The explicit teaching of vocabulary and sentence structure improves listening comprehension.

Abstract

Many students in all levels of primary education, experience difficulties in comprehension. In the early years of primary school, students are often able to read a text at an age appropriate level with high percentage accuracy, however they are unable to spontaneously retell and are often unable to answer questions related to the text. If the oral language abilities of a student, heavily affect their ability to comprehend a text that they are reading, then it may also affect their ability to comprehend a text they are listening to. In turn their oral language ability may affect their understanding of directions, instructions and explanations, ultimately impeding their learning in all areas of the curriculum.

The hypothesis of this study is that the explicit teaching of vocabulary and simple sentence structures will increase students listening comprehension. Research has shown that building vocabulary, teaching correct sentence structure and encouraging children to participate in storytelling leads to improvement in comprehension especially in the early years of schooling and preschool.

A class group of 29 prep students participated in storytelling sessions which introduced them to new vocabulary. They were instructed how to form sentences correctly and then retell the story through drama, ordering pictures and in partner activities. The results showed that all students made significant improvements in listening comprehension. The results also indicate the development

The next step to consider when teaching sentence structure is when students are comfortable with 1 event sentences explicitly teach them how to construct 2 and 3 event sentences in order that they become proficient when using oral language in all aspects of their learning. Further studies into the language of effective teachers would also be beneficial.

Introduction

Many students in all levels of primary education, experience difficulties in comprehension. In the early years of primary school, students are often able to read a text at an age appropriate level with high percentage accuracy, however they are unable to spontaneously retell and are often unable to answer questions related to the text. According to Snow, Burns & Griffin (1998) if the ability to efficiently read the printed word is evident, the comprehension of the connected text is heavily reliant on the oral language abilities of the reader. If the oral language abilities of a student, heavily affect their ability to comprehend a text that they are reading, then it may also affect their ability to comprehend a text they are listening to. In turn their oral language ability may affect their understanding of directions, instructions and explanations, ultimately impeding their learning in all areas of the curriculum. The data over the past five to six years in the school being used for this research lends credence to this theory.

Oral language is a vital tool for thought. We learn to talk by talking. We learn to listen by listening. "The more we talk and listen to others talking, the better our ability to manipulate language. The better our ability to manipulate language, the better our ability to think and therefore to read and write for both of these are thinking activities." (Moore, 1991, cited in McCusker, 2007). It is commonly assumed that early reading difficulties in oral language lay the foundation for later reading problems (Roth, Speece, Cooper & de la Paz, 1996). Data collected from students from the school, involved in this research, between 1999 - 2006 who entered school with a Record of Oral Language score of 13 or less made minimal improvements in oral language in their first year of school and have proceeded to have reading problems . According to the Catholic Education Office Melbourne's Early Literacy team 2005, children who score 13 or less on the Record of Oral Language "will have great difficulty in understanding all but the simplest instructions… and will be unable to comprehend a story read to them in class."

With regards to the relevance of oral language abilities, Storch & Whitehurst (2002, p.934) supported the notion that "in addition to code –related skills, a variety of oral language skills during the preschool period have been shown to contribute to a child's reading ability, including: semantic (word knowledge, expressive and receptive vocabulary, syntactic (knowledge of word order and conceptual knowledge) as well as narrative discourse (the ability to construct an original story and retell a recently heard story)' . Language and student's ability to communicate effectively is the foundation of a students capacity to learn (Munro 2007). He continues by outlining the specific aspects of language knowledge that research has shown are directly related to literacy learning *:*
- *"how ideas are linked into discourse and organised in terms of themes or topics,*
- *how ideas are linked into spoken sentences, their comprehension of sentence propositions and grammatical knowledge,*
- *word meanings and how these are linked in networks, and*
- *phonological knowledge and phonemic patterns." (p2).*

Oral language skills therefore provide an essential foundation for skills in listening comprehension. In order to enable students to become proficient in listening comprehension Oullette (2006) suggests that depth of vocabulary knowledge may be an important missing component. There are many recent studies which suggest that students with a low socio economic status are at a disadvantage in relation to vocabulary knowledge. In fact the studies of B Hart & T Risley (1996) stated that students of three years of age with a low socio economic status had vocabulary banks of approximately five hundred words whereas students of the same age but from a high socio economic status had vocabulary banks of approximately one thousand two hundred words. Shira Lubiner and Linda Smetanta (2005) noted that "the achievement gap between students of differing socio-economic levels is one of the most persistent and frustrating problems that educators confront." (p.163) In examining this problem they refer to the works of (Becker, 1977 ; Biemeller, 2004; Chall, 1983, Jacobs & Baldwin, 1990; Hart & Risley, 1995, 2003; White, Graves & Slater, 1990) who have studied this "problem extensively and have identified limited vocabulary as an important factor in the underachievement of children from economically disadvantaged homes". (p.163). They also cite Stanovich (1986) who suggested that children who begin school with limited vocabulary find reading difficult, avoid reading, learn less words and as a result fall further behind. Consequently identifying synonyms and providing definitions should increase students' levels of understanding. Lubliner and Smetana (2005) noted that a challenge when undertaking an intervention in vocabulary is not to just teach a set of words but to make it positively affect comprehension.

The present investigation aims to examine the effect of explicit teaching of sentence structure and extension of the breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge to an entire class in their first year of primary schooling, with a particular focus on the ability to retell stories sequentially. These students demonstrate poor sentence structure and an inability to comprehend spoken texts. The students will have a greater understanding of texts and increase their knowledge of synonyms. The hypothesis of this study is that explicitly teaching vocabulary and sentence structure improves listening comprehension.

Method

Design
The study uses a case study OXO design. Gains in listening comprehension and synonym development, following the explicit teaching of vocabulary (both breadth and depth) and simple sentence structure, are monitored for Prep students. The study compares two groups of students, a control group and an intervention group(referred to in this study as "teaching group").

Participants
The participants for this study are prep students in their first year of schooling, with ages ranging from 4-5 years. Students were chosen based on their scores on the Record of Oral Language testing, which took place for all students at the beginning of the current school year. Students were all chosen according to socio economic status and Language Other Than English backgrounds. (Refer to Appendix 1 Participants Profiles for students data).

Students who had a score of 19 or less (with most participants having scored 13 or less) on the Record of Oral Language testing, as well as being from a low socio economic background and/or from a language background other than English were selected for the study.

Running concurrently within the school was an identical study targeting Grade 1 children with scores of 20 or less in the Record of Oral Language testing.

Materials (Testing)
In pre-testing for this study students were assessed using the following assessments:
- ROL test (Record of Oral Language).- Marie Clay
This test is to assist the teacher to: observe aspects of oral language and assess a child's ability to handle selected grammatical structures. (Clay, 1983 p.8). Clay (2005) stated that she has been recently recommending that the Record of Oral Language be used to place students in three language groups : "an advanced, an average and a needs oral language enrichment group". She notes that "if your students can be placed on a scale of three on the Record of Oral Language, you can think about how simple or average or complex the child's oral language use is, and this identifies who most need you to talk more with them. The students selected for this study are of the "needs oral language enrichment" scale. Sentences of varying degrees of complexity were read aloud to students, who then had to repeat them back verbatim.

