

Guide to Teaching Reading at the Primary School Level

Kemba A. N'Namdi



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PREFACE

Literacy is the manipulation of thoughts and language to express ideas. It helps to build an understanding of various texts, people and situations, and promotes self-empowerment. Our global society depends increasingly on literacy as a major factor for progress. Unfortunately, at a time when the ability to read and write is becoming imperative in order to contribute actively to society, many children do not have access to education. Skills in reading enable learners to benefit from educational activities, and to participate fully in the social and economic activities in which they take part. In addition, reading is fundamental to progress and success in all other school subjects (Irwin, 1967).

Reading development involves the participation of children, parents, educators and the community as a whole. This manual was developed to assist teachers in teaching reading at the primary school level. It is intended to help teachers create an educational vision for ensuring reading abilities and develop an educational philosophy based on this vision. This philosophy should ultimately assist in the development of the scope and sequence of reading strategies used in the classroom. Reference is made to reading experts and specialists from as early as the 1960s to show that the thinking has persisted over a period of time.

This manual is based on the results of work with teacher trainers with the technical support of Dr V. Elaine Carter. The reading methods have been complemented by the work of Mavis Irwin in Jamaica, and studies carried out by UNESCO in 1993 in China, Ethiopia, and Jamaica. The materials from these texts and others have been compiled to create a general guide to enhance reading achievement at the primary level. The reading programme integrates reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, so that they reinforce each other.

Literacy can underlie every aspect of education across the grades, empowering all students to reflect on, and potentially reshape, themselves and their world (Langer, 1995, p. 1). The information in this manual provides a framework to help educators facilitate effective reading instruction and enable learners to acquire the necessary tools to become literate.

The Dakar Framework for Action emanating from the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, April 2000), reiterated the need for all children to have access to good quality primary education. In the 1960s, when many countries achieved independence, one of the principle concerns was education. However, today over 800 million adults are illiterate worldwide. A generation of adults has not been able to benefit from education. The Dakar Framework seeks to help prepare today's children to reap the benefits of education, thus creating a new generation of literate adults. The target for the Dakar Framework is 100 per cent enrolment by 2015.

In 1998, over 700 million children were enrolled in school. What difference would it make if all the children enrolled in schools were permanently literate? By 2015, the school system would have changed the lives of 1.5 billion young adults.

Today, the challenge is to make a dramatic difference in the provision of education, so that the next generation of adults is permanently literate. In taking up this challenge, we cannot ignore the importance of the wider environment and of the community itself. The absence of ready support structures (e.g. libraries, electricity and flourishing publishing industries), language policies in multi-lingual situations and patterns of communication to reinforce reading are challenges in many communities. Nonetheless, the school can, and should, play its role as a force for change, ensuring that children not only learn to read, but also develop good reading habits.

In many countries that have long-established education systems, there is a constant effort towards improving and towards undoing the wrongs of past educational approaches. Today, a lot more is known about the way children learn, the factors that affect their learning and the ways in which teachers can be most effective in teaching reading. Countries that are new at establishing reading programmes benefit from not having to reform their educational methods; rather, they are able to create a reading programme based on the latest and most progressive information from yesterday and today.

UNESCO would like to thank Kemba A. N'Namdi for preparing this document as well as all those who worked with her, especially Elaine Carter and June Wallace.

SECTION FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION
DIVISION OF BASIC EDUCATION
EDUCATION SECTOR

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INTRODUCTION



As educators, we want students to enjoy reading so that it promotes an interest in other subjects of the curriculum. They should leave the school as lifelong readers, writers and learners. Over many decades, educators have been drawing attention to the need for effective reading programmes. The purpose of an effective reading programme is to develop the child's ability to grasp the meaning of what is read, by teaching him or her how to analyse a sequence of ideas and make logical conclusions (Irwin, 1967). The programme should appeal to every child, meeting his or her needs, abilities and interests by constructing a positive attitude towards reading (Irwin, 1967). Teachers should be able to develop clear learning objectives, and the scope and sequence of a reading programme that should lead to achieving them. This can be done by the use of appropriate learning activities, motivational materials and a variety of teaching approaches in which the children are actively involved.

Suggestions are provided on how to prepare pupils to learn to read, and how to develop and maintain reading achievement. The manual explores various methods and activities that help pupils to maintain and continue to develop reading comprehension. Suggestions are made on how to create teacher-made diagnostic and reading comprehension tests. Strategies are given for using assessment as a guide to instruction. It is intended that teachers use this publication as a guide and, to the extent needed, ideas should be modified to suit the needs of individual classrooms better.

If the programme is to address the needs of the pupils, the teachers have to diagnose, correct and prevent reading difficulties constantly, and/or enrich and refine reading abilities. Teachers' perceptions and expectations of pupils should be positive. They should provide a wide range of experiences to permit all children to learn, and to do so at their own pace (Sweet, 1997). Teachers need to be constantly alert and to adjust learning experiences according to pupils' progress or level of difficulties, before there is a significant drop in reading performance. Teachers need to develop accurate perceptions of their pupils and re-examine them continually, so they can recognize and act on pupil behaviour that is inconsistent with their initial expectations. Teachers are also responsible for assessing new methods and approaches to reading against the experiences and abilities of their pupils.

New trends in the use of local languages in the primary grades as the media for instruction raise new challenges for the teaching of reading and simultaneously open new avenues for more creativity in the promotion of reading. More of the cultural dimensions should be integrated in the teaching and learning process, permitting community members to play a more active role in the education of their children.

At the primary level, all teachers must be teachers of reading. Regrettably, not all teachers are trained in the techniques of teaching reading. This undoubtedly calls for a review of national policies for the training of teachers. It is particularly important in the light of the various skills and social issues to be addressed during the primary cycle of education.

The quality and variety of reading materials available to children in many developing countries is a major handicap for ensuring reading competence. A survey in which the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) participated in 2000 identified pupil to book ratios ranging from 1:1 to 1:7, with rural areas having the poorest supplies of books. This situation will not be changed overnight; however, teachers can, and should, be trained to prepare reading materials along with their pupils. Advancement in the use of computers should be of great assistance but, unfortunately, the teachers who could benefit most are in the rural areas and have no access to such media. In this context, the priority of reading is very much related to other socio-economic priorities in a community.

An effective reading programme must be planned to deal with many other obstacles in and around the school system. They include very large classes, frequent absences, illiterate parents, and few opportunities for reading out of school, since it is not a pastime for some communities. The programme should, therefore, include in and out of school activities, and should be sufficiently flexible to permit pupils/learners to read on their own.

This guide should enable teachers to enhance and develop quality reading programmes that lead to achievement in recognized and measurable reading outcomes.

Chapter 1. Preparing children to read



Teachers are the those directly responsible for creating and applying various techniques and strategies that lead to reading comprehension. They should, therefore, be aware of the factors and stages of development that affect a child's ability to read. Teachers must also be aware of the reading process in order to teach certain concepts appropriate to the child's maturity and ability.

A child's initial contact with words and symbols happens before going to school. The first exposure a child has to literacy is at home and in the community. Attitudes and values are directly and indirectly taught, and influence what the child perceives as relevant and important to his or her personal success. As a child grows older and begins to go through different stages of reading development, a number of other factors could also influence success in learning to read. These factors determine the reading readiness: parents and the family environment, the child's attitudes and values, and teachers.

Factors

Parents and family background



Parents and the family environment play a significant role in preparing children to read. Parents are the first teachers and spend the longest time with them (Morrow, 1995). They provide the intellectual stimulation and the emotional atmosphere essential to reading achievement (Irwin, 1967). The characteristics of homes have been found to be more closely related to measures of scholastic achievement, particularly in reading, than to measures of general ability or verbal ability. Such practices as shared reading, reading aloud, making print materials available and promoting positive attitudes towards literacy in the home, have been found to have a significant effect on children's literacy (Morrow, 1995, p. 7).

Parents who practise literacy at home with their children tend to participate in the academic progress of their children by, for example, helping with homework and reading with their children. Such parents tend to monitor the academic progress of their children by talking with teachers about their children's progress and observing their children work at home. Those who do not value reading or education as a necessary tool generally do not become involved in the educational progress of their children. It is the responsibility of educators to inform parents about the value of their role in their children's education and to collaborate and work with parents in order to help their children better.

Parents may need to be taught how to participate constructively in the education of their children. Teachers should invite parents and families to participate in the literacy process, not only to promote literacy in their children but also to enhance their own literacy (Braun, 1991). It helps to encourage parents to interact and become involved with the school system, but it is also important to provide them with concrete shared activities that can be practised at home.

Teachers can create activities specifically for the home environment that engage the entire family, such as taking a family survey of favourite foods or making a family tree. Where parents are (or may be) illiterate, the home activities should include drawing. If the teachers could create as much harmony possible between what is taught in the classroom and what the children do and experience outside it, the reading programme could become more meaningful for the children (Auerbach, 1995). Teachers could benefit from the help of parents to reinforce the ideas and lessons taught in school. It benefits pupils, parents and teachers where there is parental involvement. The ultimate goal is for parents to be aware and prepared to lay the foundations of literacy for their children before they enter primary school, and throughout their education, at least at the primary level.



An example of a family activity is illustrated below. This is about favourite foods. A list of possible foods should be developed in class, before they take the assignment home. The foods that we eat could be drawn.

Example of a home activity that involves family participation

Name:

Date:

Lesson: Food We Eat

Assignment: Find the most favourite food eaten in your family

Procedure: Interview your family members. Ask them their favourite food and mark an X under the food and on the same line as their name.

INTERVIEW SHEET

| Name | Maize  | Fish  | Meat  | Fruit  |
|-------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Mama Fofana | | | | |
| Papa Fofana | | | | |
| Brother Fofana | | | | |
| Me | | | | |



ANSWER SHEET

1. Which types of food(s) got the most Xs?
2. Which types of food(s) got the fewest Xs?
3. Which type of food does your family like most?
4. Which type of food does your family like least?
5. Which is the second most favourite food in your family?

Children learn various skills and values from experience. They can learn to collect, present and analyse data. The results of the above exercise can be utilized to promote gender equality and democratic processes. Children can learn to spell new words. The importance of this approach is that it creates a learning environment in which, first, reading embodies various aspects of learning and, second, there is a link between home and the school. Furthermore, the exercise does not depend on the parents being literate in order to participate in the activity.

Other information can be gathered as well from some exercises. For example, the results of an exercise, such as this one, could also help the teacher to understand the nutritional habits of the pupils and their families. The results may point to the need for a school-feeding programme.

