

# TAKS rap

BEFORE  
Title. Type.  
Check it out!  
Skim it over.  
What's it all about?

DURING  
Read and think to  
understand,  
Does it  
CLICK  
Or does it  
CLUNK?  
Use your strategies to  
fix it up!

AFTER  
Underline the words  
that hold the key.  
Now read the question  
to check and see-  
Is it level 1, 2, or 3?

RATA tat tat! RATA tat  
tat!

✓ or X

BUT PROVE IT TO  
ME!

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First, I initially give out the bookmark without the After section, because this one was written specifically for a reading test situation. We practice the before and during steps with everything we read.

**Test preparation:**

I give students highlighters and a piece of text. I teach the RAP in slow steps. They know they will be given a grade for evidence that they used the strategy. I will be looking for the highlighting and marks. I do this repeatedly with tests practice before the state test. I am NOT scoring right or wrong answers each time, but rather giving grades for evidence of using the test strategy. I am aiming for a reading habit during test taking. It has worked well for me. If nothing else I have more struggling readers slowing down to think while they read.

**Before we read:**

Highlight the title. Now skim through the whole piece. Does this look like information or a story, a play?, invitation, recipe? etc. Write that down in the upper right corner.

**During the reading:**

Now read. As you read make notes in the column. (depends on what you have taught your kids to do) For test reading I keep it simple. Did you have a strong connection-mark it? A question? Write it? Some years I have asked for one key word in the margin beside each paragraph. In the beginning I model what it is like to have something not make sense. It clunks. I show them the variety of ways I might try to make sense of it. Usually it is REREAD. We then all actually proudly explain our clunks and how we solved them. This is a focus for a week.

**AFTER we read.**

We take one question at a time. We underline key words. (Many levels of questions or QAR lessons have happened long before this) We're getting good at recognizing whether it will be a "right there" answer I need to locate or one that requires text evidence and my own inferences. (book or brain)

The RATA stands for "read all the answers." This was advice from some good readers who said they discovered they had liked answer B and immediately chose it, but had they read D they would have recognized that it was the "better" answer. We discuss it isn't the right or wrong answer but the best answer. They check EVERY choice they think is possible and X those they're already certain aren't. I give them full permission to check several answers without questioning them about it. I want them to go prove it.

Prove it to me. Kids have to go back into the text and highlight evidence they used to answer a question. They put the number of the question beside it. They go back and turn every check, except the best answer into an X. (I am walking around in my black high school graduation robe acting like Judge Judy, who insists on proof)

They go onto the next question.

Yes it takes a long time to do one passage. We teach 'brain breaks' between passages.

It is a thorough process, and I have seen kids grow in their confidence and ability practicing this method. E-mail me with any questions.

Gina

Gina.Alligood@leanderisd.org