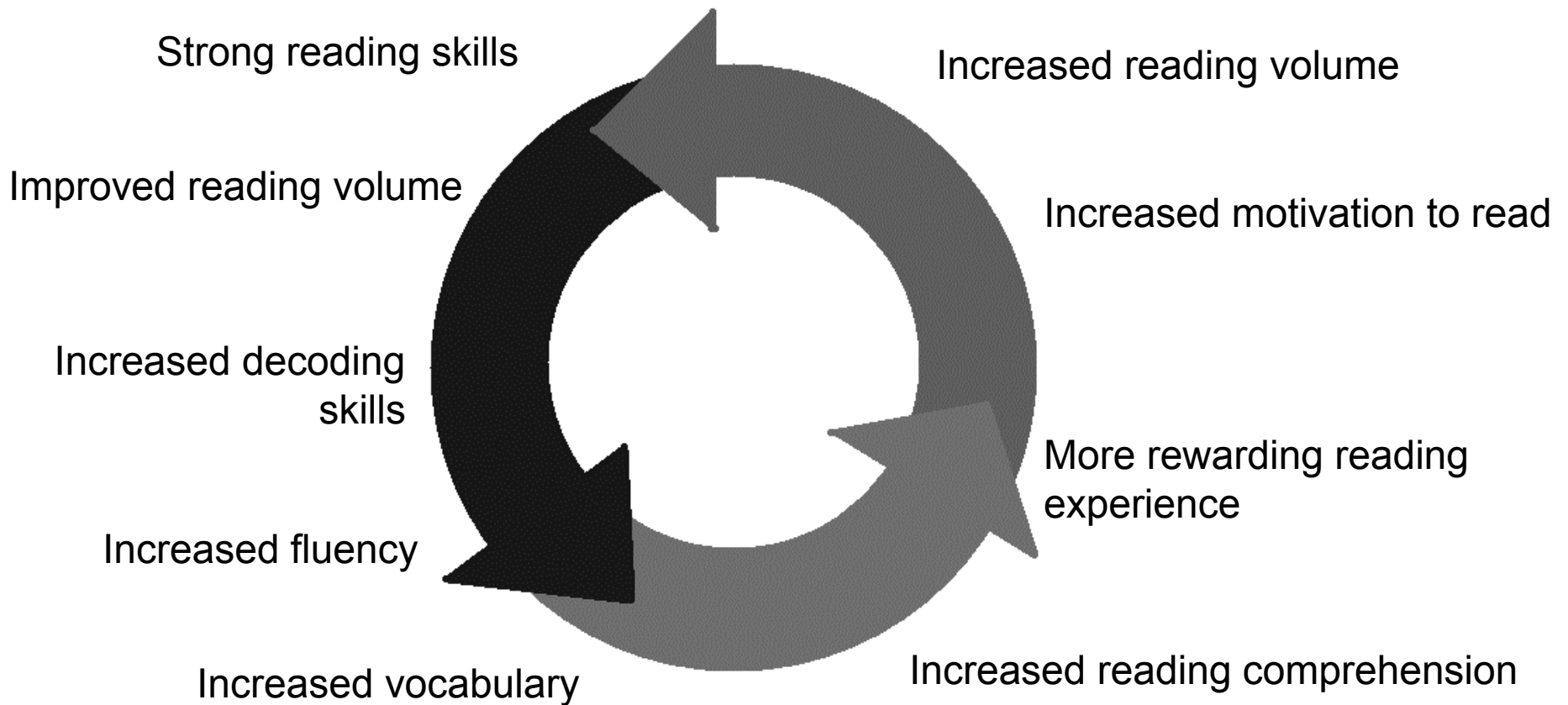
Some of the Causal Links Between Vocabulary Knowledge and Reading Comprehension



