

Teaching middle year students, who experience comprehension difficulties, the strategy of predicting before, during and after reading, leads to an improvement in comprehension skills.

Teaching Strategies

Materials:

Materials used include the following:

- **Teaching Sequences for Prediction Strategies** which consisted of ten lessons (Appendix 3)
- **Texts used for strategy teaching.** These narrative texts were used to teach the strategy of predication, ranged in word length from 123 to 140 words and the estimated grade level from Fry Readability Graph is Grade Four. (Appendix 4)
- **Paper, pencil, whiteboard**
- **Twelve sentences** which were used for ‘title prediction activities’ (Appendix 5).
- **Think Aloud Prediction Charts** devised by the author (Appendix 6)
- **Short narrative text** with a set of comprehension questions (Appendix 7)
- **Word Splash** used to teach prediction strategy (Appendix 8)
- **Story Map Prediction Chart** (Appendix 9)

Instructional procedure:

The three intervention students were exposed to a series of ten teaching sessions. They were exited from their classroom environment at different times each day. The series of lessons were completed over a three week period, each being of 35 to 40 minutes duration. Lessons were conducted in a variety of rooms available within

the school context on each particular day.

The activities implemented with the intervention group consisted of ;

1. an explicit description of the strategy,
2. when and how *prediction* can be used,
3. teacher modelling of the strategy through oral language conversation,
4. collaborative use of the strategy,
5. guided practice using the strategy with release of the responsibility from the teacher to the students,
6. independent use of the *predictive* strategy prior to reading, during reading, and final discussion of predictions,
7. review of strategy /strategies learned.

Sessions incorporated oral languages activities, brainstorming of strategies / predictions, eliciting of prior knowledge and experiences, identifying different types of stories, demonstrating formats of mind maps, using graphic organizers, reading, sharing and discussing responses, reviewing predictions, completing activities, linking prior knowledge with described information, finding clues, analyzing settings, characters, moods, predicting and revisiting predictions. (Appendix 3 for lessons 1-10).

LESSON PLANS

LESSON 1

Using Bloom's Taxonomy to create questions and makes inferences that will focus on the key elements of utensils and what they are used for.

Step 1.	Display a selection of kitchen utensils. E.g potato peeler, egg cup, tea strainer, egg ring etc. and encourage children to look at, feel and hold utensils.
Step 2	In groups children guess what each item is, what it is used for and why. Children make inferences for each utensil.
Step 3	Children share responses and document the use of each utensil.
Step 4	Give examples of sentences for students to practice making inferences for. E.g Harry plays his guitar for two hours every day. We bought tickets and some popcorn. John was the star bowler but he has a broken hand
Step 5	Show cards with drawings on them. E.g A student falling asleep; Mum yawning. In groups children tell what might be implied or inferred by each of the pictures.
Step 6	Review. Students comment on what has been learnt in this session.

Lesson 2

Step 1	Children brainstorm strategies that good readers use. Children brainstorm strategies that good readers do to understand what they read. List responses.
Step 2	Share the purpose of the lesson. E.g Today I am going to focus on one of the strategy that good readers use to support comprehension of text. Prediction. What do you think this word means? Explain what you thing it is and how you use it.
Step 3	Introduce and model a 'prediction' using the title and cover illustrations of a text. Model a 'Think Aloud' of predictions /inferences using an appropriate text. Demonstrate background and prior knowledge of the topic.
Step 4	In pairs children choose a book from the displayed books and make predictions orally using the title and cover illustrations only. Children give reasons for their predictions
Step 5	Read stories and discuss students initial predictions and outcomes.
Step 6	Ask chn. "What have you learnt during the lesson?" "What were you thinking as you worked and what actions did you take?"

Lesson 3

Introduction	Re introduce prior lesson about the concept of prediction.
Step 1	Build background and prior knowledge about fishing. Demonstrate a 'Think Aloud' prediction using the <u>title</u> of a story. (See Appendix 6) We're going to read a story about " A fisherman's Jumper".
Step 2	Children, together attempt a similar strategy using a given title.
Step 3	Discussion about their interpretations about each individual word in the title.
Step 4	Teacher demonstrates how to complete a "Word Splash" using original title "A Fisherman's Jumper"
Step 4	Children together or individually make a 'Word Splash' and talk about their choice of words and why using title from Step 2.
Step 5	Teacher reads story and children complete 'Word Splash' (See Appendix 8)
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 4

Objective: To use a story starter, which creates a setting only but gives no idea about who might inhabit the setting or what types of characters , problems or complications might happen. Children use Bloom's Taxonomy to predict story.

