Explicitly teaching and practising visualization strategies can improve comprehension levels in children who have reading difficulties.

Ten Teaching Sessions

Lesson 1

Materials:  Cue cards
Pens, pencils, paper
Novel: “George’s Marvellous Medicine.” By Roald Dahl
Photo Adjective Cards (LDA)

Aim:
- to help the student create a picture in his/her mind
- describe his/her picture

Steps
- Teacher explains the purpose of the lessons – we are going to make pictures in our minds as we read so that we can understand stories better.
- Read the description of Grandma (pg 5) from “George’s Marvellous Medicine” by Roald Dahl, which the children are currently listening to as a class novel.
- Ask the children to listen again as they close their eyes and make a picture of Grandma in their mind. Think about what she looks like, sounds like, smells like and feels like.
- Introduce the cue cards:
  - Who/What can you see in the story?
  - Where are they?
  - When did the event happen?
  - Movement - what are the characters doing?
  - Sound - what can be heard?
  - Feel - how are they feeling?
- Each child describes the picture of Grandma they see in their mind. Discuss with the group.
- Ask the children to draw a picture of grandma. Discuss as a group.
- Each child selects a picture from the Picture card set. Use the cue cards to describe the picture, using as much detail as possible.
• Elicit more information from students by asking appropriate questions.
• Take turns to describe pictures then ask children to select another one to work with.
• PLENARY: Revise the concept of visualizing (making mind pictures or videos in our head) and ask the children to reflect on one new thing they have learnt today.

Lesson 2

Materials:
Sentence strips
Cue cards
Paper
Grey leads
Picture story book “Hairy Maclary’s Showbusiness” by Lynley Dodd

Aim:
  o To focus on making mind pictures using cue cards.
  o To visualize at sentence.

Steps:
• Revise yesterday’s lesson – making videos/pictures in our minds. Look again at the cue cards and discuss briefly.
• Introduce the sentence strips (List A). Student A selects a sentence strip and reads aloud to the group. The children close their eyes and make a picture in their minds of the sentence. Student A describes his picture to the group. (e.g. “The children sat and ate breakfast.”)
• Students B and C take turns to choose a sentence and describe their mind picture to the others in the group. Each child takes another turn, this time using information from the cue cards to help their description.
• The students choose one of the sentences to draw. Refer to the cue cards to make sure that all relevant details are included (teacher asks open ended questions to gain more information and to scaffold the learning.)
• Share pictures with the group and discuss.
• Teacher reads the story “Hairy Maclary’s Showbusiness” Students are asked to close their eyes and listen, and make a
video or movie in their mind as the story is read. (The teacher can prompt using the cue cards.)

- PLENARY: Students articulate the ways they can think about a story in their mind and how they can apply that knowledge when reading.

**Lesson 3**

**Materials**
- Paper
- Grey leads/textas
- Cue cards
- Story “Hairy Maclary’s Showbusiness” by Lynley Dodd

**Aim**
- To make mind pictures using the information in a short text and to be able to describe his/her pictures.

**Steps:**
- Teacher begins reading the story “Hairy Maclary’s Showbusiness” again to the children (not showing illustrations as yet.) After each page, stop and ask the students to describe the picture they have in their mind.
- Encourage students to articulate what they see, referring to the cue cards, e.g. “Where is Hairy Maclary” “Why did he want to go to the cat show?”
- Each child is given a piece of paper folded into four. Ask them to draw a sequence of pictures, just using grey lead, which represents what they have been seeing in their mind. (Prompt using the cue cards.)
- When finished, each student retells the story using the pictures they have drawn and the cue cards (taking turns.)
- PLENARY: Read the story book to the children again, this time showing the illustrations. Ask deeper questions of the children, e.g. Imagine if you were Hairy Maclary – what would you have done? Why do you think he likes to chase cats? How did he feel about receiving a prize at the end of the cat show?
Lesson 4

Materials
Object hidden in a box
Pencils/paper/textas
Cue cards
Shared reading book: “Into The Forest” by Anthony Browne

Aim
- To visualize at paragraph level and be able to re-tell the story.

Steps

- As children enter the room, ask them to look at the special box and try to guess what is inside.
- One at a time, they can put their hand into a hole in the box and feel what is in there. While they do this they can make a mind picture of the thing they are feeling (prompt using cue cards.)
- Describe to the other children.
- Students can draw the object they visualized.
- Using the picture story book “Into The Forest” by Anthony Browne, teacher and students read aloud each page. Stop after each section, close eyes and visualize what the story is about.
- At the end of the book, use own words to tell what the story was about, using as much detail as possible (minimal prompting by teacher.)
- PLENARY: Children articulate things they can do during a shared reading session, i.e. look at the pictures to gain information about the story, make pictures in their minds to help them remember what the story is about so they can retell it.

Lesson 5

Materials
Cue cards
Pencils, paper
Whiteboard and markers
Picture story book: “Into The Forest” by Anthony Browne
Information maps (examples)
Aim

- To assist students to read a short text themselves and visualize each page, describing to the group.
- That students be able to provide an adequately detailed oral description of the story.