- Synonym Word test – John Munro
The synonym word test is used to determine the breadth of vocabulary that a student has. A word was read to a student and they were then required to provide a synonym for that word.

- Listening Comprehension test – John Munro

The listening comprehension task establishes a student's ability to comprehend a spoken text and to retell it in a sequential order. Children were read a short text and then asked to retell as much of the story as they could in a sequential order.

• Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test lll
The PPVT-lll is a norm referenced measure of receptive vocabulary and a measure of listening comprehension for a spoken word. The student listening to an item while looking at four different black and white pictures, they had to identify which picture accurately described the word. These items were in sets of twelve and were age related and each set became increasingly complex. Testing concluded when a student incorrectly identified 8 or more items in a set.

Students' entry scores and chronological age at time of testing are shown in Table 1.

STUDENTS intervention	Age	Pre-Test ROL	Pre-Test Listening Comprehension	Pre- Test Synonyms	Pre-Test PPVT-III
A	5 y11m	4	0	0	79
B	5y 6m	15	4	18	116
C	5y 5m	7	1	4	97
D	5y 2m	13	1	0	82
E	5y 3m	10	1	10	89
F	4y11m	9	1	8	112
G	5y 5m	7	0	6	65
H	5y 5m	9	1	8	106
I	5y 8m	5	1	6	87
CONTROL					
J	5y 8m	4	0	0	88
K	5y 6m	19	3	2	109
L	5y 5m	10	1	0	103
M	5y 3m	7	0	6	99
N	5y 3m	13	2	12	84
O	4y 6m	11	3	8	90
P	5y 7m	8	0	0	87
Q	5y 2m	10	0	4	76
R	5y 0m	7	1	4	99

Table 1 Pre-Test Scores

Procedure

To ensure that the teaching sessions were suitable for the intervention group a Pilot Study was initially carried out. Eight children from another grade prep class took part in Session 1 of the teaching lessons. This was done in order to evaluate the pitch of the lesson, to check that the teaching procedure engaged the students and that the language of the lesson was within the control of the students'. Therefore the pilot group were as closely matched to the intervention group with regards to age, ROL score, socio economic status and/or language background other than English. The Pilot Group was deemed successful and as a result of this the teaching sessions were delivered as they had been planned.

The intervention consisted of 10 teaching sessions each of one hour duration. The teaching was directed to a whole class of Grade Prep students. with 9 students selected for pre and post-tesing within this class group. Students in the control group continued to participate in the regular classroom Literacy program. Following the 10 sessions, children in the intervention group and control group were re-assessed using the same tests that were initially administered. Unfortunately due to other school commitments the ten teaching lessons did not take place consecutively. They were in fact completed over a four week period with only two lessons taking place on weeks 1 and 2.

Three teaching sessions were allocated to Text 1 and Text 2 however Text 3 consisted of four sessions (more complicated text). Each text followed the same teaching format. The lessons were designed so that they could be used by teachers for whole class instruction.

In session 1 the children were initially shown large stimulus pictures (related to Text 1) to generate ideas and vocabulary. As vocabulary was suggested it was displayed for everyone to see (i.e. the items were labelled).
The children were then asked to provide synonyms for the vocabulary generated, this in turn was also displayed (for children to refer to in the future) i.e. synonym cards with pictures which pictorially represented the meaning of the word, as well as two synonyms for the word and space for the students suggested synonyms to be recorded. This would not be presented to children until they had provided/attempted to provide synonyms. If children were experiencing difficulty the teacher would also suggest some synonyms.

The children then used '1 Action' sentence frames to create sentences using the vocabulary produced in the picture chat.

E.g. This is a _____.
     I can see the _____.

Before reading the text the teacher instructed the children on what it meant to be a good listener. In session one teacher provided the class with a poster which explains what a good listener does. Teacher read it to the class initially and then with the class. While reading the text the children repeated phrases and acted out different parts of the story. After reading, children took part in an activity which required them to sequence pictures in a small group and retell the story.

In session 2 the children sequenced pictures of the key events of the text and retold the story with a partner. Following that the children produced 'what questions?' with a partner and gave answers which were structurally correct. E.g. "What is this?" (child would point to an item in the picture), reply :"This is a …." "What is Goldilocks doing?" etc .In small groups children were given a character mask and required to act out the story in the correct order. Thus sequencing and practising the language structures of the characters.

In session 3 the children revisited the synonyms they had learned in a rapid naming of items. The teacher would show a picture and ask the children to give synonyms. E.g. a picture of a man and the children would respond with guy, male, gentleman etc. After listening to the story for a third time the children participated in a progressive memory activity where they used the sentence frame "In the story the …." This activity required the children to retell sequentially as a group. Finally the children had to sequence pictures from the story in the correct order and then retell the story to the teacher. A tape recorder was used to gather responses and then referred to later. At the conclusion of every session children were asked to review what they had learnt.

The Gingerbread Man had an extra session due to the large amount of characters and more complicated text. It followed the same format as session 3 but instead of sequencing pictures the children were asked to dramatise the story in a group.

Results

Results indicate support for the hypothesis that teaching prep students (who are identified as at risk in the area of oral language), to use simple sentence structures, retell in sequence and increase their vocabulary knowledge, increases their listening comprehension.