The attitudes and values of the child



The most significant factor in determining the preparation of a child to read is his or her reading readiness. Readiness is determined by the child's self-concept, his or her value of education, physiological and psychological maturity, and a desire to discover reading (Irwin, 1967; Spache, 1963). A child's self-concept governs the ability to relate to success, and predict how well he or she will perform a task in their reading performance (Eccles et al., 1983; Irwin, 1967). When children believe that they can accomplish a task, they are more likely to engage in the task, and when faced with challenges, they are more likely to continue working on it until they ultimately complete the task (Wigfield, 1997; Bandura, 1977).

The value of education is associated with the experiences of the child, the importance of education in the home environment and the relevance to the child's personal development. Children often inherit values presented to them in their environment. If reading is neither considered a valuable asset, nor has any connection with the child's world, it may not be a priority for the child.



Before entering school, some children will have reached a certain level of psychological and physiological maturity that enables them to associate relationships between symbols, sounds and words. These children come to school more prepared to learn to read than those who have not reached a certain level of maturity. Thus all the multiple components of these factors (experiences, values, maturity and motivation) create a diverse group of learners, each with individual differences in skills, needs, maturity and interests. It is, therefore, unwise to assume that all children are ready for whatever the curriculum dictates. The curriculum and the teacher must make allowances for differences in children. The learning environment must help to prepare some children to read by providing them with experiences and contact with words and symbols, yet begin to develop reading skills in others. This approach is particularly necessary in countries in the South, in which young children are exposed to organized early childhood education programmes. In fact, the first grade of primary schooling should focus on language development and other aspects of reading readiness. This investment is bound to pay off in time in the children's performance in subsequent grades.

The role of the teacher

The role of the teacher is to be responsive to the vast and varied needs of each child, and to promote an educational climate that facilitates motivation and the desire to read. First, the reading programme must reflect the identity of the children. This connection is achieved by using images that reflect the children's physical (pictures of people in the community or of the children themselves) and cultural identity. If children see themselves as contributors, they are able to take responsibility for the reading process.



When developing activities for a reading programme, the tasks should activate and extend the pupils' background knowledge, and should involve real-life issues and interests directly related to the child, and to what that child believes to be important (Ruddell and Unrau, 1997). If the pupils see literacy as a way of pursuing interests and solving personally relevant problems, and/or adding to the quality of their lives, they will be more willing to engage in reading and writing and will value them more highly (Turner, 1997, p. 192). However, to arrive at this perception, the classroom environment should also reflect the children's orientations and beliefs.

The role of the teacher is also to employ various behavioural and teaching strategies to promote pupil motivation. If children are motivated to learn to read, they will try to learn to read, and continue to do so, even when faced with obstacles. The teacher is responsible for creating an environment that motivates children to read.





The classroom environment should help pupils feel good about who they are. For example, pupils may be given different classroom duties for which they are responsible, such as noting attendance, collecting and distributing books, and classroom sanitation. Giving responsibilities to pupils helps to enhance their leadership skills and qualities.

Teachers should communicate positive beliefs and expectations and engage in positive reinforcement towards pupils. Teachers should show that they love and care about children. Pupils should feel valued and respected and supported by their teachers.

The teacher helps pupils to establish reading goals and expectations appropriate for their respective capacities, and help them reach their goals (Ruddell and Unrau, 1997; Schunk and Zimmerman, 1997). When pupils have reading goals, they are better able to monitor their progress; these accomplishments demonstrate to the pupils that they are capable of performing well, which ultimately enhances their beliefs about their abilities, and what they expect from themselves. Positive self-evaluations of progress increase pupils' beliefs about their capabilities to learn and sustain their motivation (Bandura, 1977; Schunk and Zimmerman, 1997).

Teachers can promote motivation by:

- Showing enthusiasm about teaching, and by showing interest in their work.
- Using innovative, creative, clear ways for presenting a concept, providing examples, and allowing the opportunity to apply concepts in various contexts.
- Giving learners the opportunity to gain a sense of ownership in the educational process. This means that students participate in decision-making activities that directly affect the classroom environment, such as collectively deciding class rules. They help to make decisions that affect their education, such as selecting texts to be used in a lesson, and/or giving suggestions about which activities will be used in the reading programme.

Unfortunately, there is no sure way to determine reading readiness. Each child is influenced by a variety of emotional and environmental factors that determine if the child is prepared to learn to read. Teachers can help to facilitate or enhance factors that may be underdeveloped in a child, by providing an educational environment that nurtures the children's intellect, interests, emotional development and skills. It is important to re-emphasize that teachers can help by understanding that learners do not reach certain levels of maturity at the same time, and that they have not had the same experiences. However, this variety among learners, if creatively utilized by the teacher, can itself be a source of motivational force.

Stages of reading development

There are generally five stages of reading development and teachers should be aware of what is required at each stage. This awareness helps the teachers to understand when, and how, to introduce various techniques into the programme at the various levels of growth and development of pupils. It should be noted that children tend to master the various stages at different ages. To a large extent, the ability of children to read depends on the quality of the learning environment provided by the teacher and whether or not the language spoken in the school is the language spoken by the child at home. Both of these factors can have a dramatic effect on the time it takes a child to develop in each of the stages. In situations where the language of the child is different, the language spoken in school the first year of primary education should be devoted to language development and not to reading. A child cannot learn to read in a language that he or she does not speak. After one year of language development (becoming familiar with the language of the institution), the pupil should be better prepared for the reading development programme.



1. The pre-reading stage



The first stage of development is the pre-reading stage. The responsibility of the teacher is to encourage reading interest with enjoyable experiences and activities, with an emphasis on oral expression. The principal goal at this stage is to ensure that the learner is socially, mentally, emotionally and physically ready to learn to read. Spatial development is important at this stage. The pupil is taught to recognize spaces between words and the descending order of the lines in a text. He or she learns to read from left to right usually, or from right to left for instance in Arabic (Carter, 2000). Oral expression is the focus of instruction, and the development of sight vocabulary which is taught using sentences, signs, labels, etc. Simple ideas are expressed and organized in order to create sentences. The formation of words, starting with consonants, and the recognition of rhymes by word endings, are all taught.

Examples of children's activities

Telling stories: reading stories with lots of expression, in order to capture the attention of the children. The teacher asks questions about what is going on in the story as the reading goes along, to make sure that they understand the meaning of the story.



Drawing pictures and afterwards sharing the meaning/content of the picture with the class: the pupils may draw a picture of something of their choice and then explain to the class what is going on in the picture. The picture may be a simple scene (such as a family eating dinner) or it may be a full story. This depends on the pupil.

Looking at a painting, a photograph or a drawing, analysing the image and choosing a title: this may be done collectively, as a class, or in smaller groups if the class size is very large. Pupils should be able to explain why they chose a specific title.

Using pictures and songs to arrive at a list of words: poems and jingles may be used to recognize rhyme endings. Jingles may be also be used to introduce the alphabet.

Example of using a poem to arrive at a list of words



Before learning the poem, pupils are asked to repeat sounds of three words in the poem. Then, the teacher teaches them the poem or jingle (without looking at the words). After pupils have learned the jingle, they will study the written text of the poem to see the words' relationship between what they say and what is written. The three words that are used are the three words used at the beginning.

2. Beginning reading



At this stage of development, the learner must acquire an ability to recognize the letters of the alphabet, but not to memorize them. This is accomplished by varying the types of techniques used to teach the alphabet. The modern approach is that children learn the alphabet in a literature context. A card with a picture of an apple on it and the letter 'a' helps to give meaning to the sound 'a'.

Although traditional methods of teaching the alphabet do not involve teaching the alphabet in a literary context, they do involve the participation of children in creating ways to help them learn the alphabet. Methods such as children creating their own jingles, or the teacher creating a jingle (or using a traditional jingle of the community) are ways of teaching the alphabet, and may be helpful in introducing and practising the alphabet. Children generally enjoy creating various rhythms and melodies to help them memorize the alphabet. However, to ensure that they have not just memorized but have actually learned the alphabet, the teacher will want to also teach the alphabet in a literary context. A child must have a natural ease with the alphabet in order to learn letter sounds and word spellings comfortably, and exercises that are fun as well as instructive can facilitate learning it.



At this stage, teachers should promote pupil motivation constantly from the start of a reading programme. Pupils react willingly to the text when they are motivated. Texts that reflect the interests and environment of the pupils increase motivation, especially if a pupil is having difficulty beginning to read. It may be beneficial to select photographs of people they know in the community or their family members, people who are a reflection of who they are, so that they feel connected to the reading process.

Finally, teachers are encouraged to provide models for the children. This means that the teacher (or possibly a pupil) performs an action, or expresses a thought, that the class imitates (Irwin, 1967; Schunk, 1990). Modelling is one person setting an example and the others following it. An example of modelling (the teacher in this case is the model) is a child reading a poem, imitating the pronunciation and expression a teacher used while reading the poem. Or, a pupil can be a model and teach the class a small lesson or activity that he or she has learned. When pupils are the models, it encourages self-empowerment. Children feel good about themselves because they are able to share something they have learned with the class.

A child is ready to read after having comfortably mastered the alphabet and having had lots of exposure to, and familiarity with, a variety of texts, such as books, charts, pictures, signs, etc. The goal at this beginning stage is to develop reading habits that continue to promote reading as an enjoyable activity. In order to reach this goal, students must begin to identify words that have similar beginnings and endings. Some phonetic practice begins at this stage, taught within the context of the text, such as the consonants in rhymes and jingles. New words are introduced and taught through phonetics and written activities. The pupils' vocabulary is the basis for the materials produced in the classroom. Words are recognized as a whole and their relationship in combinations. Modelling at this stage of development can even include peer models, who may demonstrate a task or activity in front of the class, and the class then imitates the action.

Four examples of children's activities

Scavenger hunt: pupils divide up into small groups. There are several cards with words with similar beginnings and endings hidden throughout the room or study area. The groups each start with a set of cards given to them by the teacher. They hunt around the area to find the matches. For example, a group may have the cards: BAT, ME and TALL. They may find the matching cards CAT (matching ending), MY (matching beginning) and BALL (matching ending) in designated hiding spots.

Modelling: each pupil can be responsible for a specific letter (maybe the first letter of their name, when possible, or something of interest to them, such as 's' for soccer). They must be able to teach the class the letter 's', for example, by using pictures that they have drawn or acting out an action, such as swimming, that they



created about the letter. In classes that are very large, it may be easier to set up small groups instead of doing this activity individually.

Listening and Reading: the teacher can record his or her voice on a cassette tape. The pupils either individually or in groups can read along with the teacher as the tape plays. The tape should include instructions to that allow pupils to physically interact with the text (the pictures in the book) or imitate an action (cited in the book) in order to make sure that the pupils are following. For example, in a story about a lion, the teacher may ask 'Put your finger on the lion's nose'. In the case where there is not access to a cassette tape recorder, a teacher may do this activity orally.

