

## ***Talk Read, Talk Write* by Nancy Motely**

### **Why do teachers need TRTW?**

Current research says that approximately eight million young people between the fourth and twelfth grades struggle to read at grade level. It also tells us that 70% of older readers require some form of reading remediation. According to *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy*, while this group of readers does not need help sounding out the words on a page, they do need help comprehending what they read. In addition, a full 70% of U.S. middle and high school students require differentiated instruction—that is, instruction targeted to their individual strengths and weaknesses. (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006)

Reading Next also reveals that approximately 32% of high school graduates are not ready for college level English Composition courses (ACT 2005), and approximately 40% of high school graduates lack the literacy skills employers seek (Achieve, Inc., 2005).

### **What are the origins of TRTW?**

Nancy Motely received an email about her family's health insurance. The email stated that the company was offering care and included an explanation of benefits with the email. Nancy opened the attachments and began reading the documents. During her attempt to read through all of the documents, she realized that she couldn't remember what she had just read. She realized she needed a different approach.

Nancy called her husband on the phone and asked, "Do you want to switch your health insurance plan to mine?" He then began to ask her questions that she couldn't answer...like, "What is the maximum payout, the Emergency deductible, the co-pay? Did the policy include vision and dental coverage, etc.?" After a long conversation about all the things she needed to look up, she realized that she could now go back and read through those documents with a purpose.

Nancy had an "Aha!" moment following this experience, and she made a connection to her students. This is exactly what her students experience when she assigns them a text to read!

## Overview of the TRTW Approach

Steps	Goal	Strategies
Talk #1	Engage with content concept and set a purpose for reading.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask a Provocative Question</li><li>• Make a Choice</li><li>• Respond to a Visual</li></ul>
Read	Read an academic text to develop content understanding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PAT List</li><li>• Annotation</li><li>• Highlighting PLUS</li></ul>
Talk #2	Process the text and prepare for writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Envelope, Please!</li><li>• Check-in Conversation</li></ul>
Write	Communicate content understanding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clear Explanation</li><li>• Make a Claim with Evidence</li></ul>

\*\*\*Embracing the entire process as part of regular instructional routine, however, will change students' educational careers. Most importantly, it will give them the gift of literacy for their entire lives.