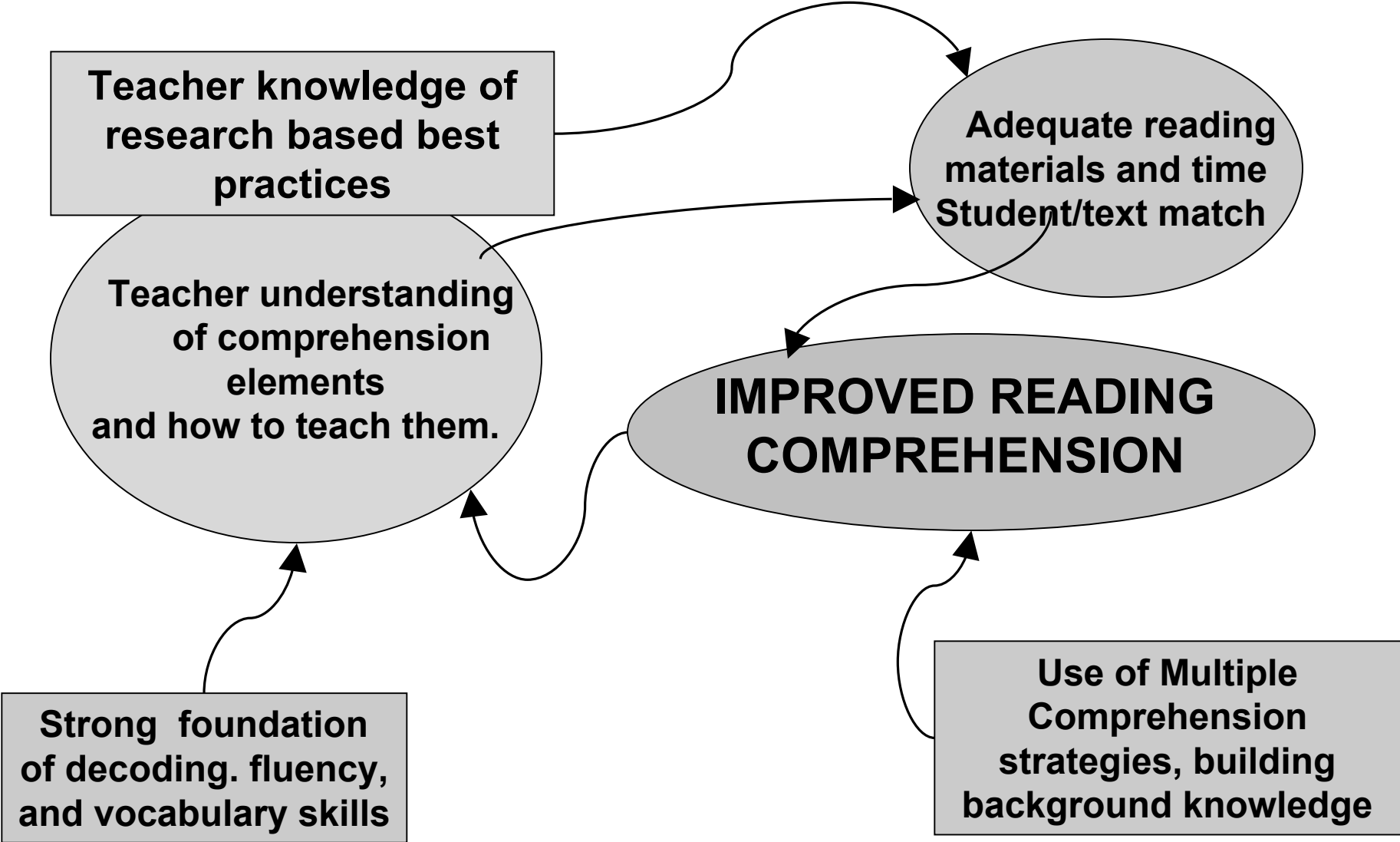
Adapted from: William Nagy

