

TEACHING UNIT

This unit comprises of 6 lessons based on the hypothesis that *Visualisation techniques such as making mental pictures with the aid of cue cards will increase comprehension at the whole text level.*

This unit was designed for year 4 students who had difficulty making meaning when reading. It was taught in a small group situation. The students were exposed to explicit teaching to develop their ability to make mental pictures whilst reading. Cue cards were used as prompts to direct their thinking. The students practiced this strategy every lesson and recorded their images in pictorial form. They used these pictures to recall what they had read and used them for the purpose of retelling the story.

LESSON ONE

Aim: To introduce the students to the cue cards and to introduce the strategy of making mental pictures.

Materials: paper, greyleads, cue cards

Procedure

Teacher:

- Ask students if they have seen any movies lately (Use this as a get to know you) Allow time for children to tell you about the movie.
- Discuss the movie Shrek – what was your favourite part?
- When you told me about it could you see it?
- When I think about the movie I can actually see it.
- Close your eyes, think of the- balloon scene, wedding scene
Can you see them? Discuss these scenes.
- Tell students to think of the word “classroom” – what can you see?

Students:

- Each child describes what they can see.
- Students draw the classroom they described.

- Share the pictures

Teacher:

- Tell the children to close their eyes and focus on their favourite scene from the movie Shrek.
- Introduce the cue cards one at a time.
- **Who/what** can you see? Who/what is in the scene?
- **where** are they ?
- **when** did it happen?
- **movement**- what are they doing?
- **sound**- what can you hear?
- **feel** – what’s the mood like? What are they feeling? How do you feel?
- Discuss what they can see.
- Introduce the word **beach** – close your eyes – teacher goes through the cue cards again slowly.

Students:

- Students listen to the prompts with their eyes closed and try to make a mental picture.
- Students retell what they saw and use the cue cards before them as prompts.

Conclusion:

- When you were “seeing” the beach did the picture stay the same?
- When we read we should see a movie in a head, we should see **what** is happening, **who** is there, **when** and **where** it is taking place, what the **mood** is like, hear the **sounds** and we should see it change.
- Play a quick game with the cue cards. Turn them over the students try to remember all cues.

Evaluation:

Student A and B found it quite easy to discuss what they could see. Student C had some trouble talking about what she could see.

All students were able to give different descriptions of their classroom.

Student B commented that she could see the pictures when the others described theirs.

LESSON 2

Aim: To revise the cue cards and to practise making mental pictures with the focus being on sentences first and then short text.

Materials: paper, greyleads, cue cards

Picture Story Book: Old Tom's Holiday by Leigh Hobbs

Procedure

Teacher:

- **Revision:** *what did we do yesterday?* – we were picturing the story in our heads
- we were using the cards
- Reintroduce the cards - go through them again
- Give out paper and divide it into 4
- Give instructions: *I'm going to give you a sentence*
I want you to close your eyes think of ..(read through the cue cards again)
Then I want you to draw a picture of what you can see.
- Read sentence: **The frightened mouse hid under the squashed box.** Repeat

Students:

- Draw their picture (Student B – responds immediately) “I saw him run”
- Explain what they saw
Student B: “I saw the mouse shaking”
Student A: “I saw the mouse going under the box and getting squashed and trying to get out”
Student C: “I saw the mouse trying to get out from under a squashed box”

Teacher

- *I'll read another one, “Close your eyes” Don't forget... (Who, when etc. go through cards)*
- Read : **The coloured ball bounced through the neat garden**

Students

- Draw their picture, then share them and explain what they saw.
Student A: “I saw the ball bouncing near the waterfall” (T: you have a path there) –
A: “I saw a neat garden flowers and grass”
T: What did it feel and sound like? A: “Fresh - colourful flowers.”
Student C: “The ball bounced onto the flowers and they got squashed and it sounds like a fresh wind blowing.”
Student B: “I saw a ball it was in the backyard when Franco went for a shot it he nearly fell down”

Teacher:

- I am going to read a short story without showing the pictures,
You can close your eyes and see the pictures in your head.
When you're reading what should happen to the movie or video in your head?
(**Response -it should change**)
- The title is “Old Toms Holiday” – when you read a title what do you think about?
(**Response: You think about what might be happening in the book**)

- *While I read, think about – who what etc. go through cues and then you can draw a picture when I stop.*
- Teacher reads one page at a time, and then go through the cue cards),
- At the end of a few *passages I want you to tell me about the two pictures you have drawn so far.* Tell me **who what** (go through the cards and associated questions again.)