The listening comprehension of all students in the intervention group indicates improvement. (Appendix 2, Table 2). Gains made by the intervention group were far greater than those of the control group, as shown through the comparison of the pre and post testing scores (Figures 1 and 2).
The minimum gain in listening comprehension in the intervention group was 50%. With student A and G achieving an improvement of 83%. However it should be noted that more students in the control group demonstrated higher comprehension scores in pre-testing than the intervention group. No student in the control group scored more than 50% accuracy with the unusual outcome of one student, student O regressing from being 50% accurate in the pre test to 0% accuracy in the post testing. The testing variables were controlled as much as possible, that is: children were pre and post-tested by the same examiner, in the same location, and at the same time of the day.
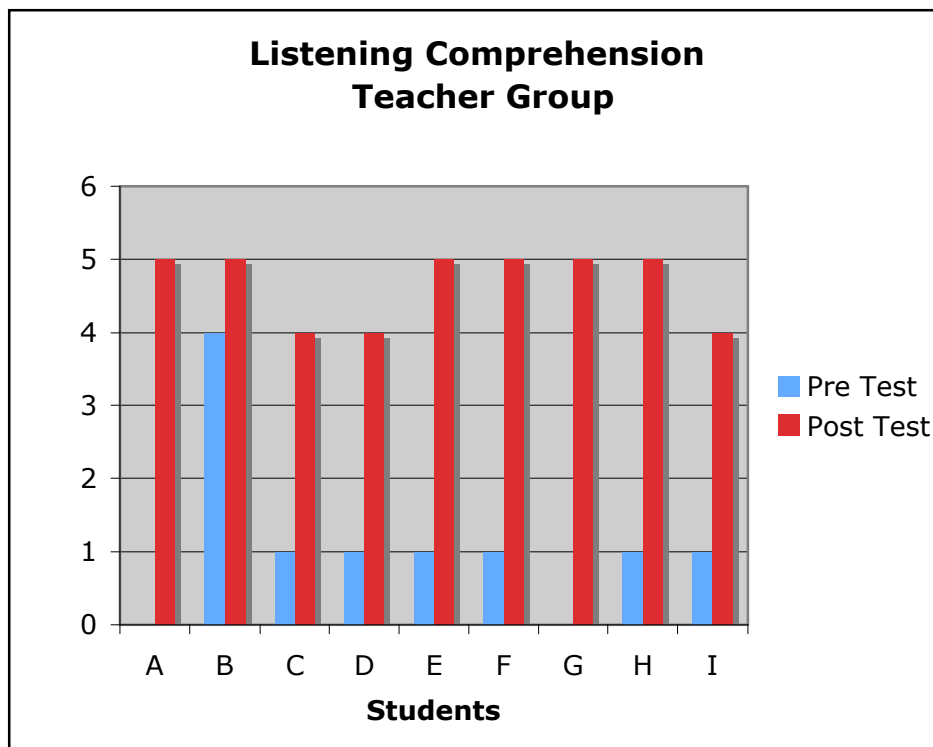

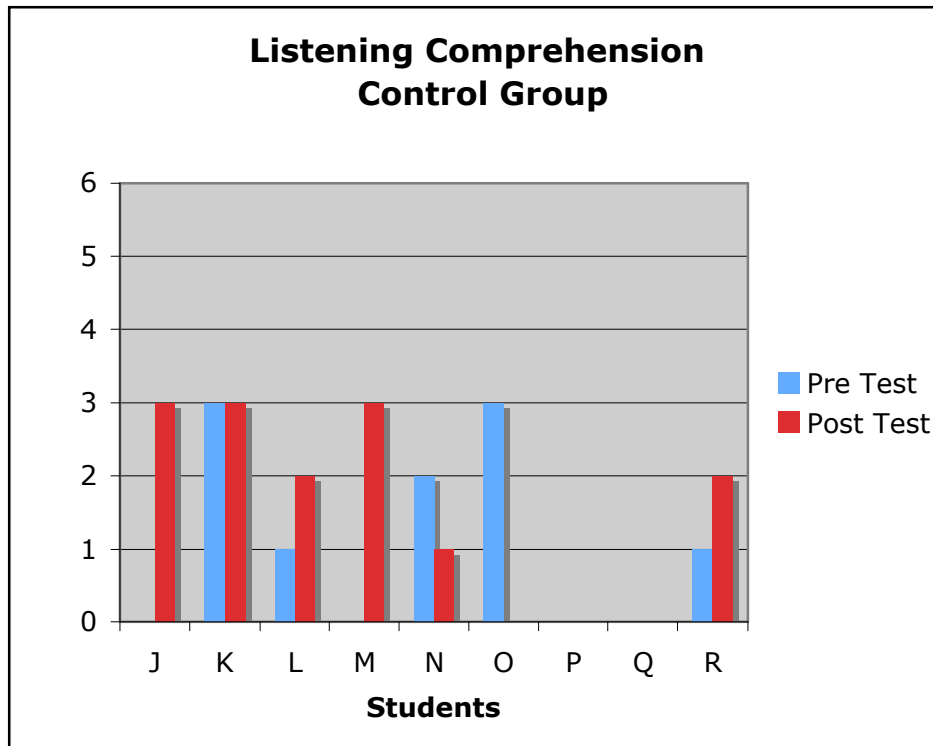Figure 1   Listening Comprehension scores Intervention group

Figure 2 Listening comprehension scores Control Group

During post testing it appears the minimum gain in listening comprehension in the intervention group was 50%. With student A and G achieving an improvement of 83%. The student who made the least gains, student B, was the student with the highest level of listening comprehension in the pre-test.

The synonym scores of all students in the intervention group indicate improvement. Gains made by the intervention students were greater than those of the control group. as shown through the comparison of the pre and post-testing scores (Figures 3 and 4). Student C made a gain of 31%, Student I progressed by 27%, students D, E, and J progressed by 24%. Students A,B, C and G increased by between 13% and 20% in their knowledge of synonyms. The smallest gain was Student H's gain of 7%. During the pre-testing, most students either responded with incorrect answers e.g. opposites or more commonly, putting the words they knew into sentences, during the post-testing student C when told the word fatigued replied "What that word? I don't know what that word mean." Leading the tester to believe that since the pre-testing period, this student had realised that in order to give a synonym for a word you must understand what that word means.
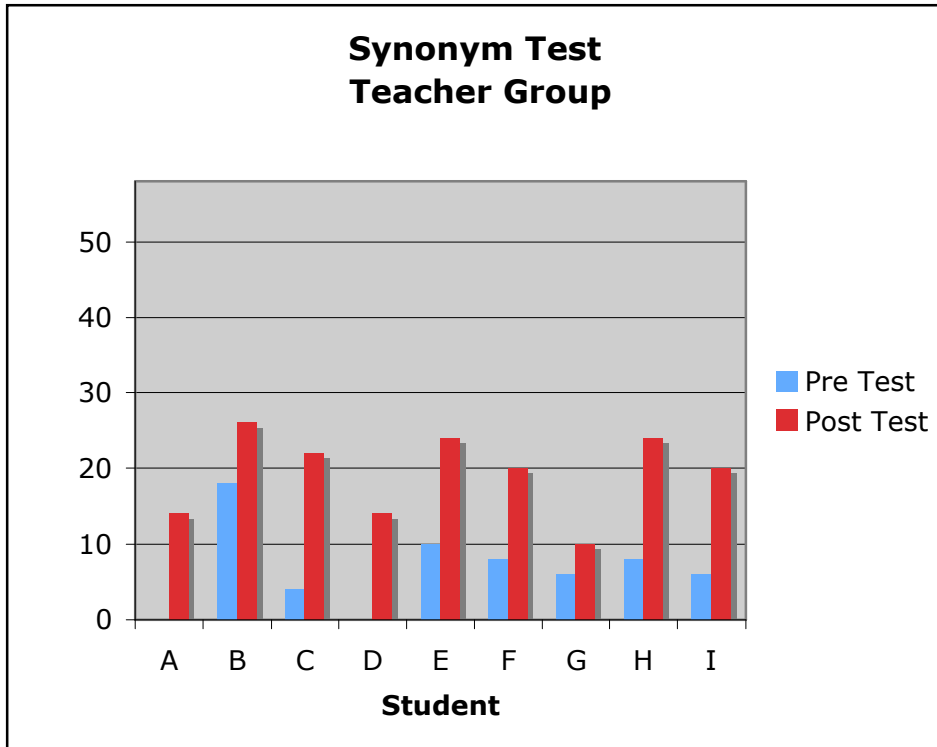
Synonym Test
Teacher Group

Figure 3   Synonym Test Intervention group

It is worth noting that there was a very similar spread of scores in the pre-test between the Intervention group and the control group. However while all students in the intervention group increased their synonym knowledge, students N and O in the control group made no gains while students Q and R regressed.

