

TPRS

BOOKS & WORKSHOPS



What is TPRS®?

TPRS® is a method of second-language teaching that uses highly-interactive stories to provide comprehensible input and create immersion-like environment. TPRS® maximizes the input in the classroom by making the input comprehensible, repetitive and interesting.

TPRS® stands for Teaching Proficiency through Readng and Storytelling.

What is Proficiency?

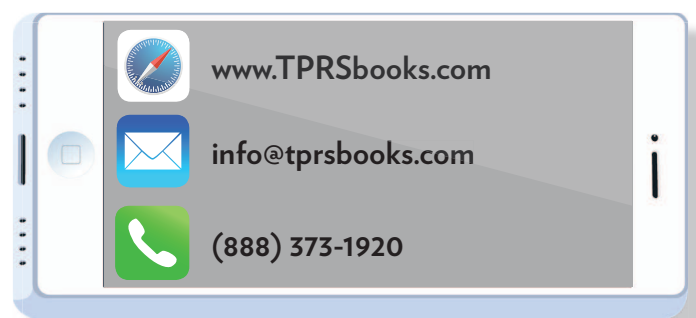
Proficiency is the ability to comprehend and be comprehended across a range of familiar & unfamiliar contexts.

Mission statement:

Changing the lives of teachers and students through the efficacy of TPRS®.

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Keys to R.I.C.H. Input

Key 1: Repetitive



Repetition is directly linked to comprehension. As teachers learn to be repetitive, the students' comprehension will increase.

TPRS® makes the language repetitive in the following ways:

1. Asking repetitive questions, or "circling".
2. Going back and reviewing storyline.
3. Adding details to a sentence one at a time.
4. Using multiple locations.
5. Using multiple characters. Multiple characters allow us to ask a lot of questions by comparing and contrasting one character with the other(s).
6. Verifying the details to the class and with our actors. Verifying a detail means to repeat the correct answer after the students answer a question. This will build confidence in our students because it will allow them to hear accurate language more.

"Communication is the expression, interpretation, and sometimes negotiation of meaning in a given context. What is more, communication is also purposeful."

-Sandra J. Savignon



Key 2: Interesting

TPRS® teachers know that students cannot comprehend language that they are not paying attention to. Therefore, making the input interesting, compelling even, will optimize the input in the classroom. Each context, grade level, and age will have different criteria for interest.

Input can be made interesting by:

1. Personalizing the input. Talk about things that students are familiar with and have an emotional connection to. Ask open-ended questions and use student answers to add details to our conversations and our stories by suggesting what is interesting to them.
2. Acting out the story. Use interesting student actors to dramatize the action. Use props like fake noses, toys, etc. to enhance the dramatic experience.
3. Using realia. Incorporate music, video clips, art (including student art). Find culturally relevant materials that students find interesting. Implement the use of learner-centered authentic resources and other realia.



TPRS® has
four keys.



Key 3: **Comprehensible**

TPRS® teachers make input comprehensible by:

1. Using vocabulary that students know and easily recognizable words like cognates.
2. Writing unknown words on the board with translation (the most efficient / effective way to make the new word comprehensible).
3. Speaking slowly enough to allow students time to process what teacher is saying.
4. Continually editing our speech, making sure that teachers use words that students know or the use of cognates.
5. Additionally using gestures, pictures, realia or other techniques to aid comprehension and processing speed.

Key 4: **High-Frequency**

Traditional textbooks attempt to teach 3000 words per year. This means that during course of a school year, students on average would be learning 17 words per day. For decades, generations of students, who have studied a language, report that they cannot speak in the Target Language with confidence or competence. Limit vocabulary to a few hundred words per year is a key to achieving proficiency. It allows the students to hear the most frequently used words in the language.

The 3 Steps of TPRS®

Step #1: Establish Meaning

Select useful key structures (*usually three*) and establish meaning with written translation and TPR gestures for a few minutes. This is not “listen and repeat.” Students are showing they understand with gestures. Begin to get it deeper into students’ memories with novel commands, very short “mini-stories” and comprehension checks. Once students have the vocabulary and structures in short term memory, begin asking personalized questions (PQA) and then play with their answers. Depending on the interest you can spend a lot of time here. Hours. Days.



Step #2: Ask-a-story

Co-creating a class story is uniquely built by asking questions using the guide words often referred to as target structures. Ask-a-story or co-creating is an opportunity for students to contribute their ideas to the class. The communicative purpose of the ask-a-story is to provide compelling, comprehensible input. The story is short, simple and interesting—it contextualizes the target structures and provides repetitions. It is told slowly with constant comprehension checks and feedback from the students.

"Language is too abstract and complex to teach and learn explicitly. As such, any approach to language teaching in the classroom must be different from approaches to teaching other subjects (e.g., history, science).

Bill VanPatten

Step #3: Read

Reading is based on the material in the two previous steps—it reinforces the content in a new way. Reading can be at a slightly higher level than the spoken language in the classroom because students can comprehend and process more vocabulary and more grammar forms found in the written input.