Students:

- Listen to the teacher reading, draw pictures
- After two pictures the students share what they have drawn
 Student B: “It was Tom he felt relaxed in the lounge room, he found the letter and he read it.”
 Student C: “He’s in the lounge room relaxing and I think the grandma is cleaning the house and he heard grandma say that he was going on a holiday and so he went into his room to pack.”
 Student A: “I saw him going in the kitchen having breakfast and his sister got the letter and she was very excited and she went to go pack her bags and leave and do the dishes and Old Tom went to pack his bag and then his sister Lisa said its only for one.”

Teacher:

- Read a few more sentences
- *Tell me what you saw*
 Student B: “I saw her driving the car.”
 Student A: “I saw her driving in the bus, train with spiky hair.”
 Student C: “I saw her and she was happy and I saw her going on the bus train.”
- Draw Angela – *what do you think she looks like?*

Students

- Students draw Angela
- Show each other the pictures (2 drew ladies, Student A drew a cat ?? saw the book)

Teacher:

- Show the rest of the story to the students so they can see the pictures
- *Did you know that Tom was a cat ?* This was Angela – compare her to your picture.
- Continue reading the book and ask questions – **who what** etc.
- We’ve read it together – *I want you to start from the beginning remember to use our cards.*
- Rewind your movie – watch it remember it changes, and tell us what happened.

Students:

- Use their 4 pictures and the cue cards to retell the story

Conclusion

- Revise: movie changes, Can you guess what’s going to happen next?
- When you read you need to see the movie – what are you going to do when you read?

- Have students state what they should do when reading.

Evaluation

Student B-always relays to the familiar – includes her brother in retelling.

Student C – needed prompting

LESSON 3

Aim: To revise the cue cards and to practise making mental pictures using a short text.

Materials: paper, greyleads, cue cards

Passage: Gone Fishing, “Cloze – Comprehension With Pictorial and Context Clues, p.12

Procedure

Teacher:

- Revise cue cards
- *Have you been using these cards when you are reading? Why are we doing this?* (So we can remember what’s happening and understand what we are reading)
- *I’m going to read a short passage I want you to close your eyes, and make your movie. Remember – who, what etc.* (go through the cards and questions again)
- Read “Gone Fishing,” after a couple of sentences stop and allow time for students to draw a picture.
- At each pause go through the cards – who is in the story? etc

Students:

- Close their eyes and see the movie.
- Draw their picture after each pause
- Retell their story at the end of the passage using their pictures
- Share the pictures with other students
- Compare stories

Teacher:

- Ask questions of the group about the passage. Note: discuss the fact that some had added their own details to the story
- Reread the passage – see if your retelling was correct
- Ask questions again

Conclusion

- Revision of key points – *why do we stop when reading?* (to ask ourselves questions)
 - *what do we do if we aren’t able to answer those questions?* (go back and reread)
 -*why do we read ?* (to understand, it has to make sense)
 -*what can we do if it doesn’t make sense?* (reread)
 -*when I was reading did you see the movie ?*

- *did you use all the cues?*

- *why do we draw the pictures?* (it should be the picture in our head and it helps us to remember)

Evaluation

A successful lesson. Proved that if they don't know terminology, visualisation is difficult eg. John's float was bobbing on the water, prior knowledge about fishing necessary. The **Feel** cue tends to be the one neglected. Student B: Comment "I'm reading the Faraway tree and I could picture it in my head."

LESSON 4

Aim: To practise making mental pictures without prompting to use the cues cards.

Materials: paper, greyleads, cue cards

Book: Round and Round by Colin Thompson, Hodder Children's Books

Procedure

Teacher:

- **Revise cue cards**
- *I'm going to read you a book today, when I pause you can draw your picture. I will not remind you to use the cues today, see if you can remember.*
- Teacher reads the first half of the book in four sections without showing the pictures.