Introduction.	Review previous lesson.
Step 1	Read short text. "A long time ago in a forest there was an old house. In that house there was an attic where packing boxes were spilling out their contents onto the floor which was littered with bits and pieces. It must have been a long time since anyone had been in there." (Appendix7)
Step 2	Analyzing the setting using Bloom's Taxonomy of 'Knowledge and Recall.' Where is the story set? Where is the attic? What is the attic like? When was the story set? Children discuss and record with captions or visually their responses onto one large sheet of paper. Encourage children to springboard from each other's responses and ideas.
Step 3	Analysis: Children predict : What sort of things might be spilling from the boxes? What smells might be noticed in the attic? What noises might you hear in the attic?
Step 4	Synthesis: Children predict: What characters might the author place in the setting? What kinds of problems or conflicts might occur in this setting?
Step 5	Evaluation: Children predict: What kind of story do you think the author intends to write? What makes you think this? Is this an interesting setting/ story starter? Why/Why not? Would you add anything to the setting? If so what would it be?
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 5

Objective: To teach children to make predictions using 'Mind Mapping'.

To help predict storyline children create a Mind Map by writing word/words to create a Mind Map using the five senses.

Step 1	Illicit prior knowledge and experiences about car/drag racing.
Step 2	Read the first two sentences of the story: "Sue Ellen had been watching her father race ever since she could remember. She loved watching the cars race along the short, straight track to discover which one had the fastest acceleration."
Step 3	Demonstrate the format of the mind map by writing the words 'Drag – Race- Day' in the middle of the board. Draw five branches from the bubble, one for each of the five senses and add words, images, phrases for each of the five senses. Teacher articulates 'out loud' her thought processes.
Step 4	Children create their own five senses Mind Map as a group. They add images or thoughts that come to mind as they read the sentences. For each prompt they are encouraged to use short captions, pictures or symbols in response to each sense or prompt.
Step 5	Children share responses and discuss reasons for any differences between them. (It may be interesting to indicate learning style or intelligence of each individual).
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 6

Objective: For children to use activities to explore the way in which settings may predict story moods or genre

Introduction	Review of previous lesson.
Step 1	Brainstorm and identify different types of story which are familiar to the children. Eg. Legends, fairy tales, mystery, horror etc Each type of story is written at the top of sheets of paper.
Step 2	Brainstorm/ predict ideas about time, settings, place .
Step 3	Play 'Hot Potato' game where on a given signal the papers are passed around to the next child. Each time span the child reads what has been written previously and adds extra ideas to the sheet.
Step 4	This process is repeated until all children have completed each sheet.
Step 5	Choose one prediction sheet and allow children to use the ideas, suggestions to predict a story line.
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 7

Objective: To use four of de Bono's Thinking Hats to encourage children to think about settings, moods, plots, times to support prediction of different types of genre.

Introduction	Review of previous lesson.
Step 1	Brainstorm , list as many different times for story settings. (White Hat) E.g Early one morning; During the dark ,black night A minute past midnight
Step 2	Children brainstorm/predict settings that mean something unpleasant is about to happen (Black Hat)
Step 3	Children brainstorm/predict settings that suggest 'good' things may happen. (Yellow Hat)
Step 4	Children brainstorm/predict some unusual possible story settings. (Green Hat)
Step 5	Each child uses one of the settings, writes it down, adds a time to the plot and reads it to a partner to predict an event. Children compare predictions.
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 8

Objective: To predict story line using visual images.

Introduction	Review of previous lesson.
Step 1	Children are given a black and white picture. This initial picture gives no indication of the time of day or mood of the setting etc. Children discuss picture using prior knowledge of content.
Step 2	After orientation of picture each child colours in the picture adding more detail and information to improve the scene indicating time of day and creating its mood. Before colouring it in children choose a de Bono Hat they will use to complete the scene. E.g. Whit Hat they will add more information and detail; Red Hat they will choose a mood or emotion and use appropriate colours to convey the mood.
Step 3	Children exchange pictures and predict a conflict that could be included in the story.
Step 4	Children exchange pictures again and suggest characters that could be included in the story line.
Step 5	These ideas can be later used to write stories.
Step 6	Review lesson and children's learning.

Lesson 9

Introduction	Review of previous lesson.
Step 1	Introduce story “Birthday Surprises” Orally discuss ideas and prior knowledge about birthdays .
Step 2	Complete a “Think Aloud” using the title.
Step 3	Children read the first part of the story and as they read they think about what might happen next in the story.
Step 4	Thinking about what you know about birthdays and what you have read children make a good guess about what might happen next.
Step 5	Children continue reading and see how close their guess was to what actually happens
Step 6	Children discuss where they found clues to their predictions
Step 7	Highlight where and how to find clues to help with predictions. E.g. Clues are frequently found in the title; in facts and details in a text, what characters say and do; clues may be found in pictures accompanying text.
Step 6	Review lesson and children’s learning.