Steps

- Revise visualization strategy used in previous lessons. Discuss using the cue cards and go through them again.
- Introduce the Information Maps to the students using an enlarged copy taped to the whiteboard (or use an interactive whiteboard). Talk about having a beginning, middle and end, and that the story must be in sequence. Explicitly teach children how to fill in the information map using enlarged copy.
- Students read aloud the picture story book “Into The Forest” by Anthony Browne and visualize the story. After each short section of the book ask the students to draw their mind pictures on the information map in front of them. Refer to the cue cards as needed to include as much information as possible.
- Ask the students to describe their information maps to the group using as much detail as possible.
- Interactive Questioning: teacher uses open-ended questions to gain more information from the children, and to encourage them to think on a deeper level about the story, e.g. “Why do you think the boy was missing his dad?”
- PLENARY: discuss the things that good readers do when they are reading, such as predicting, re-reading, asking “Does that make sense?”, and VISUALIZING.

Lesson 6

Materials
Cue cards
Information maps
Pencils, paper
PM Guided Reading book set: “Wet Weather Camping” by Dawn McMillan (Level 18)
PM Guided Reading book: “Castle Adventure” by Roderick Hunt (Oxford Reading Tree) Level 14
Tape recorder
Aim
- To revise the visualization strategies taught in the previous sessions.
- Gradually withdraw scaffolding so that children become more independent.

Steps
- Revise what we know about creating pictures in our minds to help with understanding a story. (Brief discussion.)
- Give each child a guided reading book “Wet Weather Camping” by Dawn McMillan (PM Readers), Students B and C, “Castle Adventure” by Roderick Hunt, Student A.
- Two minute book orientation on each story before students are asked to read the book themselves. (A reminder first about the strategy; read, close eyes and make mind pictures at each page.)
- Teacher moves around the group, guiding children individually.
- When children have finished reading, ask them to re-tell the story using as much detail as possible. Teacher prompts only when necessary to elicit more information when needed.
- Students use one of the information maps to describe the story. They can use drawings and/or sentences.
- PLENARY: Discuss the information maps and the strategies used to help understand the story. Students reflect on how they can apply what they know about visualizing to other texts they use.

Lesson 7

Materials
Cue cards
Picture story book “Handa’s Hen” by Eileen Browne

Aim
- To practice making mind pictures while reading a longer text.
- Enable the students to become more independent by withdrawing support gradually.

Steps
- Revise using the visualization strategy to help understand a story. Ask students to articulate what they do when
reading a text (predict, check pictures, re-read, self-check, VISUALIZE.)

- Teacher introduces the book “Handa’s Hen” by Eileen Browne. Students are going to read the entire book and visualize without drawing pictures or writing.
- Ask students to read one page each at a time and make mind pictures without talking.
- At the conclusion, each child re-tells the story using as much detail as possible. Discuss as a group.
- PLENARY: talk about the things that helped you to understand the story and think about it more deeply. What can you do in future to help your understanding of text?

Lesson 8

Materials
Guided reading sets: “After The Flood” by Jenny Giles (PM Readers) Level 14
“Robin Hood” by Roderick Hunt (Oxford Reading Tree) Level 19

Aim
- To have the children use the visualization strategies taught while reading independently.

Steps
- Review strategies taught in previous lessons.
- Introduce the guided reading books. Give an orientation for each one, emphasizing that students will be reading individually but will be given support if needed.
- Students read their book silently, with the teacher moving around checking children.
- At completion of reading, students are asked to write and draw a ‘visualization’ of the story using an information map.
- Share and discuss each child’s page.
- Shared reading of each book with the group, discussing what they did while reading and key words or phrases to remember.
- PLENARY: all students reflect on their learning today and articulate how they can use the strategies regularly.
Lesson 9

Materials
Guided reading books; “After The Flood” by Jenny Giles (PM Readers) Level 14
“Robin Hood” by Roderick Hunt (Oxford Reading Tree) Level 19
List of interactive questions (teacher).

Aim
To enable the children to independently use the visualizing strategy to assist comprehension.

Steps
- Revise making mind pictures or videos while reading a text.
- Students read the book silently while teacher moves around from child to child hearing each read a short passage.
- Each student individually writes a ‘visualization’ of each section of the story.
- Share with the group.
- PLENARY: group discussion about how to apply the strategy in the classroom on a regular basis.

Lesson 10

Materials
Guided reading sets – “Kipper And The Giant” by Roderick Hunt (Oxford Reading Tree) Level 15
“Diving At The Pool” by Kaye Baillie (PM Readers) Level 20

Aim
- To practice making mind pictures while reading a more complex text.

Steps
- Children are given a guided reading book each with a one sentence introduction by the teacher.
- Students read their book silently, visualizing each page.
• When completed, students write a re-telling of the story using their own words.
• Discuss as a group.
• PLENARY: conclude the series of lessons with a group discussion of important things the students can remember to do in the classroom and at home when they are reading.