Reading volume: Reciprocal effects

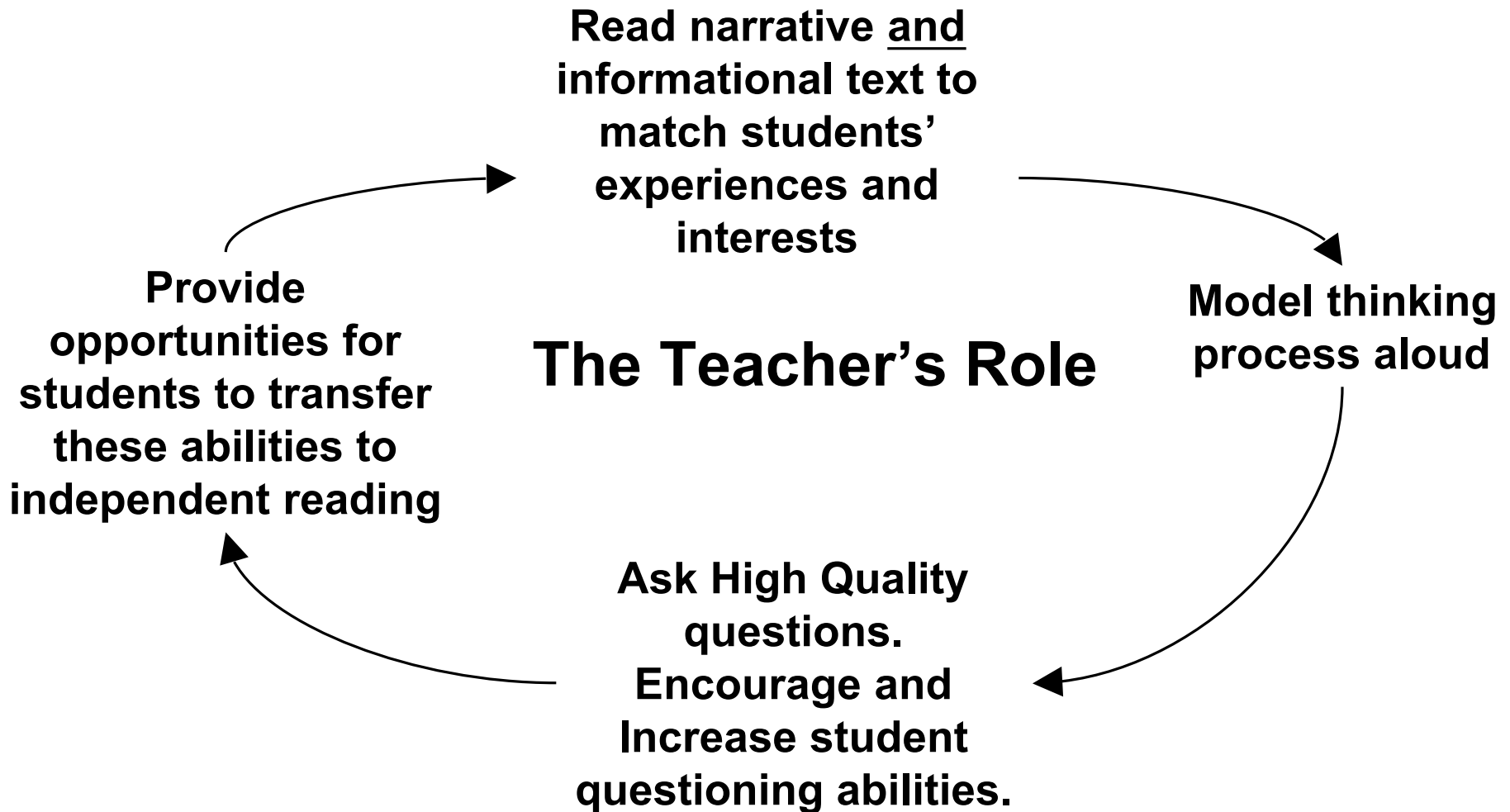
The result:



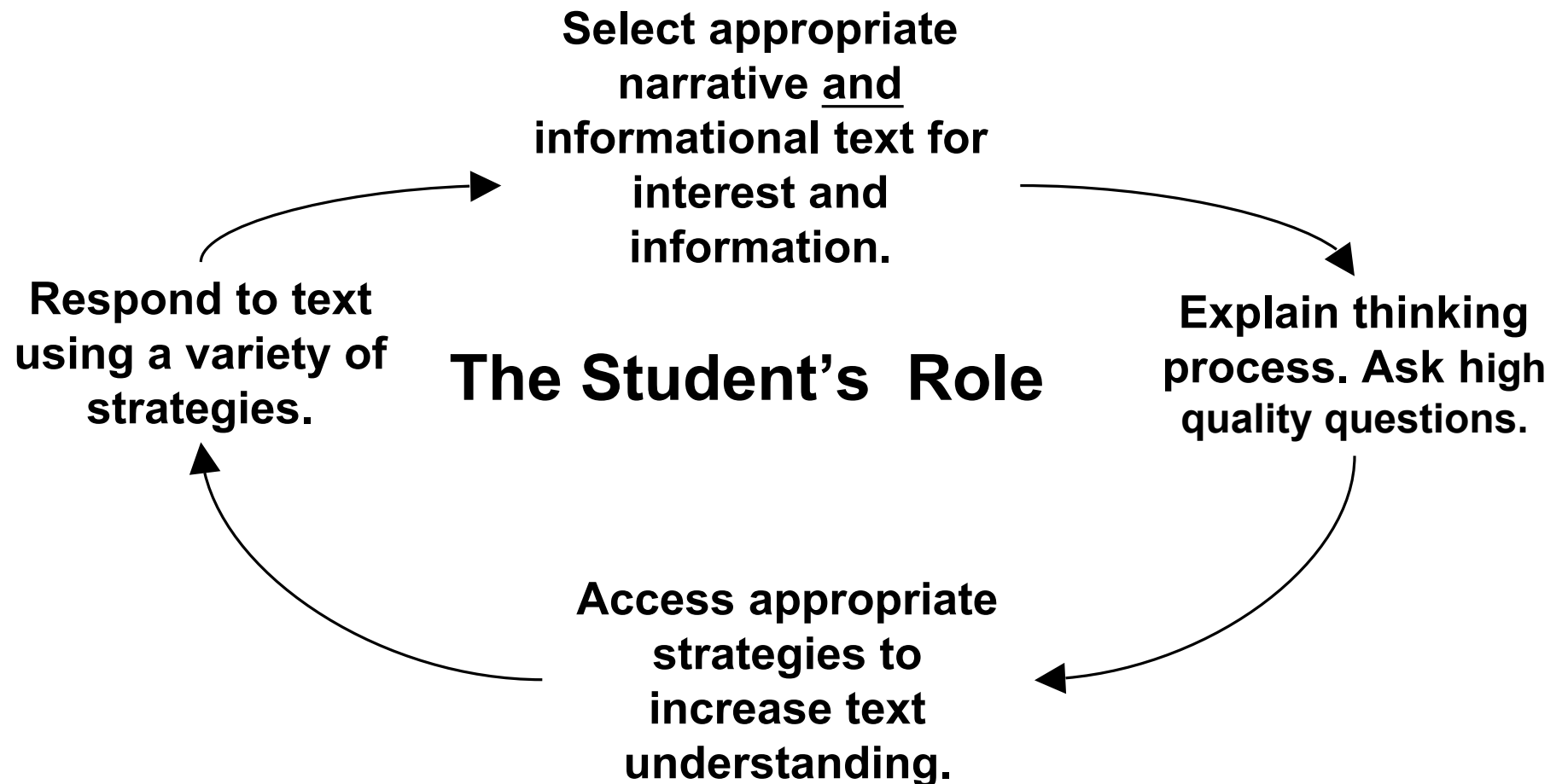
Instructional Implications for Improving Students' Reading Comprehension



The Teacher's Role in Improving Reading Comprehension



The Student's Role in Improving Reading Comprehension



Examples of High Quality Talk Strategy for Teacher and Student

- Are you talking about this topic
- I agree...because...
- I disagree...because....
- Please repeat that using your own words.
- Can you give an example?
- How do you know this?
- Why do you think this?
- Can you say more about?
- I don't understand. Can you say that another way

Trouble Shooting Strategies Comprehension

- Reread the sentence if you have stopped to figure out words.
- Look back in passage for information
- Consider options. What is possible, what is probable?
- Come to a conclusion.
- See if it makes sense

The Story (to be continued)

Findings and Implications:

- Levels of progress
- What we learned
- Next Steps

Resources

- Adams, M.J. (2000). Beginning To Read: Thinking and Learning about Print. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press
- Beck I.L. et al. (1996) Questioning the Author: A yearlong classroom implementation to engage students with text. *The Elementary School Journal*, 96, 385-414.
- Dickenson, D.K. & Smith, M.W. (1994) Long-term effects of preschool teachers' book readings on low-income children's vocabulary and story comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 29(2), 104-122.

Resources

- Duke, N.K. & Pearson, P.D. (2002). Effective practices for developing reading comprehension, In A.E. Farstrup & S.J. Samuels (Eds.), *What research has to say about reading instruction* (3rd ed.) pp. 205-242. Newark, DE: International Reading Association
- New York State Education Department. Early Literacy Guidance, Prekindergarten- Grade 3. available, <http://www.nysed.gov>
- Report of the National Reading Panel, (December, 2000). *Teaching Children to Read: Chapter 4*.
- www.earlyreading.info – website developed by Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL). Provides online support for those responsible for young children's reading achievement. The reading research and literature found on this website will help teachers, principals, parents with decisions about developing young readers. It includes the 5 components of reading and reading instruction for pre-K to grade 3 learners.