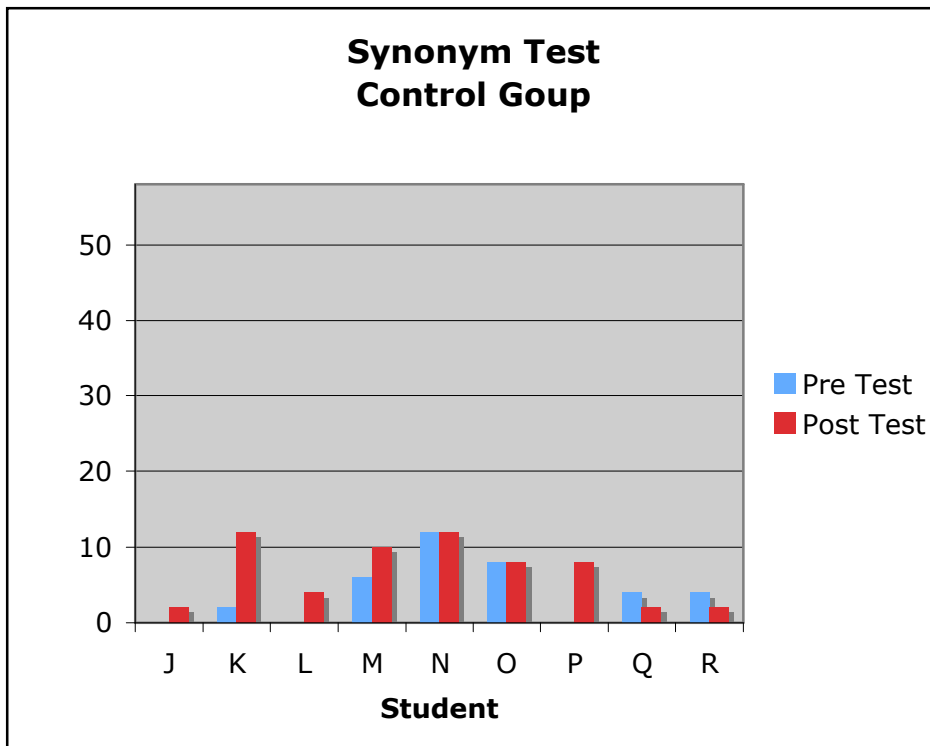**Synonym Test**
Control Goup

Figure 4   Synonym Test   Control group

With regards to oral language, all students in the intervention group made gains in their Record of Oral language score. While the gains are not as significant as in other areas tested the improving trend in the results is pleasing. Gains made by the intervention group were far greater than those of the control group, as shown through the comparison of the pre and post testing scores (Figures 5 and 6). It is worth noting that only three of the students in the control group displayed gains in their Record of Oral Language.
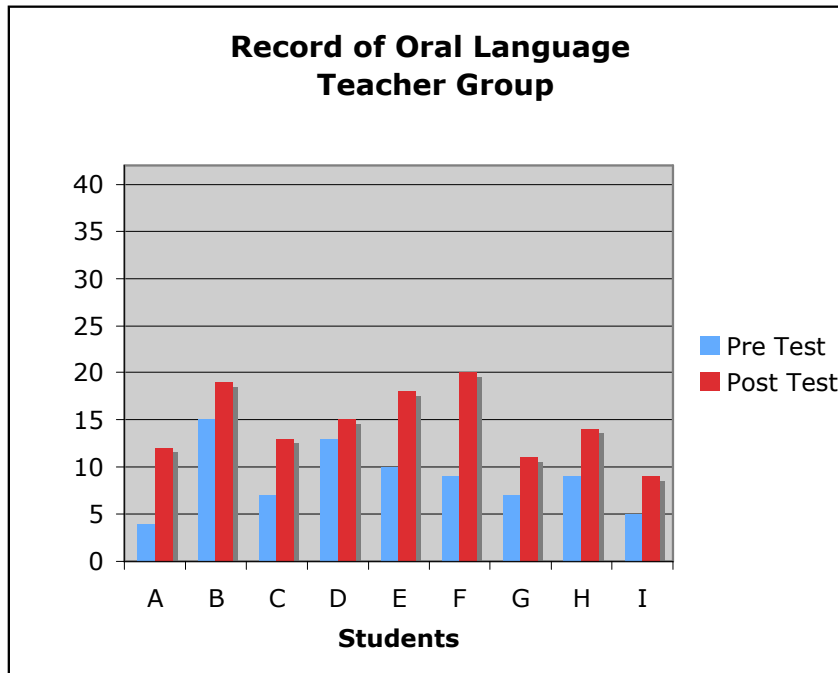

Figure 5   Record of Oral Language   Intervention group
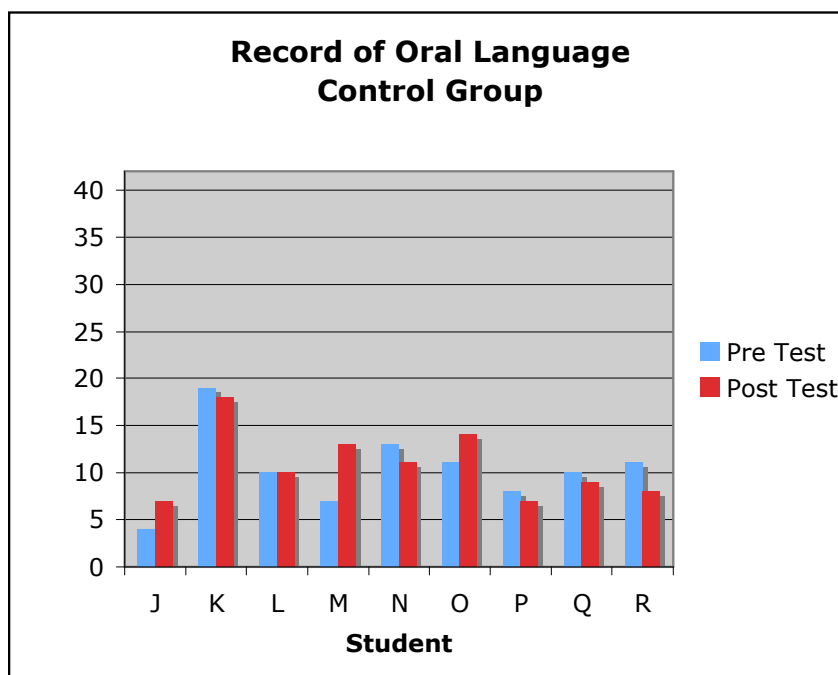
Figure 6   Record of Oral Language   Control group

Considering the fact that these students were selected with a low level of Oral Language as a set criteria, their gains are pleasing. It is interesting to note that Student H of the intervention group , who displayed the least gains in the Record of Oral Language showed improvement of 9.52%., whereas of the three students in the control group who achieved gains the highest of these gains was 14.3% by Student M. It is a concern to note that five of the students from the control group regressed on this task.

