

Teaching the RIDDER strategy to improve listening comprehension and the oral retelling of a text.

GENERAL PROCEDURE

Teaching Session One: This session focused on teaching students to visualise individual words and sentences. The students were introduced to the cue poster from the CEO Language in Pictures Program. Using this poster, the teacher modelled the process of visualising a word. Then the children attempted the task. The cue poster was used as a prompt. Seven or eight words were visualised, and then the same procedure was used to introduce the sentences. At the end of the session the students discussed what they had learnt.

Teaching Session Two: The session began with revision activities visualising words and sentences. The cue poster from the Language in Pictures Program was used to assist the student. The teacher then introduced the 'RIDDER' strategy to the student using the text 'The Bear's Lunch.' The teacher worked with individual students during this session.

Session time approximately thirty minutes.

Teaching Sessions Three to Fourteen

Sessions three to thirteen followed a similar procedure. Each day the text from the previous day was read by the children using a 'shared reading format' The new book was introduced and children encouraged to make predictions about the text. The children then revised the RIDDER strategy referring to a wall chart showing this. Using a shared reading format the children read through the book stopping at appropriate intervals to use the 'RIDDER' strategy. Students discussed what they had learnt and then completed an individual retell of the text at the end of each session.. Sessions three to thirteen were group sessions. The particular pages at which the strategy was introduced are listed in Appendix One.

Detailed Description of Teaching Sessions

Teaching Session One

Discussion about visualising pictures in our mind as we read and how this might help us to remember the story. Relate to favourite fairy tale characters. 'Goldilocks.'

The illustrated cue cards from 'Language in Pictures' were shown
WHO, WHAT, SIZE, COLOUR, SHAPE, PARTS, WHERE, WHEN,
MOVEMENT, MOOD, SOUND

The teacher then modelled description of 'Goldilocks' using the cue cards. Children were then invited to close their eyes and think about what Goldilocks looked like in their mind. The teacher prompted the children to use the various cues. Shared Descriptions followed.

A similar procedure was followed with the following words taken from 'Language in pictures' list of words for younger children.

'dog', 'pet', 'car', 'bear', 'lion'.

The children were encouraged to use inference and prediction to extend what might happen to their 'dog' e.g.

Why was the dog doing that?

What do you think the dog might do next?

What could your dog be doing after that?

The teacher modelled the use of the cue cards with a sentence and then the children did the same with the sentences below from 'Language in Pictures' sentence list for young children.

The dog is chasing the cat.

The lion roared loudly in the cage.

The magpie swooped the horse.

The teacher and children then discussed how the cue cards helped them to get interesting pictures in their minds. See examples in Appendix 13.

Teaching Session Two (Session with each child individually)

Teacher reviewed the use of the cue cards from Session One. The child was asked to get a picture in his/her head of 'a bear in the forest looking for his lunch.' Descriptions were shared.

The teacher then introduced the copy of 'The Bear's Lunch' to the child. Predictions were made about what might happen in the story. The teacher then introduced the RIDDER strategy to the child.

Discussion about how it might help the child understand the story, in the same way as getting pictures in their minds helped in Session 1.

The teacher modelled the following procedure:-

(1) **Shared Reading:** Children and teacher read sentence.

(2) **Imagine:** The teacher visualised picture in own mind and voiced description.

- (3) **Dramatise:** The teacher dramatised what happened on the page.
- (4) **Describe:** Teacher described what happened.
- (5) **Evaluate:** The teacher evaluated her own descriptions and checked with text.
- (6) **Repeat:** The students repeat procedure on next part of text.

At the end of the session children discussed how procedure could help them to understand the text. Children then completed a spontaneous retell. Questions relating to future predictions were included at several junctures in the text. After completion of the text reading, the child was asked to complete a spontaneous retelling. The child was then invited to think about how visualization helped him/her enjoy and understand the story. See Appendices 14/15 for each child's spontaneous retell and scoring. Text was broken up at the end of following pages- 3,5,7,9,11,15,21,27.