Word Bingo (variations): Pupils are given a chart with various letters and simple words (words or letters can go on the chart, depending on the lesson). They are given wooden or plastic pieces that can cover each square on the chart. The teacher calls out a word, for example, 'SEE'. The pupils are to cover the block of the chart that has the word 'SEE'. Eventually, they may use a bingo chart with letters across and numbers going down.

3. Developing reading fluency



The third stage of reading development is reading fluency. At this stage of development, the pupil is prepared to identify words that he or she cannot pronounce and find the pronunciation independently, read simple stories and feel comfortable learning new concepts. Pupils begin to use context clues, using information in the story to guess the meaning of certain unknown words or ideas. Materials need to be very diverse. The pupil is better able to make use of various texts, such as travel brochures, pictures, stamps from countries around the world and washing directions on clothes labels. It is very important, therefore, to make sure that the materials challenge the pupils and are relevant to the lessons, and that they continue to reflect the images (instil pride about who they are) and the interests of the children.

Examples of materials



Postage stamps from the country, and other countries around the world when possible.



Signs found in the environment



Newspapers (carefully selected)



Crosswords and other puzzles



Clothing cleaning (for example wash in cold water) or composition (for example cotton) labels



Materials that may be used at this stage of development include puzzles, food boxes, riddles, plays, newspapers (carefully selected), comic strips, drawings, pictures and children's publications. The stories the children tell should be written and edited by the teacher, and given back to the pupils to read to the class. To aid in selecting materials and activities that reflect the interests of the children, teachers may take an interest inventory (Irwin, 1967). An interest inventory is an informal survey administered by the teacher and given to learners to ask them what things they enjoy doing and what activities they participate in after school. Examples of activities include sports, playing with friends, music, talking with friends, taking the animals from the field, etc.). The survey should also investigate what they would like to learn in and out of school. The teacher will then be able to select materials that appeal to the children and can also introduce new interests and ideas by building on current interests.

The reading readiness of the child, and other internal and external factors, determine the amount of time a child takes to complete these early stages. Generally, a child will go through these stages in three to five years, provided that they are ready to learn, and that there are no differences between the language of the child and the language of instruction. In the latter case, the process may take longer, because the child is acquiring another language as well as learning how to read in that language. Nonetheless, as indicated before, when the language of instruction is different from the language of the home, there is a need for a school policy that delays the teaching of reading until the second year of the primary level. Language development is a crucial aspect of reading readiness. Thus the first year of primary education should be dedicated to language development in preparation for reading in the language



of instruction. In any case, the child's language should form the bridge to learning a new language.

It is important to understand that children will master these three levels at different times. It cannot be over-emphasized that classroom instruction must be flexible in order to take into account the abilities of the children.

LESSON PLAN – Ms Veronica Smith

READING

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Topic: | Word recognition |
| Grade: | 6 |
| Duration: | 40 minutes |

Aim

To show that reading and writing constitute a constructive process that shares common knowledge.

Objectives

Pupils will be able to:

- Participate in both oral and written story-building.
- Construct meanings.
- Identify sight words.
- Draw a favourite character. Write at least five sentences about a character.
- Read a story.

Skills

Reading, writing, comprehending, drawing, listening.

Activities

- A. Brainstorming: Question pupils to find out:
 - i. If they have ever read or listened to anybody telling a story.
 - ii. The word(s) that are usually used to begin stories, e.g. 'Once upon a time', 'Long ago', etc.
 - iii. Who/what makes up a story, e.g. characters.
- B. Engage pupils in a story-building exercise, e.g. start the story with one of the words that was suggested in the brainstorming exercise.



- Ask individuals to suggest one word each that could be added to develop the story.
- Pupils read the story and decide whether they want to add, change or delete anything in it.
- After the final draft, distribute vip cards to pupils.
- Pupils write an unfamiliar word from the story on each card. Use words as sight word activity.
- Question pupils about the story.
- Ask pupils to draw a favourite character and write at least five sentences about the character.
- Pupils will share their writing with classmates by reading aloud what they have written.

Evaluation

Evaluation can be done while pupils read aloud what their classmates have written.

4. Increased reading ability and the development of reading interest



Once the fundamental elements of reading have been mastered, pupils are able to start reading for pleasure. They have the ability to combine different sounds in order to create new combinations with unfamiliar words. They have experience with contractions and are able to recognize the use of contraction. They are able to recognize compound words and smaller words within larger words.

we are
we're

Together
to get her

Many of the tools needed to be a fluent reader have been learned at this point in development, so concentration is placed on motivating pupils to read for enjoyment and encouraging children to make reading a habit. Supplementary materials for individual reading activities or free voluntary reading should be made available. The children should be encouraged to make class books in addition added to the supplementary materials.

As pupils are able to read faster and with more understanding, ample materials should therefore be available in the classroom library and/or the school library for the children to choose from. If there are no libraries, as is the case in most rural primary schools, teachers can build up box libraries over time. This box may include children's writings the teacher's writing, and other material the teacher has collected.



Examples of children's activities

Word Dig: pupils can pretend to be archaeologists and dig for 'roots' and words within other words. Examples are words such as 'whenever' (when and ever) and other less obvious words with different sounds such as 'instead' (in, tea).

Storytelling: pupils may have a designated time every day or during the week where they read a story to the class.

Book reviews: pupils read a book and give the class a summary and their opinion of the book. The teacher should provide a guide sheet for them to fill out so that they know exactly how to critique a book. The criteria a teacher has taught in the classroom about literature are what should go on the book review form (See below).

BOOK REVIEW/CRITIQUE

1. What is the name of the book?
2. Who is (are) the main character(s)?
3. Where does the story take place?
4. What is the main character's problem?
5. How does this problem get solved?
6. What did you like about the story?
7. What did you dislike about the story?
8. What was your favourite part in the story?
9. What did you think after you finished the story?
10. Would you recommend this story to friends?

5. Enhancing and refining reading skills



Reading comprehension requires pupils to be able to use the language of a text to understand and explain the meaning. Pupils learn how to (a) identify the main ideas in a text and (b) how to analyse and apply the information that they have learned from a text. They are able to develop arguments and support those arguments based on information in the text, other sources of information or previous knowledge. At this stage, there should be more emphasis on non-fiction materials, such as diagrams, maps and encyclopaedias.

The ultimate goal is for pupils to be able to read a text and comprehend its meaning. It is expected that pupils will have a facility with words that aid in communication, the form of communication they use with others and in self-expression.

Examples of activities

Creating a board game: pupils make a board game to be played with their peers. It is best to follow the design of an existing game, such as Monopoly.

Research paper: pupils conduct an interview with knowledgeable (about a specific topic) members of the community and/or consult books (when available) concerning a topic of interest. They learn to take notes and compile information, and at the end write a report. This report may be read to the class aloud.

LESSON PLAN – Ms Veronica Smith

| | |
|-------|---|
| Grade | 3 |
|-------|---|

Objectives

Pupils should be able to:

- Read for information and enjoyment.
- Read fluently.
- Construct meaning.
- Rewrite sections of a story in their own words.

Skills

Writing, reading, decoding, comprehending



Activities

- Class discussion on the title of the story.
- Pupils will predict what they think the story is about.
- Teacher shows pupils flashcards with words from the passage.
- Pupils identify words.
- Pupils read a story in groups/individually.
- Teacher questions pupils (at intervals) to see if a prediction was true.
- Pupils choose a paragraph from the story then rewrite it in their own words.
- Pupils read their writing to classmates.

Evaluation

Pupils can test each other in word recognition.

Chapter 2: The reading approach



A vision for enhancing reading

In many countries, teachers have often received a centrally developed curriculum. It is then the responsibility of the school to discuss and create its programme for improving reading achievement. However, before developing a programme, teachers must reflect on what they believe to be most important for teaching reading and writing. This provides an opportunity for teachers to share personal experiences, concerns and desires about what needs to be added, or changed, in the reading or language arts programme. Teachers are able to compare and contrast ideas and needs in order to construct a vision that addresses those ideas and concerns.

When teachers (and this means teachers of different subjects across the curriculum) work together, it enriches the learning environment. The teachers can create a vision based on their educational experiences and the needs of their classrooms synchronized across the reading programme and the curriculum. Pupils benefit from the harmony of the curriculum, and are better able to recognize and participate in this vision. In this regard, the leadership of the school is very important for creating and maintaining cooperation amongst the teachers.



Teachers may begin constructing a vision by writing down ideas and experiences, using a questionnaire as a guide. Suggestions for clarifying the vision and setting the stage for implementation are proposed below.

The following questions should be answered based on your thoughts, beliefs and experience as an educator.

- What is the importance of the reading programme in the wider context of education?
- What are the academic, social and emotional needs of the learners?
- What can you do to help meet these needs?
- What would you like see changed or improved in the programme?
- What would you like to see added to the programme? Why?
- What do you think is the most important attribute for teaching reading?
- What do learners need from the teacher?
- What do teachers need from the learners?
- What are your goals for your learners?
- What are your personal goals as a teacher?

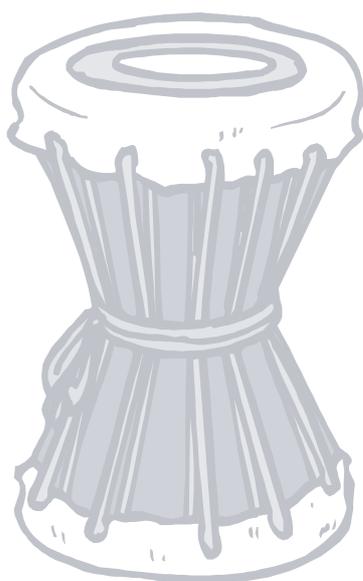


Next, the teachers meet to discuss what they have written. The purpose of this is to exchange different ideas. After sharing personal goals in teaching reading, teachers try to create a common vision of how they would like their reading programme to function and what they would like the pupils to gain from it. Teachers discuss their beliefs, thoughts and concerns in order to develop goals for the reading programme.

The reading programme should:

- Enhance communication skills.
- Create and develop new interests in pupils.
- Produce pupils who continue to learn, even outside the institutional setting.
- Produce pupils who are self-confident.
- Produce pupils who are able to acknowledge and respect differences in cultures, religions, beliefs, values and interests.