Students:

- Divide their paper into 4 and listen and visualise as the teacher reads the story.
- Draw the 4 pictures after each short reading.
- Retell the story so far using the 4 pictures to remind them of what they were visualising.

Teacher:

- *Don't just use the pictures tell me the movie as you have seen it so far*
- After the retelling - *Is there anything you didn't say ?*
- *Which cue card did you leave out?* mood/feel

Conclusion

- *Let's look at the pictures in the book now* (only up to where you have read)

- *How do the pictures help when you're reading?*
- *What do you have to remember for the next lesson?*

Evaluation

Student C showed no confidence in retelling the story. She was very hesitant. The responses after having seen the pictures in the book were: **"I imagined . ."**
"I saw .." **"It's a good story.."**

LESSON 5

(continuation of Lesson 4)

Aim: To practise making mental pictures and retell the story without using their pictures as prompts.

Materials: paper, greyleads, cue cards

Book: Round and Round by Colin Thompson, Hodder Children's Books

Procedure

Teacher:

- *Do you remember what happened yesterday in Round and Round?-*
- *Lets look at our pictures from yesterday to revise what had happened so far*
- *Remember yesterday you weren't prompted to use the cue cards. Which one did we leave out? Let's revise the cards quickly and see if we can remember them all this time. **Revise cue cards***
- Continue reading the book from the previous lesson.

Students:

- Listen and visualise as the teacher reads the story
- Draw the pictures
- After the reading is completed, Use the pictures from the previous lesson as well as today's to remind you of the movie you made in your head.

Teacher

- *Now you're going to watch the whole movie from the beginning.*
- *When you've looked at all the pictures you're going to give your pictures to me and retell the story without the pictures. Remember : **Who, what** etc.*

Students:

- Students retell the whole story then answer True or False to the following statements.

Teacher

- Reads out the following statements while students write their responses.
1. When Mrs. Golightly retired she bought a new bike.
 2. She set off with just her dog Reggie.
 3. She was going South and she met a professor and there was plenty of room on the bike.

4. The professor made the bike bigger.
5. Along the way they met a man who had lost his compass.
6. She had only a couple of people travelling with her.
7. When they were in the North there were sharks. If not what was in the North?
8. Towards the end of the story there was a parachute attached to the bike.
9. The man who had grown a beard and was sleeping in the shed was her brother.
10. Mrs. Golightly travelled on the bike every year.

Conclusion

Correct and discuss questions together.

Evaluation

All retellings were excellent! Student C was hesitant to start and commented –“Do I have to do it long?”

LESSON 6

Aim: To practise making mental pictures during shared reading without drawing pictures.

Materials: cue cards

Guided reading Book: Don't Talk With Your Mouth Full, Exaggerations series (one copy each)

Procedure

Teacher:

- *Today we are going to read a book together instead of me reading to you.*
- *You will not be drawing your own pictures, you will use the ones in the book.*
- Read the title and have the students predict what it might be about.
- *What are you going to remember to do while you are reading?* (see the movie)
- *What are you looking for in the movie?* (**Revise cards**)

Students:

- Students take turns in reading one page at a time
- Students retell the story together, one starts and then the other student continues the *movie*.

Student B: The boy made the sandwich for him and the grandma or something when the phone rang or something she went a fly went in her lunch and he was trying to go MMMM with his mouthful but she goes don't talk with your mouth full

Student A: Soon the phone rang and a spider came in and crawled into the sandwich and Mrs. Crockle came back the boy was trying to say don't eat that and I wouldn't do that if I was you and she said don't talk with your mouthful its rude.

Student C: Then the doorbell rang when she went off the dog jumped onto the chair and licked the top of Mrs. Crockles bread and when he heard Mrs. Crockle coming back the dog jumped off the chair and went back to where it was

Student B: Then she eats the whole thing and she goes that was beautiful lunch and he was going to say I like you eating that but his mouth was too full.

Conclusion: Discuss the book.

Was it easy to make the movie when you could see the pictures?

Evaluation: The students enjoyed the book, the pictures are excellent. They are bold and colourful and made it easy for the students to understand what was happening. This was the first time that they got to retell the story after having read it themselves and the shared reading and the text made the task manageable.

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