## What digital texts are you using today that you didn’t use before?

M- While participating in the research project by CAST (Center for Applied Special Technology), I used the Thinking Reader which integrates the reciprocal teaching method into digital versions of children’s literature for my fourth grade class. (show first image)

P-I am using the Thinking Reader as well.  This also applies to the UDL which uses the technology to make the curriculum more flexible and better able to meet the needs of all students.  The digitized texts offers different levels of support for all students.

## Tell me about the digital texts and the various types of features?

M- The CAST e-Reader prompts students to use reading strategies such as: summarizing, predicting, questioning, clarifying, and/or visualizing. The text can be read aloud and there are tools to help support the student such vocabulary, decoding, or how to respond. There is a hint “genie” or a “bird” that can aid the student in responding to a written response. These student responses then go in a work log.

P- I could say...The Thinking Reader embeds texts websites relevant to the themes of the novel, enhances student background information, provides reading strategies to improve reading comprehension skills, and helps students improve reading comprehension skills with strategy prompts.

 or I can discuss the features

## What are some of the positives and the negatives of using digital texts?

 P- Benefits- Helped readers get into text and better understand reading, engaged with the text, helped students who were stronger listeners than readers, and impacted reading comprehension.

  Negatives- Some stories too complex for some students.  They would have benefited from picture books due to their attention spans and motivation level.

M- Benefits-

* A tool that can be used cross curricular when students are struggling
* When students met offline in small groups they were able to think and analyze the way there would have responded online
* Students were motivated to read or respond to text they would not have attempted before
* Students came to me for suggestions for chapter books/novels

M- Negatives

* It took students a little bit to adapt to learning something new with the new format
* Some students sat out from discussion but eventually joined in
* Not all strategies were favorable but were used, most students stuck to strategies that they felt more comfortable with like visualizing
* I struggled at first with technical issues but eventually learned ways to solve- it was definitely a learning experience for me as well

## Did you notice any changes in student self-esteem and confidence level?

P- Yes I noticed changes in self-esteem.    They were more confident in their writing and the students were actually talking to one another about what they have read.  They were building ideas together.  Also were more confident in reading books.

M- One of my students who is withdrawn and shy developed confidence after she worked with digital text. Instead of fading away in the background she felt like “I know what I’m doing here!” One of my ELL students who was from Kenya became more and more willing to participate in discussions and appeared more confident in his written responses. All students began to feel armed and ready to attack any form of text, because they had a “plan.” These strategies were like the special recipe for success, effective for every student.

## Do you feel that digital texts can meet the needs of all student levels and does it help with overall reading comprehension?

P- Yes it meets all students’ needs. For example one student in my class who was ELL.  It increased his comprehension.  In general...my students writing showed more detail.

M- A pre/post test which focused on vocabulary and comprehension showed improvement. End of novel assessments helped me understand the student’s comprehension of important events and details of the story. I used a performance assessment at the end of the novel, So Far from the Bamboo Grove at which students retold the story by creating a mural in groups. I could evaluate how well the students could focus on the critical events of the story. I strongly encourage educators at all levels to familiarize themselves with reciprocal teaching and its strategies using digital text. (show image 3 &4)