After having defined the goals, teachers are able to move to the next step, that of identifying the teaching and learning activities needed to achieve these goals. Teachers will be able to identify the reading competencies to be achieved, prepare appropriate lesson plans, and monitor the progress of pupils. An important aspect of this exercise is for teachers to identify the environmental factors that enhance reading. For example, in the community, there may be:



- a traditional storyteller
- an interesting tree about which the children have information
- traditional musical instruments that can be used to give a rhythmic beat to jingles and poems
- dances that the children can talk and write about festivals that children can talk and write about, and make drawings about
- some materials from plants that children can bring to the classroom in order to make their own teaching and learning aids
- an important folk character in the community
- community folklore
- community songs



Reading approaches

Reading experts advocated various approaches over the years that were believed to be the best methods for teaching children to learn how to read. During the 1930s and 1940s, emphasis was placed on reading to gain meaning, using the 'look and say' method. In the 1960s and 1970s, the emphasis changed to skill development, which meant using tools, such as phonetics and other word decoding skills. The early 1980s introduced the whole language approach, which focused on reading for meaning; this approach expanded on the whole word method by integrating the four components of language with literature: reading, writing, listening and speaking. The basic belief in using this method was that children can learn to read as naturally as they learn to speak; they will learn to read from exposure to reading skills using literature without direct instruction in specific isolated reading skills. Direct instruction means that the teacher creates an independent lesson specifically about, for example, phonetics or sight vocabulary. The whole language approach, instead, advocated the use of indirect instruction, where phonetics and sight vocabulary are taught through literature.

Today teaching reading encompasses the integration of the four components of language (reading, speaking, writing and listening) into other subjects of the curriculum (Irwin, 1967). Therefore, connections are made between disciplines, such as science and language arts, and taught through conceptual themes, such as inventors or the weather. The contemporary view of reading is that the pupil is an active learner. Learners interact with new information based on their previous knowledge



and experiences. They build their own knowledge base by deriving their own meanings from information, connecting new concepts and skills to what they already know. Children do not always understand what precision in meaning demands and are also unable to call to mind what words they require in speech and writing and apply them correctly (Irwin, 1967). Therefore, emphasis is placed on helping pupils learn how to draw on their experiences and previous knowledge in order to construct meaning. For example, understanding is easier when pupils living in a rural area read a story about a family that lives in an area similar to theirs. Pupils living in a large city may read a story about a character that lives in a large city. Pupils have experiences that they can relate to in the characters and therefore begin the lesson with some understanding of the story. Children begin learning about the world using themselves and their culture as a reference point (speaking their language, learning about their culture, using images that physically reflect the children's identities, etc.). It is important that they have a point of reference in order to have a clear understanding of their culture and identity. As they develop a sense of pride and understanding of who they are, they are better able to understand and appreciate other cultures, which is one of the main goals of reading.



The contemporary approach is a balanced one, which includes the strengths of previous methods. The method uses literature to teach skills and focuses on reading for meaning integrated with direct instruction in skill development for decoding and comprehension. Phonetics can be useful when incorporated into a balanced approach. However, it should not share equal emphasis with reading comprehension. The purpose of phonetics and other decoding strategies is to create additional means for improving reading comprehension and help learners understand the meaning of what they read. Phonetics should not be viewed as skill pupils learn before using and interacting with authentic literature, but rather is taught within the context of reading and writing (Irwin, 1967). Skill instruction should be mixed in reading and writing activities, and not presented as a separate activity. Children respond differently to different approaches. It is advantageous, therefore, to develop a method based on many methods in order to reach all children and strengthen different aspects of learning.

Language and vocabulary knowledge also play an important role in a balanced reading method. Teachers should seek to improve children's vocabularies through experience and this can be done not only by using existing interests, but also by creating new ones (Irwin, 1967). Children should be able to learn sight vocabulary in context rather than in isolation. Teachers could use word lists in order to compare and contrast, classify words or use tags and signs as a context for teaching sight vocabulary. Learners may also learn vocabulary in activities such as games and dramatizations that stimulate the imagination, and make reference to children's experiences.

Teachers could make a very valuable input, to both their own writing and that of publishers of children's books, by building a vocabulary list for each grade level.



This they can do through listening to the children in various situations, for example at play and telling stories in peer group conversation. This vocabulary list, taken over three or four years, will give the teacher an idea of the level of vocabulary to be utilized when writing for the grade level. It will also help as a tool to assess the competence of children in vocabulary.

LESSON PLAN – Ms Veronica Smith

READING

Topic: Vocabulary Building

Grade: 4

Reader: L. M. W. Series (a story for the age group)

Lesson: The Strange Fisherman

Aim

To enable students to use words which they have learnt in given situations.

Objectives

At the end of the lesson pupils should be able to:

- Make up sentences using words on flash cards.
- Find sentences in a reader with words.
- Pretend they are at a festival competition reading from a sentence strip (sentences on flash cards).

Skills

Making sentences, identifying sentences, and comprehending sentences.

Attitude

Cooperation

Materials

Flash cards, tape recorder

Presentation

- Teacher plays a tape recorder or reads a story related to the lesson.
- pupils re-enact the story as they move around the class.
- Pupils identify words on flash cards they heard in the story.
- Teacher and pupils have a class discussion to bring out the meaning of words.
- Pupils make sentences with given words.



- Pupils identify a sentence in a reader with a given word.
- Teacher gives pupils a sentence strip with sentences from reader.
- Put pupils in three groups. Pupils in their groups will all pretend they are at a festival making a presentation as they read the sentences they have.
- Presentations will be taped.

Evaluation

Pupils will make up other sentences using the key words they have learnt.

Chapter 3. Classroom environment for literacy learning



The classroom environment is one of the key elements in enhancing children's progress in learning to read. It should be an environment that provides opportunities for the integration of literacy with other areas of the curriculum and with all aspects of language arts: reading, speaking, writing, viewing and listening. Both social and physical factors are important for creating an appropriate environment for success in literacy achievement and development. There should be ample opportunity for pupils to interact with their peers, and study texts; the teacher must understand the functions of reading and writing.

A relaxed, yet structured ambiance is important in the classroom. Pupils should feel comfortable in order to be able to concentrate on their studies. When possible, the pupils should take part in the decoration of the classroom, which should reflect the most recent lesson. It should include samples of all the children's work, if not all pupils at the same time, then in rotation. The images on the walls should reflect the images of the children, their culture, their heritage and their customs. This helps children to visualize their participation in literacy and as a result feel more compelled to learn about other cultures.

When possible, learning centres should be established to provide children with the opportunity to work independently or in small groups. Learning centres are areas or classrooms designated for reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. Children should be able to work on activities independent of the teacher, so explanation may be necessary to explain the different activities at the learning centre(s). For example, a teacher may have cassette tapes of himself or herself reading a story. The pupils would be able to play the cassette, reading aloud with the teacher. The activities should accommodate both individual pupils and small group activities. Learning centres may be particularly beneficial for large classes. The teacher can divide the class into smaller groups of children with diverse skills and abilities. Each child is, therefore, able to contribute to the group differently. The teacher guides each group in rotation as they work on an activity.

Materials

One of the main problems in many rural areas is the lack of reading materials. When this is so, it is difficult to create an effective learning environment. All pupils should be provided with all the books and materials they need to create interest and stimulate the desire to read. Where there is a lack of reading materials, the teacher should create as many of the materials as possible. The materials may be very basic, such as very short stories, perhaps used only in small groups at a time, if there is a lack of copying facilities.

Pupils can also participate in the creation of classroom materials. A lesson in writing stories or poetry writing, after editing, can become a part of the permanent collection of materials of the classroom. There can even be an exchange of materials between classrooms. For example, pupils in higher grades could write stories for the younger pupils, or children in the same grades or pupils at the same level of reading comprehension can exchange texts by class. This enables the teacher to develop a library without the burden of having to create all the classroom texts and at the same time gives the pupils a chance to feel responsible for their learning, help others, contribute to the classroom environment and develop a positive attitude towards learning.

Ideally, materials should include a variety of narrative and expository books at different levels of difficulty. These books should reflect the interests of the pupils. There should be a variety of texts, such as newspaper articles, stories, proverbs, book maps, jokes, riddles, recipes, poetry, song lyrics, street signs, clothing tags (cleaning directions) and posters.

LESSON PLAN – Ms Veronica Smith

READING**Topic: Word recognition****Grade: 4****Reader: L. M. W. Series****Lesson: The Strange Fisherman**

Aim

To enable pupils to recognize and pronounce words.

Objectives

At the end of the class pupils should be able to:

- Recognize and pronounce given words.
- Match words on flash cards to those on a chalkboard.
- Use songs and games to help in identifying words.

Skills

Identifying words, matching words.

Attitude

Cooperation, self-confidence.

Material

Flash cards, words in a bag, songs.

Presentation

Teacher and pupils sing song in their local dialect, e.g. 'Come wi gu dung a sea side'.

Question pupils on song:

- a. Have you ever been to the beach?
- b. Do you know any fishermen?
- c. What are some of the things they take to the beach?

List words on chalkboard, pupils identify and use words on flash cards to match with them. Put pupils in groups and give instructions.

Group 1

Pupils identify given words on flash cards using song 'The River Beng Cum Dung'.

Group 2

Pupils identify given words on flash cards using 'I am in a well'.

Group 3

Pupils identify words on flash cards using game 'The Postman'.

Evaluation

Pupils identify words learnt, pretending they are on television doing a competition.



It is recommended that each classroom be equipped with the following:



Chalk board or dry erase board for writing and drawing for whole class activities. A teacher may also use an easel, with a large notepad for writing. In either case, the teacher will need chalk or markers and an eraser. An easel can be purchased or made using large branches and cord to attach the ends to create a stand.



Bulletin Board for posting any assignments. When a bulletin board is not available, the teacher may provide a space of the classroom wall as a bulletin board. It is also possible to paint a border, using chalkboard paint or the wall at the level of the pupils. They can use this section of the wall for writing news or to practise writing. If this is done when the classroom is being constructed, it will be more refined. Another possibility is to nail strips of wood along the wall in order to display the children's work.

Weather Chart to enable pupils to monitor the changes in the weather daily. This helps pupils to learn the different terms for describing the weather. Cards with pictures of the weather and the description below could be used. The pupils responsible for this activity may rotate daily or weekly. Others may be responsible for drawing the weather cards for the classroom. An actual chart is not necessary; instead a card can be posted on the wall each day.

Monday



SUNNY

Tuesday



SUNNY

Wednesday



SUNNY

Thursday



CLOUDY

Friday



RAINY

Current events board to highlight certain positive things going on in the community and in the world. Pupils may be encouraged to share information with the class and put it on the current events board.



DAILY NEWS :

Khalifah has a new baby sister!
A new primary school is being built in
a nearby village.
Government elections are today.

Globe (and/or world map) enables pupils should be able to see where they live and their relationship to other countries. These are necessary for teaching about other cultures and geography.

Health bulletin, a poster, either developed by health officials or the teacher, to inform pupils about healthy eating habits or to encourage positive health behaviours in pupils. The teacher should read and explain the bulletin to the pupils firstly so that they understand clearly the importance of the message and secondly in case the vocabulary used on the poster includes words with which the pupils are not familiar.