Teaching Session Three: 'Tom Thumb flies a kite'

The children re-read 'The Bear's Lunch' using shared reading strategy. The teacher invited the children to get a picture in their mind of 'Tom Thumb' using cues from 'Language in Pictures'.

A similar process is used with the title sentence 'Tom Thumb flies a kite'. Predictions are made about what might happen to Tom Thumb and the Kite.

The teacher then cued the children to the 'RIDDER' strategy. The cue poster for the RIDDER strategy was displayed and discussed.

The short text was read sentence by sentence. See Appendices 16/17 for each child's retell and summary of ideas retained.

Teaching Session Four

The children re-read the titles 'The Bear's Lunch' and 'Tom Thumb flies a Kite'. Using the cues from 'Language in Pictures' poster, the teacher invited the students to get a picture in their mind of a lion. Students and teacher discussed the descriptions and setting. Then the Title 'Danger Ahead' was introduced and discussion centred on the topic of fearsome wild animals. Children briefly shared knowledge about lions, before making predictions about the story. Then the RIDDER strategy was implemented. Children read the text paragraph by paragraph. Children enjoyed dramatising and evaluating their predictions.. Cues from 'Language in Pictures' were used to assist the children to visualise a sense of the setting and mood of the animals. The RIDDER strategy was used at the end of paragraph 1,2,3,5 & end of text. The word 'distance' and the phrase 'danger ahead of time' were discussed.

Discussion about how useful the strategy was then concluded the lesson. Children then individually retold text. See Appendices 18/19.

Teaching Session Five

The children reread 'Danger Ahead' and 'The Bear's Lunch'. Then the children engaged in some incidental discussion about how bear and lion both had to hunt to survive. The text 'The Three Little Pigs' was introduced and children invited to make comparisons about the wolf, the lion and the bear. The children were encouraged to visualise the little pigs using 'Language in Pictures' cues. The RIDDER strategy was then used. Some discussion at the end of shared reading viewing the story from perspective of the Mother Pig and her feelings on discovering wrecked homes. Session concluded with discussion about what the children had learn't in terms of using the strategy.

Teaching Session Six

The children re-read 'The Three Little Pigs' and then the cover of 'Mr. McGee' was introduced. There was much discussion about the contradictions on the front cover, in particular, the bed in the middle of a field and what this might mean for understanding Mr. McGee. Using the 'Language in Pictures' cues, children were encouraged to image how Mr. McGee would feel living under a tree and make predictions about what might happen in the story. Some discussion regarding the rhyming words in the text and the comical nature of the main character. Session concluded with discussion about how using the strategy was helpful and how it could be used when reading in other settings. The RIDDER strategy was used, at the end of pages 6,12,20,28. Appendices 22/23 include children's spontaneous retellings and scores for recalling main ideas.

Teaching Session Seven

The children re-read Mr. McGee before discussion about new text 'Mr McGee and the Perfect Nest.' There were some queries about whether it might be the same bird as in 'Mr McGee' until the children noted the difference in size of the bird. The meaning of the phrase 'Just right for me' was discussed. The children were directed to visualise what they thought might happen in the next minute, 2 minutes etc. The RIDDER strategy was used at the end of pages 4, 8, 12, 21 and at the end of the book. In this session there were reduced teacher prompts in terms of reminding the children to visualise events in text. Children cued into using 'Language in Pictures' cues and RIDDER strategy at beginning of lesson. Lesson concluded with children discussing how the strategy had helped them understand the text. Then individual retelling took place. See Appendices 24/25 for children's spontaneous retellings and scores on the number of events recalled.

Teaching Session Eight

The children re-read 'Mr McGee' and 'Mr McGee and the Perfect Nest' with much delight and confidence. I told the children that in this story Mr McGee encountered some farm animals. Several of the children had relatives living on farms so there was some discussion about background knowledge of farm animals etc. I discussed some of the vocabulary – billy can, blackberries, heifers, squirm, startled and bellow, stile, and pawing. I encouraged the children to dramatise the words or experiences around the words that might involve Mr McGee. This took an additional five minutes but was worthwhile in terms of helping the children understand the vocabulary.. The RIDDER strategy was used at the end of pages 3,9, 15, 19, 26 and the end of the text. The dramatisation component was useful in this text as it enabled the children to get a concrete impression of what standing on a stile felt like(We used a chair). Dramatising phrases such as 'pawing the ground' and 'squirming' was also useful. Children discussed value of the strategy before completing individual retells. See Appendices 26/27