Figure 7   PPVT-III   Intervention group
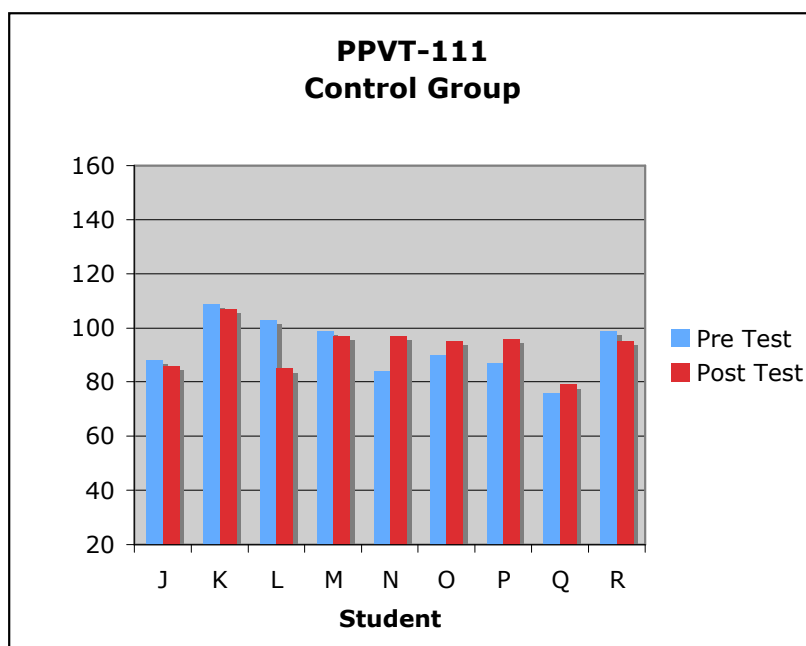
Figure 8   PPVT-III   Control group

It was interesting to observe the students as they took part in the Peabody Picture Vocabulary test as many of the students seemed to use elimination skills to det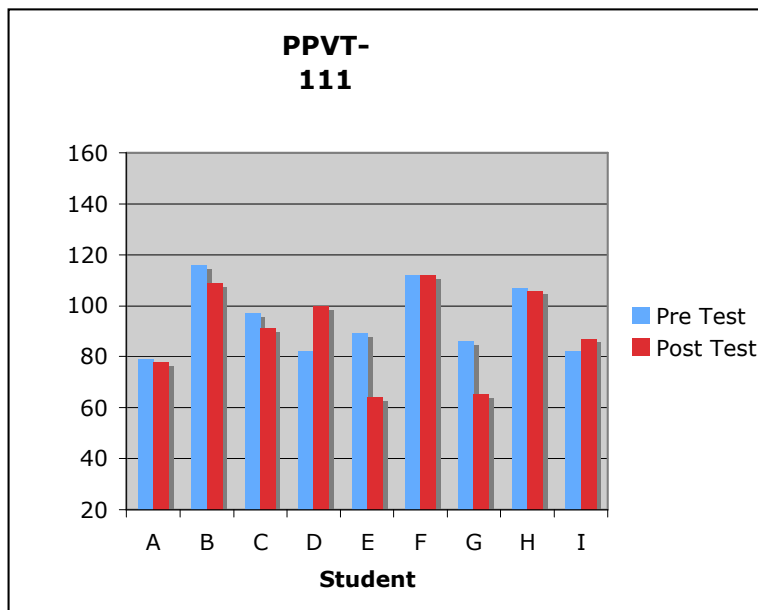ermine which object should be selected. This seems to be the case because in their post-testing results many of the students selected different pictures for some items than they did in the pre-testing. Student G in the intervention group (whom made the least gains in most areas tested) had a pre-test score of 86 and a post-test score of 65. Which would place her in the extremely low category. Some of the variance between the pre-test and post-test scores can be attributed to the time difference between pre and post testing (although this does not apply to Student G), as a different age scale was used to obtain the standard scores. These findings suggest that more work on receptive vocabulary may need to be carried out within the classroom.

It is interesting to note that with regards to the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test , the control group appear to have made more gains than the intervention group as can be seen in above figures 7 and 8.

Discussion

In reflecting on the results of this study there is support for the hypothesis and the research, which suggests that, explicitly teaching students vocabulary and sentence structure improves listening comprehension. Students improved their listening comprehension skills, increasing their recall of events in a sequential order. They had a much better understanding of what synonyms were and consequently increased their levels of understanding of vocabulary. In the Record of Oral language students demonstrated gains indicating that they had a better awareness of the role of syntax when listening to and repeating sentences.. The students in the teaching group were selected on the basis of their low oral language skills and in the short period of time that the intervention took place gains were clearly evident, furthermore these gains were significant when compared with the results of the control group. The results obtained demonstrate the effectiveness of this strategy as a whole class strategy. We are currently running this program with the other prep class from which the control group were taken and eagerly await the results.

The results lend support for the work of Biemiller , 1999 who suggests that listening comprehension develops through the early years and can grow if there is interaction with other people and texts that introduce new vocabulary, concepts and language structures. It also lends support for the work of Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer and Lowrance, (2004) which indicated that storytelling and story reading were found to produce positive gains in oral language complexity and influenced the development of comprehension. Engaging children in repetition of phrases, acting out sections of a story and referring to illustrations increases levels of comprehension.

This research involved the reading of stories daily, in fact each text was read three times for Tests 1 and 2 and four times for Text 4. The children were encouraged to participate through repetition of phrases and acting out different parts. The students were completely involved in the story telling process and not just reliant on text and illustrations. Isbel et al (2004) commented in their study that this was an effective way for children to increase their comprehension skills and was beneficial in the development of oral language complexity in children. The results of this study relating to listening comprehension and oral language development concurs with the work of Isbel et al (2004) as all of the students in the teaching group became more proficient at retelling what they had listened to and all made gains in oral language structures.

The use of the "good Listener poster" was beneficial in helping the students to prepare themselves for the listening activity. When asked during teaching sessions and indeed at post testing what a good listener does, they responded enthusiastically with "looks, listens, thinks and talks at the end!" At the end of session 2 when sharing what they had learned student F responded that he had learned how to be a good listener.