HEALTH BULLETIN



*Protect Against Disease,
Get Your Vaccinations Today !*

| SEPTEMBER | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Monthly calendar of the current year. Pupils may be responsible for updating the calendar each month. It may be helpful to make a 'shell' of a calendar (the chart with no months, nor numbers, only days of the week) and have removable numbers and months (on cards, for example). This prevents having to use a new sheet every day; it can be used for every month and every year.

Duty list. Pupils share responsibilities for classroom management. This enables the children to practise responsibility and learn leadership skills, and helps the teacher's classroom management. Children tend to like catchy titles, titles that rhyme or are comical.



Duties will vary according to different classroom settings and may be determined by the teacher and/or the pupils. The duration of each task should be long enough for the pupils to learn the task, yet short enough to allow others an opportunity. Children may want to participate in creating either job titles that rhyme or that are fun for them

| NAME | ACTIVITY |
|---------------------------|--|
| Olaiyde | CLOUDY THE METEOROLOGIST (manages the weather chart) |
| Hamady | CALENDAR CAPTAIN (changes the calendar for the next month) |
| Dominique | THE JOURNALIST (posts current events on the board or wall) |
| Kadidja and Assane | ATTENDANCE CAPTAINS (take class attendance) |
| Franck and Francis | THE ENVIRONMENTALISTS (manage classroom sanitation) |
| Fulake | THE HOMEWORK OFFICER (collects the homework for the teacher when necessary) |
| Helena and Abbas | CLASS PARLIAMENTARIANS (help teacher maintain discipline in the classroom, for example by showing a sign or symbol that means to be quiet) |
| Geoffrey | THE SUBSTITUTE (when a pupil is absent, the substitute performs the duty of that person) |

Many schools in some countries lack financial resources and cannot afford equipment. However, the teacher is able to improvise. The teacher can have radio time in the class for five minutes each day and one child reads the news. Another possibility is to make a television using a cardboard to make the frame and cedar cloth to make the screen. The teacher may write a story or may use pictures to generate discussions and various class activities. Images are sewn or glued to the cloth. The pupils create a scroll by rolling the cloth on a stick or a short pole. When it is television time, as they unroll the scroll, image by image. The teacher can have pupils explain images that they see on television or recite the news (reading what is on the scroll to the class), create the news using current events and later take turns being the news anchor. Together with the children, the teacher is able to make a collection of stories for future use.



Equipment

A tape recorder is very helpful for listening activities, such as oral reading, taping and listening to folk tales or songs. The teacher is able to tape stories to help pupils who need guidance as they read independently. It also provides the children with an opportunity to hear music or the voices of different people, other than the teacher.

When available, television, radio and a computer are assets for stimulating viewing and listening skills. They enable teachers to make use of the interaction of text, sound and visual texts at the same time. The television discussed earlier can be beneficial for many teacher-led and pupil-led activities. Computer stations are unique learning areas in classrooms, providing opportunities for children to acquire knowledge about literacy socially. The computer station should be a focal area in the classroom, which encourages children to engage in a variety of creative and imaginative activities, including printing children's work, book jackets and classroom information. In the absence of computers, pupils still have the opportunity to create these materials by hand and even perhaps learn a new skill or develop an old one. Some examples include making their own book covers or using objects found in nature to design and create frames for their published stories, poems, plays, songs, etc.



Pupils may also be taught how to recycle paper to use for other assignments or for presentations. This encourages the habit of recycling and teaches the pupils a skill. It requires very little materials and is relatively simple for pupils to do. In order to recycle paper, all used paper is soaked in water until it becomes a thick pulp, with consistency of thick porridge. Pupils may mix tiny grains, leaves or other natural materials in the pulp to add texture, style or colour. Next, the pulp is spread out on a square screen, with a wooden border. The pulp should cover the entire screen. The screen will drain all excess water. After the water drains, the pulp that is on the screen becomes dry enough to place on a flat surface to dry. The pulp may take one to two days to completely dry. The only equipment needed is a screen.

Accommodation, furnishing and lighting

Careful attention to the physical classroom design is essential for the success of teaching and learning. Classroom space must be adequate to accommodate each pupil comfortably when writing and engaging in whole class instruction. Ideally there should be a sufficient number of chairs or benches, with ample space for writing on a desk or table. However, there are many schools without sufficient desks and chairs. In this situation, teachers should try to find the most comfortable seating arrangement possible to accommodate the pupils. In cultures where the children sit on the floor or on stones, there should be ample space for the pupils to sit comfortably. What is most important is that children should be reasonably comfortable



when they are in class. Otherwise, when they are uncomfortable, they tend to be more disruptive, there is an increase in disciplinary problems and very little learning takes place.

It is recommended that the teacher move about the room during the lesson in order to keep the attention of all the pupils in the classroom and not just of those sitting close to the teacher. The pupils should be seated in such a way that the teacher has access to each child and can walk about the room freely during the lesson. Some examples of seating arrangements include:

Two semi-circles. This formation makes it easy for the teacher to be closer to everyone (instead of having rows going further and further away from the teacher). This is particularly useful for larger classes of about 30 or 40 pupils. The teacher may want to alternate where the board is used or alternate the seating arrangement from time to time so that each pupil gets a chance to be near the teacher.

Learning centres. Pupils may be grouped in 3s or 4s up to 10 for larger classes (of 40 or more pupils). This grouping helps allow teachers to promote cooperative learning (group projects and assignments). In very large classes and/or active classes, the teacher may have pupils working on the same project or assignment at each learning centre. This may be easier for teachers to give their full attention to each group and prevent them from being overwhelmed by overloading the number of activities in the classroom at one time.

Lighting is very important, especially for children who may be visually impaired. If the lighting is weak, it may cause problems for some pupils and even the teacher. Doorways and windows should be clear of any obstacles that may block the light.

Discipline



One of the major challenges of teachers is classroom management and managing discipline. One of the main reasons children misbehave in class is because they want something, such as to be the centre of attention, or to boss others around (Albert, 1995). It is a particularly difficult problem when children are not provided with the necessary materials for lessons and class sizes are very large. It is recommended that the disruptive child be engaged in the learning process. Various intervening techniques should be used when a child begins to disrupt the classroom environment and a clear set of consequences established – that the children must accept – if the intervention does not work. It must be kept in mind that using writing and reading exercises as punishment is counterproductive; it teaches the children that reading and writing are punishments (e.g. writing ‘I will not talk’ 100 times on the board) and not a source of pleasure. Children should not be punished with literary exercises, because they start to associate literacy with something negative. Instead, children should accept



the consequences of their actions with (non-pleasurable) activities that are nevertheless instructive. For example, a child who scribbles on an undesignated point of a wall may be responsible for cleaning the room for the week. Not only does the child clean the wall, it is also the child's responsibility to make sure the walls are completely clean and that no one writes on them. There is a direct relationship between what the child did and the consequence of the action.

Children misbehave for different reasons. Some want attention, either from the teacher or their classmates, so they distract the class to get an audience. Examples include making noises and using inappropriate language. Some children want to be the boss – of themselves, the other pupils and/or the teacher. They want everything done their way. Generally these pupils do not comply with class rules and will argue and challenge teachers until they get their way (Albert, 1995). Sometimes they want revenge for being hurt or embarrassed by either a classmate or a teacher. When children feel incapable of living up to their expectations, their parents' expectations, or the teacher's, sometimes they may act to divert attention away from the (reading) problem, and change the focus to something else.

The four basic concepts of cooperative discipline (based on Albert, 1995)

Children choose their behaviour

Teachers need to learn how to interact with pupils so they will want to choose the appropriate behaviour and comply with the rules.

The ultimate goal of pupil behaviour is to fulfil the need to belong



Pupils have to feel capable of completing assignments given by the teacher. The teacher can provide: ample preparation for the task by giving clear instruction, positive reinforcement by focusing on the successes of the pupil and an environment where learners are not afraid to make mistakes.

Pupils have to connect successfully with teachers and classmates in order to feel as though they belong. The teacher can provide a nurturing and peaceful environment that must be maintained and encouraged in the classroom. Also, the teacher should express his or her concern for each pupil by showing interest in them (including listening and praising them).



Pupils need to know that they contribute in a significant way to the group. The teacher can have all pupils participate (not necessarily at the same time, especially for large classes) in developing class activities and sharing the responsibility for classroom management.



Children usually misbehave to achieve one of the four immediate goals

- Attention
- Power
- Revenge
- Avoidance of failure



Intervention techniques for attention seeking

Minimize attention

- Stand close by the pupil.
- Send a secret signal to the pupil.
- Mention the pupil's name in your sentence. Example: Dbemi is talking while the teacher is giving instruction. The teacher would use Dbemi's name in an example for an exercise.

Do the unexpected

- Play a musical sound.
- Turn off the lights.
- Change the tone of your voice.

Note appropriate behaviour

- Express thanks to those who are following directions.



Dbemi likes to read mystery books. What is the adjective in this sentence?

Intervention techniques for power and revenge

Make a graceful exit

- Remove the audience (the children paying attention to the child being disruptive).
- Change the subject.
- Avoid confrontation by agreeing with the pupil. Disagreeing with pupil creates a power struggle between the pupil and the teacher.

Use time-out

- Pupils that are acting up may be asked to sit in a corner quietly and take time out to reflect on their behaviour. This time can be during recess as well.
- Require the repair, return or replacement of damaged goods.

Set the consequences

- Loss or delay of a favoured activity.
- Interaction with school administrator.
- Interaction with parents.



You're right, Fulake, I cannot make you do your work, however I'll be collecting the reading reviews in 10 minutes.



It is very important to understand that when pupils misbehave they are really in search of something (attention, power, etc.). Alternately, they are bored. If a teacher lectures everyday, without adding any diversity to the types of activities performed in class, some children tend to become bored quickly and begin to act up. Using only one method generally excludes pupils who respond to different methods of instruction. The more varied the instruction and activities, the more the instruction will engage all learners. If class activities are challenging, yet within the capabilities of the pupils, exciting, yet relevant to instruction, pupils tend to be engaged in instruction.

Teachers must be accurate observers in order to pinpoint the behaviour and describe the pupil's behaviour. Identify the goals of the misbehaviour. Choose the intervention techniques for the moment of behaviour. The purpose of using intervention is to stop the behaviour occurring and to influence the pupil to use more appropriate behaviour in the future. Once the teacher identifies the reasons behind the misbehaviour, he or she can immediately begin to deal with the pupil. The purpose is not to punish the pupil, but rather to stop the disruptive behaviour and to discourage it in the future.



Chapter 4. Teaching reading fluency: suggested approaches and methods



Sequence concerns the order of the learners' experiences as well as the organization of subject materials. Two approaches to reading could be combined for ultimate results. The direct approach tailors the curriculum to the needs, interests and abilities of the pupil. The goals of the programme remain constant, but the implementation of activities to attain these goals is based on the learner's knowledge and interests. The indirect approach prepares the pupil for learning new information and to interact with new information. The pupil is taught various learning tools that help in working with new information to construct meaning. The objective is to equip pupils with the necessary tools to construct meaning with the information that they encounter.

