Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA)
Part 1: Pre-Reading Activity for Heart of Darkness

Purpose of Strategy: Using pictures from National Geographic, and a scene from a TV show along with the directed reading-thinking strategy will generate interest in the book Heart of Darkness. As they make predictions, students will have a purpose to continue reading the book. It will also stimulate discussion about Africa and the effects of imperialism in Africa in the late 1800s.

Directions:
Step 1: Predicting:
Show the students pictures from the September 2005 issue of National Geographic, and show them the pictures on the power point of the ivory. Looking at the title, and knowing that the book is about the pictures they have seen, seeing the map of Africa and the Congo, etc, help them make predictions by asking such questions as:

- What do you know about Africa and the Congo?
- What would you think about these people, if you just saw them and did not know what their customs were? What judgments might you make?
- What do you think that this book is about?
- What might be the significance of the title of the book?
- What do you think might happen in this story?

As the students read the book, you may ask questions like:

- What do you think might happen next?
- Why do you think so?
- Why do you think that Marlow makes these judgments?
- What does this say about Marlow/his culture?

Have the students record some of their predictions in a journal, or on a worksheet, and have them refer to these as they read the text.

Step 2: Reading:
Have the students begin reading the text. Are their predictions correct? As they go through the text, have them evaluate their predictions to see how accurate they were. Emphasize that there are no right or wrong predictions, but have them change their predictions as they read, and see how correct they were. Encourage discussion of their predictions, etc.

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Step 3: Proving:

During the discussion, as you are reading together, have them evaluate their predictions. Were they correct or incorrect? Where is the proof? Have them find proof for their predictions by using passages from the text.

Continue reading with the students. Assess their oral reading ability. Write down their predictions on the board. How well are the students understanding the text as they read? How well are they remembering what they have read? How hard are they looking for meaning in *Heart of Darkness*? Are they actively trying to understand it? Continue this cycle of 1-3.

1. Ask them for predictions as they read.
2. Evaluate their predictions.
3. Have them prove their predictions.

Assessment:

This strategy will help the teacher know that the students are paying attention to the text, and help the teacher evaluate their comprehension. This can be a very useful strategy to help ensure that the students are keeping up on reading and understand what they are reading.