Research undertaken by Brett et al (1996) complements the present study in that they found that reading aloud and giving explanations of unfamiliar words produced significant gains in vocabulary. They also suggested that using these words in sentences would be beneficial. The results of the present study indicate that teaching vocabulary increased levels of comprehension as well as synonym knowledge. The study also lends support for the work of Storch and Whitehurst (2002) who suggested that benefits of awareness in syntax and word knowledge resulted in benefits on levels of comprehension and oral language development.

The results suggest that the teaching of vocabulary and sentence structure is a successful strategy and should be explicitly taught to improve listening comprehension, as well as vocabulary knowledge and syntax. Many students also needed explicit teaching of how to be a good listener. For future research another area of possible study would be the effect of explicit teaching of strategies how to get the students to locate information within in the text and give answers using correct sentence structure.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brett, A., Rothlein, L. & Hurley, M. (1996). *Vocabulary Acquisition From Listening to Stories and Explanations of Target Words.* The Elementary School Journal, 69, 4, 415 – 422.

Biemiller, A. (1999). *Oral comprehension Sets the Ceiling on Reading Comprehension. From Reading Research to Practice: A Series for Teachers.* Brookline Books, Canada.

Clay, M.M., Gill,M., Glynn, T., McNaughton, T., Salmon, K. (1983). *Record of Oral Lnaguage Biks and Gluctches.* Auckland, New Zealand, Heinemann Education.

Dunn, L.M. & Dunn, L.M. (1997). *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, 3rd Edition (PPVTIII):* Circle Pines, Minnesota: American Guidance Service.

Isbell, R., Sobol, J., Lindauer, L. & Lowrance, A. (2004). *The Effects of Storytelling and Story Reading on the Oral Language Complexity and Story Comprehension of Young Children.* Early Childhood Journal, 32, 3, 157 – 163.

Lubline, S. & Smetana, L. (2005). *The Effects of Comprehensive Vocabulary Instruction on Title I Students' Metacognitive Word-Living Skills and Reading Comprehension.* Journal of Literacy, 37, 2, 163 – 200.

McCusker, H (2007) Oral Language Supporting Early Literacy. OLSEL Pilot program.

Munro, J.K. (2006). *Listening Comprehension Test*, 476 – 696 Project in Literacy Intervention: Course Notes: University of Melbourne.

Munro, J.K. (2007) Oral Language Supporting Early Literacy. OLSEL Pilot program.

Munro, J.K. (2006). *Synonym Test*, 476 – 696 Project in Literacy Intervention: Course Notes: University of Melbourne.

Ouelette, G.P. (2006). *What's Meaning Got To Do With It: The Role of Vocabulary in Word Reading and Reading Comprehension.* Journal of Educational Psychology, 98, 3, 544 – 566.

Speece, D.L., Roth, F.P., Cooper, D.H. & De La Paz, S. (1999). *The Relevance of Oral Language Skills to Early Literacy: A multivariate analysis.* Applied Psycholinguistics, 20, 167 – 190.

Storch, S.a. & Whitehurst, G.J. (2002). *Oral Language and Code Related Precursors to Reading: Evidence From a Longitudinal Structural Model.* Developmental Psychology, 38, 6, 934-947.

Table 1

Selection Criteria for Students in Study.

STUDENTS intervention	Age	Pre-Test ROL	Pre-Test Listening Comprehension	Pre- Test Synonyms	Pre-Test PPVT-III
A	5 y11m	4	0	0	79
B	5y 6m	15	4	18	116
C	5y 5m	7	1	4	97
D	5y 2m	13	1	0	82
E	5y 3m	10	1	10	89
F	4y11m	9	1	8	112
G	5y 5m	7	0	6	65
H	5y 5m	9	1	8	106
I	5y 8m	5	1	6	87
CONTROL					
J	5y 8m	4	0	0	88
K	5y 6m	19	3	2	109
L	5y 5m	10	1	0	103
M	5y 3m	7	0	6	99
N	5y 3m	13	2	12	84
O	4y 6m	11	3	8	90
P	5y 7m	8	0	0	87
Q	5y 2m	10	0	4	76
R	5y 0m	7	1	4	99

APPENDIX 2

TABLE 2

SESSION	TEXT	GENRE
1	The Little Red hen	Fiction
2	The Little Red hen	Fiction
3	The Little Red hen	Fiction
4	Goldilocks and the Three Bears	Fiction
5	Goldilocks and the Three Bears	Fiction
6	Goldilocks and the Three Bears	Fiction
7	The Gingerbread Man	Fiction
8	Goldilocks and the Three Bears	Fiction
9	Goldilocks and the Three Bears	Fiction
10	Goldilocks and the Three Bears	Fiction

Teaching Procedure – Session 1 – The Little Red Hen

ACTIVITY TIME	Description
5 minutes INTRODUCTION (Ideas – Word Level)	PICTURE CHAT (Enlarged pictures from book that will relate to text that will be read to children in READ TO section) Generate existing vocabulary and introduce new vocabulary.
10 minutes SYNONYMS	Synonyms generated by children from the vocabulary given during the picture chat.
10 minutes SENTENCE WORK	<u>Action Sentences</u> Action sentences modelled to children. Children use 1 action sentence frames to produce sentences from vocabulary given during the picture chat. (Sentence Production) Illicit from another child what the sentence means. (Sentence Comprehension, e.g. include drama)
10 minutes READ TO	Children are instructed on how to organise themselves as good listeners and how to be a disciplined listener. Teacher reads story to children using enlarged text. While Reading/Post Reading – Individually and in group repeat sentences heard during the listening.
5 minutes LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Retell story in order with a partner. Children called on to share parts of the story Picture Cues
5 minutes REVIEW	Children review what they have learned in the session. (Store and retrieve from Long Term Memory) Similar to share time in ClaSS.

Teaching Procedure -Sessions 2 – The Little Red Hen

ACTIVITY TIME	Description
5 minutes INTRODUCTION - RETELL	Oral Sequencing of story. Children are handed a picture and come to the front of the class in the correct order and retell.
10 minutes SENTENCE WORK	<u>Action Sentences</u> Action sentences modelled to children. Children use 1 action sentence frames to produce sentences from vocabulary given during the picture chat. (Sentence Production) Illicit from another child what the sentence means. (Sentence Comprehension, e.g. include drama) <u>Who? Questions</u> Teacher asks children 'Who Questions' and the children respond. Children ask each other 'Who Questions'.
10 minutes READ TO	Children remind themselves orally how to be a good listener. Teacher re- reads story to children using enlarged text. While Reading/Post Reading – Individually and in group repeat sentences heard during the listening.
5 minutes LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Retell story in order –Drama presentation. In small groups act out story. Each child will have a puppet. Characters then share with class what they said during their acting. (Small groups)
5 minutes REVIEW	Children review what they have learned in the session. (Store and retrieve from Long Term Memory) Similar to share time in ClaSS.