Teachers should develop a reading programme that follows a sequential approach. A sequential approach is that based on the pupils' previous knowledge and experiences. The teacher builds upon that knowledge to acquire new information, while challenging the learner to analyse and process the information. This approach develops mental processes by making pupils summarize previous information, integrate new knowledge with previous knowledge, analyse the new information, apply the information learned and create new information based on new knowledge. The sequential approach develops critical thinking skills, by exercising the child's ability to think independently using analytical skills. Children in primary grades are not always equipped with the thinking skills necessary to summarize and process information. They may lack the ability to differentiate the connotations of some words and meanings, and are unable, therefore, to apply them correctly. The sequential approach develops their ability to think independently, to solve problems independently and to form their own concepts.



The teacher's major task in developing reading comprehension is in the careful selection of relevant materials and in creating experiences that enable children to gain specific concepts that will facilitate word discrimination and generalization (Irwin, 1967). Once pupils master concepts, they are prepared to analyse and apply these concepts, as well as create new ones.

Suggested reading programme

The suggested reading programme should be based on the following criteria:

- A.** Identify each child's specific readiness for the reading programme through classroom observation and diagnostic testing.
- B.** Develop a programme that facilitates readiness to learn new material based on the children's interests and abilities.
- C.** The reading readiness programme should focus on building reading comprehension by emphasizing the whole word meaning and whole language. The programme should integrate the four components of literacy: reading, writing, listening and speaking.
- D.** Develop ability in reading mechanics (such as developing the ability to sound out the pronunciation of unknown words), reading comprehension skills and critical thinking skills, using both fictional and non-fictional texts.
- E.** Integrate into the curriculum an opportunity for reading for leisure.

Multiple intelligences

Howard Gardner (1983) developed the theory of multiple intelligences based on the fact that children have different ways of learning and processing information. Children have strengths in some areas and weaknesses in others, and are better able to process information according to their type of intelligence. There are eight intelligences (listed and described in sample form). There are generally eight different ways or styles that children use to absorb information. The use of this theory helps teachers to understand differences in individuals, by allowing each pupil to demonstrate their strongest assets. It creates an opportunity for pupils to use their strengths to build up their weaknesses. This gives each child an opportunity to experience success and be motivated and creative in its own way. Teachers are encouraged to use most of the eight intelligences in the presentation of new materials, in the daily lessons and in assessment.

A teacher may begin by observing pupils in various situations and then using an assessment form to record their learning styles. This helps the teacher plan lessons and assist individual pupils with specific problems, perhaps by presenting the information in a way that corresponds with their learning style.



Teacher learning-style assessment form

(based on Gardner's multiple intelligences theory and developed by Carmen N'Namdi)

Pupil Assessment Form

Pupil's name:

Grade level:

VERBAL-LINGUISTIC

Loves talking, writing and reading almost anything
Expresses herself or himself very clearly in both writing and talking
Enjoys speaking in front of people (public speaking)
Is sensitive to the impact of words and language on others
Understands and enjoys plays on words and word games

LOGICAL-MATHEMATICAL

Is good at finding and understanding patterns
Is quick at solving a variety of problems
Can remember thinking formulae and strategies
Likes to identify, create and sort things into categories
Is able to follow lines of reasoning and thought processes

VISUAL-SPATIAL

Frequently doodles during class activities
Is helped by visuals and manipulatives
Likes painting, drawing and working with clay
Has a good sense of direction and understanding of maps
Creates mental images easily; likes pretending

BODILY-KINAESTHETIC

Has difficulty sitting still or staying in a seat
Uses body gestures and physical movement to express himself or herself
Is good at sports; is well coordinated physically
Likes to invent things, put things together, and take them apart
Likes to make up songs and melodies
Senses musical elements in unusual or non-musical situations

INTERPERSONAL

Has an irresistible urge to discuss almost anything with others
Is good at listening and communicating
Is sensitive to the moods and feelings of others
Is a good, effective team player
Is able to figure out the motives and intentions of others

INTRAPERSONAL

Is highly intuitive
Is quiet, very self-reflective and aware
Asks questions relentlessly; has avid curiosity
Is able to express inner feelings in a variety of ways
Is individualistic and independent; is not concerned about others' opinions



NATURAL

Loves animals and nature
 Enjoys raising plants and animals
 Draws or talks often about plants and animals
 Likes stories about plants and animals

Now that you know your pupil

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Verbal linguistic</i> , encourage: | <i>Bodily-kinaesthetic</i> , encourage: |
| Reading | Dance |
| Vocabulary | Drama |
| Formal speaking | Sports games |
| Journal/diary keeping | Inventing |
| Creative writing | Gymnastic Routines |
| Poetry | |
| Debate | <i>Musical-rhythmic</i> , encourage: |
| Jokes | Writing songs with the beat |
| Storytelling | Rapping |
| | Drumming |
| <i>Logical-mathematical</i> , encourage: | <i>Interpersonal</i> , encourage: |
| Outlining | Group projects |
| Number sequences/patterns | Expressing understanding from someone else's viewpoint |
| Deciphering codes | Accepting another's input |
| Problem solving | Accepting positive criticism |
| Practice 'if...then...' deductions about a topic | |
| Calculations | <i>Intrapersonal</i> , encourage: |
| Logic/pattern games | Independent projects |
| | Working with diaries, reflective journals |
| <i>Visual-spatial</i> , encourage | <i>Natural</i> |
| Painting | Write narratives using a plant or an animal as the main character |
| Pretending/fantasy | Write descriptions of natural environment |
| Visualizing | Develop plays with animals as the main characters |
| Collages | |
| Sculpting | |
| Patterns and design | |

While there are no definite rules concerning the results of observation of the pupils, the multiple intelligences approach gives the teacher an opportunity to sort the differences among children in manageable groups. For instance, when creating groups for a project, a teacher may put pupils with complementary strengths in a group together (a verbal-linguistic learner with a bodily-kinaesthetic learner) so that each can contribute in his or her own way to the project. A teacher may also decide to group pupils according to their learning styles to help explain a particular lesson.



Suggested methods and approaches

Comprehension work. Grammar, sentence structure and themes should be taught using literature (from short stories to maps). Examples should be heavily oral based and based on the eight multiple intelligences. Exercises developed should be both deductive, meaning pupils are able to recite what is in the text, and inductive (thinking and evaluation), where pupils are able to guess or create possible outcomes, based on information in the text. Examples are given below.

Body/kinaesthetic activity. Children transform a story (or stories) read by the class into a play. They divide into groups and act out the play for the other groups in the class.

During the performance, there should be a moment when the audience is asked to guess what is going to happen next. After the performance, questions are asked in reference to what the children saw in the play (summarize information). The next set of questions should be analytical (such as why did a character react in a certain manner to a situation), and finally pupils should be able to tell what new information they learned from the play. They should be able to express new knowledge based on the classroom activities.

Reading aloud stimulates listening skills. It helps to familiarize pupils with the language of books and patterns. It builds listening skills and provides examples (models) for children in pronunciation and expression. It is a good idea to incorporate fiction as well as non-fiction texts. The intonation and tone used by the teacher should be appropriate to the text being read. See cassette example.

Pre-reading activity: A story about a trip to the mountains.

Before reading the text, draw upon the pupils' prior knowledge about the subject. Ask children, 'Who has visited the mountains, and/or lives in the mountains?' Ask them for descriptions of mountains using semantic mapping (see p. 54). Have photographs of different mountains available for visual stimulation. Next, preview two or three names, ideas or concepts that are to be recognized in the story (e.g. Mount Everest, how to climb a mountain, the changes in the air in the mountains, etc.). Ask them about mountains in their environment. If there are no mountains in their environment, then a drawing or a photograph should be part of the class materials. Pupils then are listening to the story, but also listening for specific information.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Topic: Ourselves
Subtopic: Myself
 My body parts
 Myself and others
 My environment/culture



Objectives

Pupils should be able to:

- Share factual information about themselves in clear concise language.
- Identify and pronounce words with silent letters.
- Use their syllabication skills to attack new words.
- Write legibly in cursive form.
- Use their phonetic skill to spell words.
- Relate rule governing the addition of suffixes to certain words.
- Use context clues.

Activities

- Teacher introduces lesson with poem ‘Myself’.
- Teacher and pupils read poem twice.
- Guided by teacher, pupils identify new words.
- Pupils use new words in sentences.
- Pupils play the game ‘I spy’ to identify words with silent letters.

Evaluation

Students will write down the words with silent letters that they have identified in the ‘I spy’ game.

Reading activity: Learners are prepared to listen for specific information, as well as listen to the story as a whole. The teacher wants to stop the story at intervals to check comprehension and to keep attention alive. If attention seems to wane, learners may be given a key word to listen for while the teacher reads and asked to perform as a physical gesture, such as clapping their hands, when they hear the word.

Post-reading activity: After the reading, questions may be asked related to information presented in the pre-reading activity. The first set of questions reflects listening skills. The answers to these questions are found directly in the text. The second set of questions requires processing information and deducting meaning from that information. Eventually, the teacher may want the students to participate in reading aloud, using a story that the children selected or wrote themselves or a story selected by the teacher.



Shared reading follows the same format as reading aloud, only the teacher reads the text with the pupils. The reading includes pupils identifying key words, either by circling or underlining the words and phrases that they know. This practice is continued on numerous occasions, until the learner can read more and more of the text independently. This may be done individually, with the pupil using a tape recorder with the story being read by the teacher on the cassette. This can also be classified as an independent reading activity.

Paired reading. Children work in pairs and assist each other in reading and comprehending the text. This activity must be guided by the teacher by giving the pair questions to answer based on the text information. It may be beneficial to have older (but still close in age) learners work with the younger ones. This opportunity is provided in multigrade classes.

Independent reading is a good opportunity for pupils to utilize a learning centre. If there is a learning centre in the classroom, the students may go to that area and select a reading activity of their choice, and begin reading and working on comprehension exercises. If it is time for leisurely reading, then the pupils may want to bring in an appropriate book from home once a week or once a month to read during independent reading (otherwise, the books can come from the school library). Learners can also make and exchange reading materials. This builds their home libraries and thereby encourages reading at home, and also provides an opportunity for pupils to share what is learned.

Language exploration. When creating reading activities, it is important to incorporate all the learning styles of the children. Children respond differently to different teaching styles, and a variety of styles should, therefore, always be a part of the information presented. Some examples of literary activities that emphasize different learning styles are:

1. Drama (kinetic/verbal): One pupil reads a poem or lyrics to a song, and another acts out the text (the words to the song).

