This qualitative research study examined the effects of explicit instruction in visualization strategies within a fourth-grade Read 180 reading intervention classroom. The study’s nine participants were taught visualization strategies in hopes of increasing their reading comprehension and reading motivation. The study’s lessons consisted of teaching visualization within three categories: Drawing (creating images based on author description), Watching (seeing the story unfold), and Living (experiencing the story).

The study was conducted in an urban neighborhood elementary school with a high population of at-risk learners. The nine participants were a ethnically heterogeneous group of below grade-level readers, which included economically disadvantaged students, males and females, English Language Learners, and students with Individualized Education Plans. The participants were also enrolled in the Read 180 program, which included differentiated instructional software, leveled independent texts, and comprehension instruction.

The study’s findings suggest that explicit instruction of visualization techniques can have positive impacts on struggling readers’ comprehension. The study also suggests that providing students with explicit visualization instruction can have a positive impact on students’ self-reported reading enjoyment and motivation to read independently.