READING CLOZE PROCEDURE

Example of a cloze activity from the book Across the Stream by Mirra Ginsburg:

pages 4-5 A hen and three chicks
page 7 had a bad dream.
page 9 They r______ and came
page 10 to a deep, wide stream.
page 13 The hen said, “Cluck, we are in luck.
page 14-15 I _______ three ducklings and a duck.”

What is Reading Cloze?

Cloze refers to the ‘reading closure’ practice required when readers must fill blanks left in text, using whatever knowledge and experience they have (Teach On by David Hornsby.) The teacher uses the cloze procedure to model a variety of problem-solving reading strategies.

In a cloze activity words or letters are omitted from text in ways that require the readers to use specific reading strategies, or to focus upon specific cues in the text. The teacher guides students through the text, helping them to focus on one of the following:

- phonics/visual cues
- sight and/or speaking vocabulary
- predication skills
- cross-check cues

Lessons using the cloze procedure can also expand student’s use of language structure cues, meaning cues, and background knowledge to predict unknown words.
**Cloze Procedures**

1. Choose a familiar or meaningful piece of text to work on a particular reading skill. Types of appropriate text with enlarged print include:

   - big books
   - songs
   - rhymes
   - chants

2. Cover up some of the words or parts of words from the text using sticky notes. Focus on one reading strategy for each cloze procedure lesson. The focus may be on meaning, syntax, or graphophonics.

   Using the example from Across the Stream, pages 14-15

   **I ______ three ducklings and a duck.**

   To focus on meaning ask:  
   **“What would make sense in this space?”**

   To focus on syntax ask:  
   **“What would sound right in this space?”**

   To focus on graphophonics uncover a portion of the word,

   **I s______ three ducklings and a duck.**

   Ask: **“What word would make sense in this space and begin this way?”**

3. Assist the students as they use the context of the text, structure, illustrations, and graphophonics information to figure out the missing word.
### Oral Reading Cloze Sequence

from *Teach On* by David Hornsby

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Action</th>
<th>Student Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher introduces text. Teacher reads title and asks students what they think is going to happen.</td>
<td>Students make predictions about the text. This also helps to set purposes for the shared reading. Students discuss their different predictions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher reads to the first deletion and asks students to suggest a word that might come next.</td>
<td>Students consider their predictions and use the extra context they have picked up from the teacher’s oral reading to suggest a word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When students have predicted a word, the teacher asks, “Why did you choose that word?” Teacher either confirms prediction or asks why it could not be right. Teacher encourages discussion of alternatives.</td>
<td>Students have to justify their choice of words, using not only information from the text and any illustrations, but also their own knowledge. They predict and consider alternatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher reads to the next deletion, pauses, looks expectantly at the students.</td>
<td>Students continue as above.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cycle of **Predicting—Justifying—Comparing—Discussing** is continued until the passage is completed.
Oral cloze needs to be planned in advance. During the preparation the teacher decides upon the words to be deleted. However, the teacher makes changes according to how well the students are handling the task. The frequency of deletions must be low enough to ensure that the flow of the story is not lost.

Deleting Text

It is important for a teacher to use his/her knowledge of the students needs and capabilities when matching text and considering which words or letters to delete. In addition, the rate of deletion needs to be considered. There is not a set rate. The deletion rate is determined by the students’ stage of development and the “conceptual load” of the text. The following guidelines may be used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Development</th>
<th>Maximum Rate of Deletion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>1 word deletion in every 15-20 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>1 word deletion in every 12-15 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td>1 word deletion in every 8-10 words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are only guidelines. When the text covers a familiar subject, more words could be deleted than if the subject is unfamiliar.

It is important to remember that the activity is to help the reader with reading strategies. The aim is to use those strategies to complete the deletions successfully and be able to articulate what was done and why. The aim is not to make the procedure a text or to make it as difficult as possible.

Teach On by David Hornsby
Students Who Might Benefit From Cloze Procedures

- Students who do not realize that making meaning from the written text is paramount.

- Students who do not realize that one essential reading strategy is prediction.

- Students who need confidence to use what they know and to apply it as they read.

- Students who are not aware of the reading strategies they use.

- Students who rely too much upon one cueing system when reading.

- Students who read word by word, with little or no comprehension.

- Readers who make too many omissions, reversals, or insertions.

- Non-thinking readers who need to discuss their reading and to become more critical.

- Good readers who need to be encouraged to discuss word choice.

- Students who do not realize that both non-visual information (*including what you know in your head*) and visual information (*which includes both the words and illustrations*) are essential in reading.