Teaching Session Nine

The session began with the re-reading of 'Mr McGee and the Blackberry Jam'. This text is a little harder than the others, but, as I predicted, the students were so entranced that they enjoyed reading the sequence of events. The dramatisation component I am sure assisted in their understanding of the text. We had a longer session today. I took advantage of that and the children read 'The Bear's Lunch' as well. Some of the descriptions of the bear 'with red rolling eyes', 'sharp teeth' and 'hot breath' are similar to the description of the monster in 'Mary Elizabeth'. Reading this additional text was a useful introduction to the new text 'Mary Elizabeth'. The children were asked to visualise what would happen if they had a monster living in their house? Would their friends believe them? The cues from 'Language in pictures' used to build up description of this. During the RIDDER format, the children were encouraged to visualise without any prompting from the teacher. During the dramatisation component of the strategy, each of the three children took turns to be different characters at different sections of the text. They loved chanting out the chant. The children were very keen to evaluate and re-check text. The RIDDER strategy was used at pages 6,11,15,17 and the end of the text. Individual retellings of text found in Appendices 28/29

Teaching Session Ten

Session began with a re-reading of 'Inside Mary Elizabeth's house. Then the text 'Willy and Hugh' was introduced. We focused on the first

sentence ‘Willy was lonely’. The students were asked to visualise a time when they were lonely. There was some discussion on this topic before discussing the words ‘useless, sneered and fault.’ As the students hadn’t read this text before, I took the opportunity to read it to the students without picture support. The RIDDER strategy was used at the end of page 1,5,9,23,17 and end of book. After the reading was complete, each child was given a copy of the text and discussion followed regarding the difference between the images they had in their mind and Anthony Brown’s illustrations. Individual retellings in Appendices 30/31

Teaching Session Eleven

Children reread ‘Willy and Hugh’ and then discussed the cover of ‘John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat’. The theme of coping with loneliness continued into this text. The first page was read and we discussed how Rose’s husband had died. Then the children were asked to think about the companionship John Brown and Rose shared. This time the text was read with particular attention to the illustrations- particularly the body language of the characters. The students were invited to share their thoughts while using the RIDDER strategy. This text evoked much discussion among the students and some of this is recorded in Appendices 32/33. RIDDER format used after page 1, 5,9,12, 17,22,26 and the end of the story. The Children then revisited the text to Discuss body language apparent in the illustrations and general feelings about friendship. Individual retelling of text recorded in Appendices 32/33.

Teaching Session Twelve

The children reread ‘John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat’, before being introduced to ‘Where the wild things are?’ Children used the ‘Language in pictures’ cues to help make predictions about the text. (All the students were unfamiliar with the story. During the reading of the text, the students were asked to use context cues to work out what the following phrases meant. ‘mischief’, the walls became the world all around’, and ‘ someone who loved him most of all’.The RIDDER strategy was used with text breaks at pages 6,16,20,30 and the end of the book. Students then discussed how the strategy was helping them. and how useful it was in reading other books. Oral retelling conducted individually and recorded in Appendices 34/35

Sessions Thirteen and Fourteen

The students were post tested using ‘Jessica in the Dark.’ Those in the Teaching Group were encouraged to use the RIDDER strategy as I read the text to them individually. A spontaneous retell and a cued retell was

then conducted. The Probe Passage 'The River' was listened to on the second day. The children completed a spontaneous retell and then answered the comprehension questions. Children in the teaching group also completed a running record on the text 'Jessica in the Dark'.

Additional Sessions

The children also completed the Oral Language tests used prior to assignment to Testing or Control Group. On another day, the children re-read the Probe Texts 5.5- 7.00 and completed second retellings on the texts. Two weeks after the Teaching sessions were completed the children in the Teaching Group completed running records on six of the texts used in the Teaching Sessions.

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