

## 3. Teach reading comprehension strategies by using a gradual release of responsibility.

Because the use of strategies may not come naturally to many young readers, the panel believes that the strategies should be taught through a **gradual release of responsibility**, in which the teacher first explains how to use the strategy and then gives students more and more independence in practicing and applying the strategy over time.<sup>32</sup> Figure 1 illustrates this shift in responsibility from teacher to student. Effective instruction in reading comprehension strategies often includes some or all of the steps in this model.<sup>33</sup>

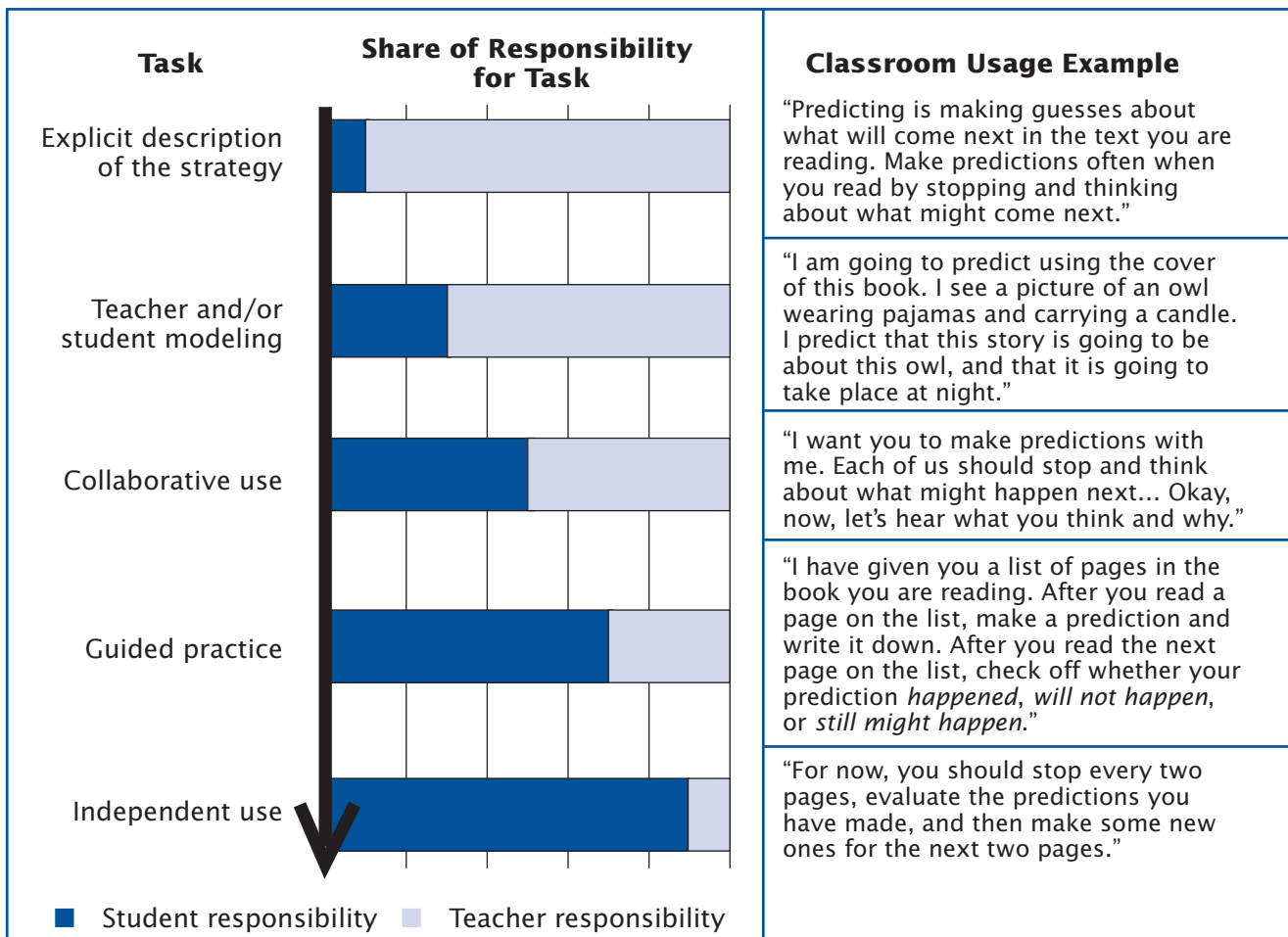
While going through the steps with the class, a teacher should periodically review the purpose of any given strategy and how it improves

### Key reminders

- Remind students to use not only the strategy they just learned but also others they already know, and offer tips on when to use the strategies.
- Talk with students about the value of using strategies to understand what they read so that they understand that strategies are important to both the assignment at hand and to reading in general.

comprehension until students can apply it independently while they read. Cycle back through the gradual release process as the text/topics/concepts become more difficult.

**Figure 1. Illustration of instructional practices to gradually release responsibility to students as task progresses**



Source: Adapted from Duke and Pearson (2002).

Note: Teachers should modify these examples to best suit students’ age and abilities.