Teaching Procedure -Session 3 – The Little Red Hen

ACTIVITY TIME	Description
5 minutes INTRODUCTION	Oral Sequencing of story. Children are handed a picture and come to the front of the class in the correct order and retell.
10 minutes SYNONYMS	RAN of vocabulary from sessions 1 and 2 to determine whether children have automatic recall of vocabulary and synonyms. (Picture flash cards. Child A gives a label, Child B gives a synonym for that label etc)
10 minutes SENTENCE WORK	Children will play Progressive Memory game. "In the story the ...." Sentence Production and progressive memory.
10 minutes READ TO	Children are instructed on how to organise themselves as good listeners and how to be a disciplined listener. Teacher reads story to children using enlarged text. While Reading/Post Reading – Individually and in group repeat sentences heard during the listening.
5 minutes LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Retell story in order. Story map – Children draw story map and share with a partner/teacher.
5 minutes REVIEW	Children review what they have learned in the session. (Store and retrieve from Long Term Memory) Similar to share time in ClaSS.

Teaching Procedure – Session 4 – Goldilocks

ACTIVITY TIME	Description
5 minutes INTRODUCTION (Ideas – Word Level)	PICTURE CHAT (Enlarged pictures from book that will relate to text that will be read to children in READ TO section) Generate existing vocabulary and introduce new vocabulary.
10 minutes SYNONYMS	Synonyms generated by children from the vocabulary given during the picture chat.
10 minutes SENTENCE WORK	<u>Action Sentences</u> Action sentences modelled to children. Children use 1 action sentence frames to produce sentences from vocabulary given during the picture chat. (Sentence Production) Illicit from another child what the sentence means. (Sentence Comprehension, e.g. include drama)
10 minutes READ TO	Children are instructed on how to organise themselves as good listeners and how to be a disciplined listener. Teacher reads story to children using enlarged text. While Reading/Post Reading – Individually and in group repeat sentences heard during the listening.
5 minutes LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Retell story in order with a partner. Children called on to share parts of the story Picture Cues
5 minutes REVIEW	Children review what they have learned in the session. (Store and retrieve from Long Term Memory) Similar to share time in ClaSS.

Teaching Procedure –Session 5 - Goldilocks

ACTIVITY TIME	Description
5 minutes INTRODUCTION - RETELL	Oral Sequencing of story. Children are handed a picture and come to the front of the class in the correct order and retell.
10 minutes SENTENCE WORK	Action Sentences Action sentences modelled to children. Children use 1 action sentence frames to produce sentences from vocabulary given during the picture chat. (Sentence Production) Illicit from another child what the sentence means. (Sentence Comprehension, e.g. include drama) Who? Questions Teacher asks children 'Who Questions' and the children respond. Children ask each other 'Who Questions'.
10 minutes READ TO	Children remind themselves orally how to be a good listener. Teacher re- reads story to children using enlarged text. While Reading/Post Reading – Individually and in group repeat sentences heard during the listening.
5 minutes LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Retell story in order –Drama presentation. In small groups act out story. Each child will have a puppet. Characters then share with class what they said during their acting. (Small groups)
5 minutes REVIEW	Children review what they have learned in the session. (Store and retrieve from Long Term Memory) Similar to share time in ClaSS.

Teaching Procedure -Session 6 – Goldilocks

ACTIVITY TIME	Description
5 minutes INTRODUCTION	Oral Sequencing of story. Children are handed a picture and come to the front of the class in the correct order and retell.
10 minutes SYNONYMS	RAN of vocabulary from sessions 1 and 2 to determine whether children have automatic recall of vocabulary and synonyms. (Picture flash cards. Child A gives a label, Child B gives a synonym for that label etc)
10 minutes SENTENCE WORK	Children will play Progressive Memory game. "In the story the ...." Sentence Production and progressive memory.
10 minutes READ TO	Children are instructed on how to organise themselves as good listeners and how to be a disciplined listener. Teacher reads story to children using enlarged text. While Reading/Post Reading – Individually and in group repeat sentences heard during the listening.
5 minutes LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Retell story in order. Story map – Children draw story map and share with a partner/teacher.
5 minutes REVIEW	Children review what they have learned in the session. (Store and retrieve from Long Term Memory) Similar to share time in ClaSS.

Teaching Procedure – Session 7 – The Gingerbread Man

ACTIVITY TIME	Description
5 minutes INTRODUCTION (Ideas – Word Level)	PICTURE CHAT (Enlarged pictures from book that will relate to text that will be read to children in READ TO section) Generate existing vocabulary and introduce new vocabulary.
10 minutes SYNONYMS	Synonyms generated by children from the vocabulary given during the picture chat.
10 minutes SENTENCE WORK	<u>Action Sentences</u> Action sentences modelled to children. Children use 1 action sentence frames to produce sentences from vocabulary given during the picture chat. (Sentence Production) Illicit from another child what the sentence means. (Sentence Comprehension, e.g. include drama)
10 minutes READ TO	Children are instructed on how to organise themselves as good listeners and how to be a disciplined listener. Teacher reads story to children using enlarged text. While Reading/Post Reading – Individually and in group repeat sentences heard during the listening.
5 minutes LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Retell story in order with a partner. Picture Cues
5 minutes REVIEW	Children review what they have learned in the session. (Store and retrieve from Long Term Memory) Similar to share time in ClaSS.

Teaching Procedure -Sessions 8 – The Gingerbread Man

ACTIVITY TIME	Description
5 minutes INTRODUCTION - RETELL	Oral Sequencing of story. Children are handed a picture and come to the front of the class in the correct order and retell.
10 minutes SENTENCE WORK	Using pictures associated with the theme of the story encourage children to produce 1or 2 sentences using known vocabulary. 1 action sentence frames will be used. (Sentence Production) Illicit from another child what the sentence means. (Sentence Comprehension, e.g. include drama)
10 minutes READ TO	Children remind themselves orally how to be a good listener. Teacher re- reads story to children using enlarged text. While Reading/Post Reading – Individually and in group repeat sentences heard during the listening.
5 minutes LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Children in small groups acted out the story. Characters had to share what they would have said during the story.
5 minutes REVIEW	Children review what they have learned in the session. (Store and retrieve from Long Term Memory) Similar to share time in ClaSS.

Teaching Procedure –Session 9

ACTIVITY TIME	Description
10 minutes INTRODUCTION RETELL	Oral Sequencing of story. Children are handed a picture and come to the front of the class in the correct order and retell.
10 minutes SENTENCE WORK	Action Sentences Action sentences modelled to children. Children use 1 action sentence frames to produce sentences from vocabulary given during the picture chat. (Sentence Production) Illicit from another child what the sentence means. (Sentence Comprehension, e.g. include drama) What? Questions Teacher asks children 'Who Questions' and the children respond. Children ask each other 'Who Questions'.
10 minutes READ TO	Children are instructed on how to organise themselves as good listeners and how to be a disciplined listener. Teacher reads story to children using enlarged text.