2. Song writing (musical/linguistic): pupils write lyrics and the tune to a song, either individually or in small groups. This could be a culminating activity after having learned a poetry format, if the children are studying poetry. The pupils then follow the same format for the poem in their song.

LESSON PLAN – Ms Elaine Patterson

LANGUAGE ARTS

Unit:

Focus question:

Poems

How do poems help me see, smell, touch, taste and hear?



Attainment targets

- Listen and speak with sensitivity to audience.
- Apply relevant decoding skills to the reading process.
- Read for meaning and for enjoyment.

Objectives

Pupils will:

- Speak clearly and distinctly in a natural easy manner.
- Listen and speak with awareness of the audience and of situations.
- Use diphthongs, e.g. 'oi', 'ow', 'oy', 'ou'.
- Use advanced syllabication principles to determine basic units of words, e.g. gen/er/ate, sum/ma/ry.
- Use grammatical and other clues to derive meanings of words in context.
- Identify and use ideas and information at the literal and inferential levels.
- Use a dictionary.
- Apply comprehension skills across content areas, noting main points, key words.
- Use correct cursive forms, upper and lower case, headings, margins, spacing.
- Spell phonetically irregular words, e.g. 'rough, cough, through'.
- Demonstrate ability to generate own sentences and patterns.
- Show understanding of the functions of the parts of speech (nouns and verbs)
- Write poems that reflect the senses.
- Write couplets.

Skills

- Listening to, expressing the language of poetry.
- Identifying sound patterns in poetry.
- Creating sound patterns.
- Creating verse using sense words.
- Recognizing tone in poems.
- Writing.

Activities

Pupils and teacher will:

- Share favourite poems and talk freely about likes, dislikes and feelings evoked in poems.
- Collect poems and poetry books for class reading.

Pupils will:

- Listen to, read and sing, and tap clap to rhythm of poems selected for sound effect, alliteration in 'Pickety Fence'.
- Say poems to suggest word music and express sound quality.
- Perform poems as a choral group.
- Create rhymes, couplets, poems with similar rhythm. Check spelling and punctuation.
- Write legibly and neatly.
- Talk about how images or word pictures work in poems, i.e., words that cause them to hear, see, feel, touch, taste and smell, e.g. images in 'cat', 'Big Waves and Little Waves', 'Farther than far'.



- Read poems to suggest how these images should sound when reading poems.
- Create similar sense verses about a dog, fast car or a shower of rain.
- Listen to tones in poems and tell whether the poet is angry, pleased, sad, etc.
- Discuss how they know by referring to words in poems (diction), sound quality, etc.
- Discuss themes of poems (main thing poet wants to say).

Evaluation

Pupils will write down one of the verses completed.

Writing used to teach reading



The reading process involves the development of listening, speaking, and writing skills. It is not the opposite of reading but instead the complement to reading. This means that reading development is dependent on writing development. Both should be practised daily as a part of the curriculum. Many exercises can be integrated in the daily classroom environment that encourage the constant use of writing and reading, such as journal writing.

Language experience approach. This approach is based on the view that children's experiences can be talked about and recorded (written down) by the teacher, and form part of the reading material. The teacher records children's thoughts using their language, with the teacher and children reading during recording. Repeated reading enables children to identify words and to read on their own. To provide a shared reading experience, a child may describe to the class his or her favourite animal. The teacher may write the five or so sentences the child says on the board in complete sentences. The pupil then reads to the class what the teacher wrote. The other pupils at this point may ask questions, share opinions or want to share their personal stories.

Journal writing. Children are encouraged to write their thoughts and ideas about anything they like. This is free writing, meaning that the writing in the journal is not subject to teacher's standards. It is an opportunity for the pupil to express himself or herself freely. The advantage of journal writing is that it can serve as an emotional outlet, yet at the same time exercise writing skills.

Guided writing. As the name implies, the teacher works with the individual pupil, offering guidance in sound/symbol relationships, eliciting what the pupil knows and giving guidance to help the pupil to experience success in the writing process (Carter, 2000). In large classes, this may be done in small groups, where the teacher guides the group to brainstorm (tell all the information they know about a particular topic). Next, the teacher shows the group how to guide each other by using a standard set of questions. The teacher may want to first practise using these guide questions with the entire class and again explain them to the smaller groups.

Example of guide questions for small groups

GUIDE QUESTIONS

1. What is it that you want to write about?
2. What do you already know about this topic?
3. What is the main idea that you want to express in your story?
4. Where does your story take place? A city? A village? In a house? In the forest?
At the river?
5. Who is the main character in your story?
6. Who are the other characters?
7. When does this story take place, now, or a long time ago?
8. The main character always has a problem that must be solved. What is the problem?
9. How does your character solve this problem?

Content writing encourages responses to a topic in an organized manner. Children are able to use research skills, summarize facts and draw conclusions. Children are taught how to organize an idea: an introduction, a body and a conclusion. The introduction states the problem, what the main characters need in order to do something. The body details how the characters go about trying to solve their problem. The conclusion explains how the problem was solved and how the story ends.

Peer editing, Pupils editing the work of their classmates, is recommended for content writing. Pupils may follow a punctuation checklist, provided by the teacher (or it may be on the wall in the classroom), when checking other pupils' work. Peer editing teaches the children to become aware of punctuation and a sequence of ideas. They practise looking for punctuation mistakes and establishing whether the story is easy to understand or not. As children mature, they may participate in a discussion concerning the ideas of the text, text structure, and what additions and/or deletions need to be made. Remember that eventually the teacher still needs to edit all the texts written, because the children editors may make a mistake themselves.

Strategies to foster reading comprehension

Preparing for the reading. The teacher selects a word, phrase or picture about a key idea or concept in the text or topic. Next, the teacher begins a discussion with the class around this subject in order that pupils see other ideas related to the idea being studied. Then the teacher may ask the pupils to look at the text, the title and the pictures, and ask questions that may evoke relevant thoughts and memories related to those items. The teacher builds background information by activating appropriate prior knowledge through self-questioning about what is known of the topic, the vocabulary and the format of presentation. The teacher sets the purpose of reading by asking questions about what the reader wants to know.



Example: Topic - Protecting Our Environment (Carter, 2000).

What comes to mind when you hear the word environment? Why do we need to protect our environment?



Teacher provokes
Background information

Trees
Elephant
Birds
Goats
River
Grass

Responses are recorded

Why do these ideas come to mind ?

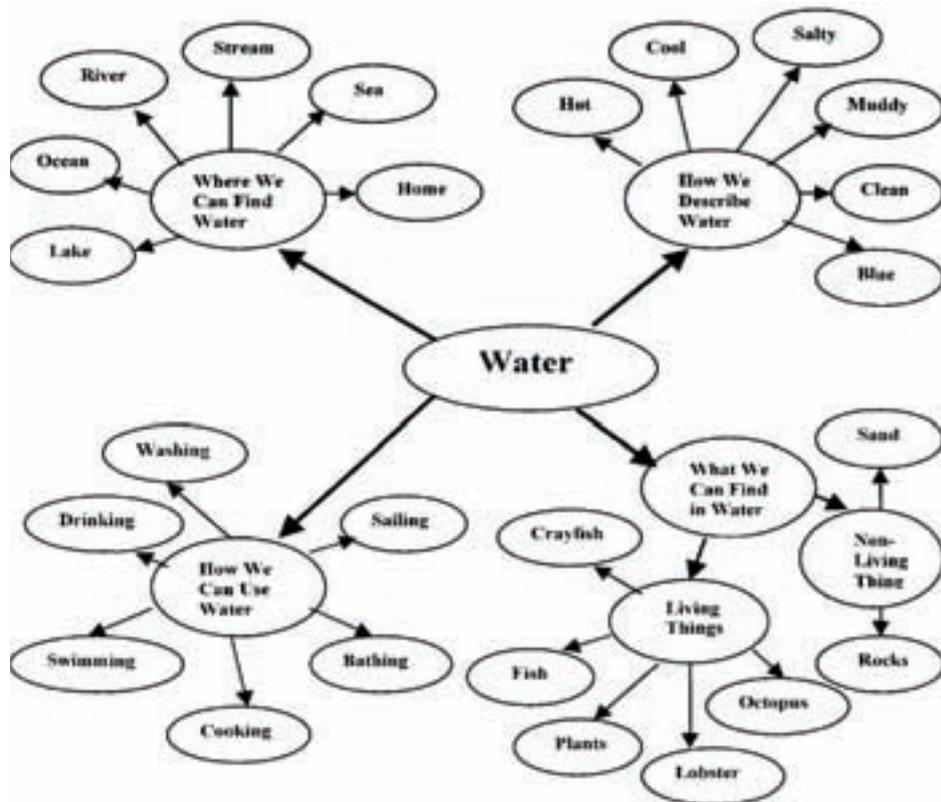


*Because we need food
Because we need clean water*

Reflection stage

The social interaction of this activity will help pupils understand and expand their knowledge through listening to and interacting with the other pupils. In the final stage pupils might be asked the following question:

Semantic mapping. Teachers may choose to present the information using semantic mapping. The key word or phrase is put on the board, and the children and the teacher develop categories and subcategories of related words. Pupils may add to the map as they read.



Semantic map example (Carter, 2000).



Take note that the subcategories answer the questions Where? When? Why? What? How? Pupils will predict the information that they believe will be in the text. Then they read the text and compare their predictions with the information actually contained in the text. This active form of processing enhances the development of effective comprehension strategies.

The reading process

During the reading of the text, the pupil:

- Checks understanding of the text by paraphrasing the author's words.
- Monitors comprehension by using context clues to figure out new words and by using images, inference, and prediction.
- Integrates new concepts with existing knowledge and continually reviews the purposes of reading.

Post-reading activities

After reading the text, the pupil:

- Summarizes what has been read by retelling the plot of the story or the main idea of the text.
- Applies ideas in the text to other situations, broadening these ideas.

Various techniques or practices may be used to organize information after reading the text. It is advised that diverse activities be used to allow pupils to express what they have read. Pupils could return to their semantic map to include new ideas that they learned after having read the text. Pupils could, for example, write summaries, give oral presentations or act out the text in the form of a play. The pupils may use other methods of organizing the text, such as those listed below.

- Description: pupils describe either the setting (where the story takes place) or the personality of one or more of the characters.
- Narrative: pupils write a narrative about their reflections on the story or some part of the story that relates to them or their experiences.



CAUSE
plant seeds + sun
+ rain

- Cause and effect: a chart may be developed to show why certain characters performed the way they did in the story and the pupils look for the consequences of those actions taken by the characters. This activity is also good for explaining classroom management.



EFFECT
plants and
vegetables

Compare and contrast permits pupils to see the similarities between two subjects. They look for all the qualities two characters or two stories have in common. Next, they look for all the differences between the two subjects. Once they are comfortable with this activity they may use more than two subjects.