Lesson 10

Objectives: To link prior knowledge about a topic with information described in the text.
To link what children already know about clues and where to find them to support making good predictions.

Introduction	Review of previous lesson.
Step 1	Introduce the story ‘Fishing on the Lake’ (Appendix 4) Orientate the title by discussing what children already know about fishing.
Step 2	Children read the article about two brothers fishing on a lake.
Step 3	Children answer the following questions: Predict what kind of weather will most likely occur next? What will the boys most likely do next? Predict what would happen if the boys stayed on the lake? If the weather had not changed, the boys would probably have
Step 4	Children give reasons for their predictions
Step 5	Children revisit the story and find clues in the story to support their predictions.
Step 6	Review lesson and children’s learning. Children talk about what it means to predict, how to do it and discuss its support when reading a story.

Appendix 4

A fisherman's Jumper

Long ago, on the green island of Ireland, a woman named Nancy lived with her husband, Ian. They lived by the blue Atlantic in a cozy stone cottage with a thatched roof. Six days a week, Ian rowed his fishing boat out to sea. Nancy stayed at home doing chores. When she had time, she knitted jumpers for Ian. Each jumper had a bold pattern.

One stormy day, Ian did not return on time. Nancy watched for him at the cottage window. She was afraid that Ian had drowned.

At last she saw someone in the distance. A man was walking toward the cottage. Nancy strained her eyes to see who it was. The man wore a jumper. Nancy recognized the pattern immediately.

Cited: Hawker Brownlow Education (2000) STARS Book 3

Fishing on a Lake

“Look at the sky,” Peter said as he cast his fishing line from the front seat of the canoe.

His brother, Danny, glanced upward. The bright sunlight of the morning sky was gone. In its place were dark clouds, moving swiftly across the blue sky. “Where did all of those clouds come from?”

Peter shrugged. “I don’t know, but they sure moved in quickly.” Peter looked over his shoulder. The clouds were turning darker. “It looks like the weather is going to change.”

“I agree,” Danny said. A strong, warm breeze blew across his face. He tightened the cap on his head. “I wonder how long we should stay out on the lake.”

As Danny spoke, a flash of light lit up the sky. “I don’t know about you,” Peter replied, “but I think we should head home *now!*”

Cited: Hawker Brownlow Education (2000) STARS Book 3

Appendix 5

HARRY PLAYS HIS GUITAR FOR TWO HOURS EVERYDAY.

WE BOUGHT SOME TICKETS AND SOME POPCORN.

JOHN WAS THE STAR BOWLER BUT HE HAS A BROKEN HAND.

SUE BLEW OUT THE CANDLES AND GOT PRESENTS.

MARY PLAYS HER FLUTE FOR TWO HOURS EVERY DAY.

THE BOAT DRIFTED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE.

JOHN WENT RUNNING INTO THE STREET WITHOUT LOOKING.

RASHEETA WAS THE STAR PITCHER BUT SHE HAD A BROKEN FINGER.

I FORGOT TO SET MY ALARM CLOCK LAST NIGHT.

WHEN I WOKE UP, THERE WERE BRANCHES AND LEAVES ALL OVER THE YARD.

YESTERDAY WE CLEANED OUT OUR DESKS AND TOOK EVERYTHING HOME.

EVERYONE STOPPED WHEN THE REFEREE BLEW HIS WHISTLE.

Appendix 6

Think Aloud Prediction Charts

Story: Sucked into the Sky

Sucked	
Into	
The Sky	

Story: The Ants At The Olympics

The Ants	
At	
The	
Olympics	

Story: Training For The Big Day

Training	
For	
The	
Big	
Day	

Appendix 7

Short Narrative Text

A long time ago in a forest there was an old house. In that house there was an attic where packing boxes were spilling out their contents onto the floor which was littered with bits and pieces. It must have been a long time since anyone had been in there.

Where is the story set?

Where is the attic?

What is the attic like?

When was the story set?

What sort of things might be spilling from the boxes?

What smells might be noticed in the attic?

Predict:

What characters might the author place in the setting?

What kinds of problems or conflicts might occur in this setting?

What kind of story do you think the author intends to write?

What makes you think this?

Is this an interesting setting / story starter? Why / Why not?

Would you add anything to the setting? If so what would it be?
If not, why not?

Appendix 9

Story Map Prediction Chart

Before Reading Use text and illustrations	After Reading Fill in what actually happened
Setting:	Setting:
Characters:	Characters:
Problem:	Problem:
Main Events:	Main Events:
Ending:	Ending:
Theme:	Theme:

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