

Answers to Chapter 4: Comprehension Questions

1. *How is focused practice different from the common conception of practice?*

Practice is commonly thought of as performing an action repeatedly. Focused practice differs from this because it involves repetition of a strategy while paying attention to detailed parts or aspects of the strategy that have been targeted for improvement.

2. *What are the benefits of focusing on specific steps of a strategy or developing a protocol for a strategy?*

For strategies with a specific set of well-defined steps, focusing on one of those steps allows a teacher to perfect his or her performance on parts of the strategy that are crucial to its overall success. Practicing a specific step of a strategy might include developing explicit guidelines for students about how to complete that step of the strategy most effectively.

If a strategy does not have a well-defined set of steps, a teacher might develop a protocol to guide focused practice of that strategy. A protocol articulates specific actions associated with a strategy that does not have a well-defined set of steps.

3. *What is overlearning, and what role does it play in the development of fluency?*

Overlearning refers to practice that continues after a person has achieved proficiency. To be fluent with a strategy, a teacher needs to be able to execute the strategy so easily that his or her attention can be focused on monitoring students' reactions to the strategy. Overlearning helps a teacher reach this level of facility with a strategy.

4. *What are the similarities and differences between focused practice at the Applying (3) level and focused practice at the Innovating (4) level?*

At the Applying (3) level, a teacher's practice focuses on using information gathered from students' reactions to adapt the strategy to meet students' needs more effectively. At the Innovating (4) level, a teacher is fluent with multiple strategies for a specific element of teaching and can integrate different parts of each strategy to create macrostrategies.