	While Reading/Post Reading – Individually and in group repeat sentences heard during the listening.
5 minutes LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Retell story in order –Drama presentation. In small groups act out story. Each child becomes a character in the story. Characters then share with class what they said during their acting. (Small groups)
5 minutes REVIEW	Children review what they have learned in the session. (Store and retrieve from Long Term Memory) Similar to share time in ClaSS.

Teaching Procedure -Session 10 – The Gingerbread Man

| ACTIVITY TIME	Description
5 minutes INTRODUCTION	Oral Sequencing of story. Children are handed a picture and come to the front of the class in the correct order and retell.
10 minutes SYNONYMS	RAN of vocabulary from sessions 1 and 2 to determine whether children have automatic recall of vocabulary and synonyms. (Picture flash cards. Child A gives a label, Child B gives a synonym for that label etc)
10 minutes SENTENCE WORK	Children will play Progressive Memory game. "In the story the ...." Sentence Production and progressive memory.
10 minutes READ TO	Children are instructed on how to organise themselves as good listeners and how to be a disciplined listener. Teacher reads story to children using enlarged text. While Reading/Post Reading – Individually and in group repeat sentences heard during the listening.
5 minutes LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Retell story in order. Story map – Children draw story map and share with a partner/teacher.
5 minutes REVIEW	Children review what they have learned in the session. (Store and retrieve from Long Term Memory) Similar to share time in ClaSS.

A Good Listener:

Looks at the person talking

Listens to what is being said

Thinks about what is said

Puts it in their own words
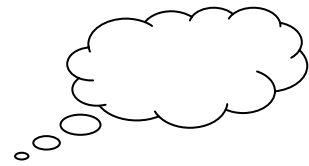
Teaching Unit   Listening Comprehension

Teaching Grade 1 students' vocabulary and sentence structure improves listening comprehension.

- A teaching sequence of 3 - 4 lessons accompanying a text.
- Texts used The Little Red Hen (3 Sessions)
  Goldilocks and the Three Bears (3 Sessions)
  The Gingerbread Man (4 Sessions)

Procedure Session 1
Materials needed:
Story, Enlarged Pictures from story, Vocabulary Word Cards, Lists of Synonyms, Sentence Frames, 'How to be a Good Listener' chart, Small Pictures to sequence.

Introduction – Picture Chat
Let's have a look at some pictures from a story that I am going to read to you today. What can you tell me is happening in these pictures?

What could you tell me about the characters in this story?

Teacher to stick on vocabulary labels as they are mentioned during this time.

Synonyms
From our words that we have found during our discussion, let's try to find different words which have the same meaning.

Synonyms are generated by children from vocabulary in picture chat. Teacher introduces new examples of synonyms. Lists are displayed.

Sentence Work
Choose a word from our lists and put it into a sentence.

Teacher models a 1 Action sentence. Sentence frames are provided for children. Children construct sentences and share with class.

Who can act out the sentence that has been given?

Read – To
As the story is being read we all need to be good listeners. This is what we need to do to be a good listener. (See 'How to be a Good Listener' chart)

Children listen to the story and join in repeating phrases and acting parts of the story.

Retell
Using these pictures sequence the story and retell it with a partner

Conclusion
What things have you learned today?

Children take turns to share what they learned at any stage of the lesson. "Today I learned …"

Procedure Session 2
Materials needed:
Story, Enlarged Pictures from story, Vocabulary Word Cards, Lists of Synonyms, Sentence Frames, 'How to be a Good Listener' chart, Small Pictures to sequence.

Introduction – Retell
Here are our pictures from yesterday's story. Who can help me put them in the correct order? Can you make up a sentence for the picture.

Children volunteer to put pictures in order and make up a sentence to match. Story is retold in order.

Sentence Work
Choose a word from our lists and put it into a sentence.

Teacher models a 1 Action sentence. Sentence frames are provided for children. Children construct sentences and share with class.

Who can act out the sentence that has been given?

We are going to make some sentences now that begin with 'What' and then answer them in a full sentence.

Teacher asks 'What?' questions. Children construct sentences and share with class. Children then ask a partner a 'What question'

Read – To
As the story is being read we all need to be good listeners. This is what we need to do to be a good listener. (See 'How to be a Good Listener' chart)

Children listen to the story and join in repeating phrases and acting parts of the story.

Retell
Here are character masks from the story. In small groups you are going to act out the story that we have been reading. Think about what you would say as your character and how they would act.

Children act out stories wearing character masks.

Conclusion
What things have you learned today?

Children take turns to share what they learned at any stage of the lesson. "Today I learned …"

Procedure Session 3
Materials needed:
Story, Enlarged Pictures from story, Vocabulary Word Cards, Lists of Synonyms, Sentence Frames, 'How to be a Good Listener' chart, Small Pictures to sequence.

Introduction – Retell
Here are our pictures from yesterday's story. Who can help me put them in the correct order? Can you make up a sentence for the picture?

Children are given a picture and have to arrange themselves in order. Make up a sentence to match.

RAN Activity
I am going to show you some pictures of the words we have learned while we have been reading this story. I want you to give me the name of the picture. Now, who can give me another word that means this?

Children take part in rapid naming of items.

Sentence Work
We are going to play a game where you have to say a sentence about the story in the right order. This is how you start, "In the story…"

Children play progressive memory game.

Read – To
As the story is being read we all need to be good listeners. This is what we need to do to be a good listener. (See 'How to be a Good Listener' chart)

Children listen to the story and join in repeating phrases and acting parts of the story.

Retell
Here are character masks from the story. In small groups you are going to act out the story that we have been reading. Think about what you would say as your character and how they would act.

Children act out stories wearing character masks.

Conclusion
What things have you learned today?

Children take turns to share what they learned at any stage of the lesson. "Today I learned …"

APPENDIX 4

Test Scores of all Students:Comparisons of Pre and Post Scores

STUDENTS	Pre-Test ROL	Post-Test ROL	Pre- Test Synonyms	Post- Test Synonyms
A	4	12	0	12
B	15	19	18	26
C	7	13	4	22
D	13	15	0	14
E	10	18	10	24
F	9	20	8	20
G	7	11	6	10
H	9	14	8	24
I	5	9	6	20
CONTROL				
J	4	7	0	2
K	19	18	2	12
L	10	10	0	4
M	7	13	6	10
N	13	11	12	12
O	11	14	8	8
P	8	7	0	8
Q	10	9	4	2
R	11	8	4	2

STUDENTS Test	Pre – Test Listening Comprehension Out of 6	Post - Test Listening Comprehension Out of 6	Pre - Test PPVT III Standard Score	Post - Test PPVT III Standard Score
A	0	5	79	77
B	4	5	116	109
C	1	4	97	91
D	1	4	82	100
E	1	5	89	64
F	1	5	112	112
G	0	5	86	65
H	1	5	107	106
I	1	4	82	87
CONTROL				
J	0	3	88	86
K	3	3	109	107
L	1	2	103	85
M	0	3	99	97
N	2	1	84	97
O	3	0	90	95
P	0	0	87	96
Q	0	0	76	79
R	1	2	99	95