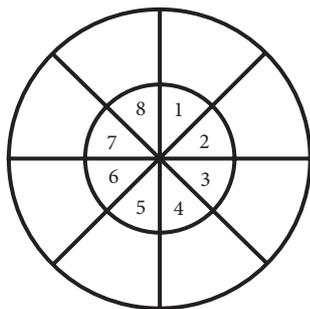


Problem and solution. Pupils identify the problem in the story. Keep in mind that a problem is not necessarily negative. Often, children believe a problem in the story to be something negative, when it is not negative, but simply a goal that the character(s) want to accomplish, such as teaching a sister or brother how to climb a baobab tree.

Story structure and sequence. The practice of putting the story line in order of events, or in sequence, is a good exercise for facilitating comprehension. It enables pupils to practise thinking about the story in connected parts, as opposed to a series of short thoughts. It also shows pupils the format of stories: beginning, middle and end. Story circles are one way of helping pupils to put the story in sequence. Numbers are used in sequencing to put the events of the story in order. Pupils may also use pictures that they draw, or make copies from the book that tell the story line in order to put the story in sequence.

Example of a story circle

Pupils may also use pictures that they draw, or make copies from the book that tell the story line in order to put the story in sequence.



In the small sections of the story, pupils illustrate the events in the order that corresponds to the number. Some pupils may be more comfortable writing a brief sentence that tells what happened in the story.

- Information processing involves a chart that can be started before any reading activity. Pupils begin by stating what they know on a chart, either individually or as a class, what they already know and what they want to know or learn from the text they are going to read. This activity helps pupils set a purpose for their reading. A chart design called the KWL (know-want-learn) can be used by the teacher on the board or by pupils individu-

ally. After the activity is completed they will write in what they learned, which may or may not be the information that they wanted to learn prior to the activity.

An adapted KWL design (Ogle, 1986).

| WHAT I KNOW | WHAT I WANT TO KNOW | WHAT I LEARNED |
|-------------|---------------------|----------------|
| | | |

- Summarizing involves taking out information in the text that is not important and looking for the main points. This activity can and should be combined with sequencing activities. For example, the teacher introduces a story and the pupils read it silently to see how the plot develops. The teacher guides the pupils to develop a story frame and instructs the class in writing one or two sentence summaries for a small portion of the text.
- Look for the most important ideas that help us know about the problem or the solution.
- State the important ideas in your own words.
- Combine the ideas into one or two sentences.
- Take out anything that repeats information.

On the second reading of the text, the pupils will be assisted in determining the most important ideas, and how to combine these ideas and summarize them. After short summaries have been written, the children may cut them out on small slips of paper and mix them. Then they rearrange the slips of paper in order, in the sequence of the story. Children can make their own summary strips from other texts as they become more familiar with the process.

- Note taking. Once pupils have mastered the ability to extract the main ideas from a text, they may begin to develop note-taking skills. Note-taking skills involve pupils writing down the important elements from a text they are reading or from what a teacher is saying. The teacher may want to begin this activity orally, in order to better monitor the success of the children. The teacher begins by stating a short informative paragraph. The pupils then orally try to find the main ideas. The



teacher increases the amount of information bit by bit until the pupils are able to take notes from a short text (such as a short story).

- Voluntary and recreational reading. Many children, particularly in rural areas, do not choose reading as a source of information or as a recreational activity. In order to enhance literacy, projects and programmes involving voluntary reading should be developed in schools and public libraries, by making available a variety of reading materials that reflect the children's interests. If schools have no libraries, then teachers may want to begin by creating libraries using boxes. Box libraries can begin by collecting the few books a school has access to, and little by little adding more books to the box as they become available. The goal is to eventually have enough books to start a library. The box should be neatly decorated or made to look appealing to the children so that they want to use the books or contribute books to the library.

This will motivate learners, foster the self-selection of materials by pupils and instil a sense of pride in building their library. Teachers and pupils can also write and display materials. Parents, friends and relatives should be encouraged to give books to children as gifts, whenever possible, in order to increase the amount of printed materials in their homes.

Chapter 5: Developing reading assessment



Assessment is a tool that measures a learner's knowledge and ability. It shows the areas in the reading programme where learners have weaknesses and strengths. It shows how well they are able to extract information and analyse what they are reading. The purpose of using assessment is to test that learning objectives (and lesson objectives) are being met. Forms of assessment should be based on, and reflect, what is taught in the classroom. The forms of assessment must be as varied as the lessons and relevant to the lessons, while addressing the different learning styles.

For example, in a lesson in styles of architecture, children are taught to recognize and distinguish between three different house styles. They are taught how to draw a doorway that is characteristic of each of the three styles. They read and study the history of each of the styles. If there are no books, the teacher may tell the history orally. The children can also question the older people in the community. They are expected to know which country each style comes from and in what period it began. The learners look for examples of the styles in their communities. The skills that are learned and practised include drawing, reading for meaning, observing and matching. The assessment of this lesson must correspond to what was taught and be as varied in form as the lesson. Learners may be asked to identify different forms of houses in pictures. They may be asked to match elements that are a part of the same style. They may be given questions that ask for the dates and countries of origin of each of the three styles.

Sample lesson plan with assessment

LESSON PLAN

Title:

Students will be able to:

Materials:

Pre-activity:

Activity:

Post-activity:

Forms of assessment:

The teacher is not the only person who participates in assessment. Learners also evaluate their performance in school. However, teacher guidance is still needed to help pupils learn how to assess their own work and recognize progress. For example, a pupil who is performing poorly in reading comprehension, but has made some progress, may not be able to recognize progress if he or she has not reached his or her goal in reading comprehension.

The goal of assessment is to guide what is taught in the classroom (Irwin, 1967; Carter, 2000; Ruddell and Unrau, 1997). Teachers base instruction on what proves to be effective in their teaching and eliminate the parts that are ineffective. If a class performs poorly when assessed, that means either that the instruction was not effective or that the form of assessment used does not correspond with the way the lesson was taught. In either case, the teacher must make the necessary adjustments so that the students can understand the information.

Below are guidelines to be considered in the evaluation process. These guidelines are based on research by Irwin, Carter and Langer.

- Testing and interpreting test scores to identify and address learners' academic strengths and weaknesses
- Observation
- Using portfolio assessment to record academic progress, and personal growth and development
- Questioning and interviewing between the teacher and the learner
- Self-evaluation (for teachers and learners)

Testing

Diagnostic testing is a tool often used to determine a student's ability. Testing is intended to be used to show areas in which trainees are strong, and/or areas in which they need improvement. It is used to show teachers what areas of instruction are strong, and what areas of instruction need strengthening. Testing alone, however, cannot accurately measure a learner's performance. In fact, no form of assessment



used alone should be the basis of evaluation; all forms of assessment need to be supplemented with various types of assessment. Although diagnostic testing is very helpful in helping teachers find specific problems in reading difficulties, it must also be supplemented with other forms of assessment.

Too often teachers rely solely on testing in general as a means to determine understanding, when in some cases it may simply determine a child's test-taking skills. Standard tests tend to emphasize low-level skills, factual knowledge, memorization of procedures and skills. These aspects of performance are necessary, but by no means provide an assessment of critical thinking skills.

As mentioned earlier, the forms of assessment should be a direct reflection of instruction in the classroom. The skills that are practised during the lesson, such as compare and contrast, identifying relationships, multiple choice, matching, etc., should be the skills tested. The information taught in the lesson should be the only information evaluated. Children should not be assessed using a multiple-choice test if that test-taking skill was neither learned nor practised during the lesson. Positive assessment should satisfy the learning objectives.

It is to the advantage of the teacher to design tests that correspond to the needs of the learners. The teacher is better able to set questions that correspond to what was taught in a lesson, the skills practised and the students' interests. However, it is a very delicate process and rules must be followed in order to develop a well-made test. The test-making process involves much revision and much interaction between teachers and administrators. Examples and procedures for creating teacher-made diagnostic and standardized tests are provided in Chapter 6.

Assessment must accommodate individual cultural differences. Children living in rural and agricultural areas will have a different relationship with reading and comprehension. Teachers need to avoid labelling children as slow learners or failures when they are actually in transition, learning a new language. The reading process in some countries may need to focus on language development. A child must be able to speak the language of the school, before reading the language of the school. Most of the assessment at this time is, therefore, orally based.

Observations

Observing pupils is one of the most accessible forms of assessment for a teacher. Teachers observe learners everyday in a more formal classroom setting, and out of class casually interacting and playing with peers. When a teacher observes a pupil, he or she is looking at what interests the child. The teacher is able to know how the child interacts with peers and adults, and how the child interacts with learning. If a child has a change in behaviour or begins to demonstrate unusual behaviour, the teacher can immediately note the difference and try to address any possibility of a problem.



There are many ways to document observations, such as noting what kinds of books the children select, listening to conversations about current affairs or observing students before, during and after a lesson. Teachers may find it useful to create their own checklists and surveys that specifically address the behaviour that they would like to observe.

Class observation checklist.

The teacher elects what behaviour he or she is looking for in a particular lesson and lists it on the left-hand side of the checklist. The pupils' names go across the top of the chart. This is an example, so only four names are used. During the lesson, the teacher checks off observed behaviour on the part of listed pupils.

A= always
S= Sometimes
R= Rarely
N= Never

| | Olu | Geoffrey | Olaiyde | William |
|--|-----|----------|---------|---------|
| Participates in class discussion | | | | |
| Makes predictions about the reading | | | | |
| Confirms or refutes past predictions | | | | |
| Uses the reading to justify predictions | | | | |
| Reads fluently (smoothly) | | | | |
| Uses the context of the sentence to determine the meaning of a word | | | | |
| Is able to summarize the reading in his or her own words | | | | |
| Is able to work with others on comprehension problems | | | | |

Teachers may decide to use an observation record that allows for more notes to be taken about what the teacher observes. This may be useful when a teacher is observing an individual child or a small group of children. In this example, the child is presenting an oral assignment, such as a speech or reading aloud. This chart may be used for reading, writing and listening exercises as well.

Name: Kouyaté KOUME

| Date | Action before speaking | Action during speaking | Action after speaking | Self-directed uses of literature |
|---------|--|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 19 June | Attention on other children and not the text to be read, avoiding the text | Speaks very carefully, slowly, pronouncing each word very clearly | Seems more assured, wants to read again to correct mistakes | Sounds out words |



The results of these checklists, charts and surveys help teachers select the areas of instruction that will be emphasized in order to strengthen the weaknesses.

Portfolio assessment

Portfolio assessment is a compilation of reading and writing samples collected over a period of weeks or months. It is a folder that contains a collection of materials that document children's development in reading and writing. These samples are analysed for growth in and challenges to reading development. The advantage of using portfolio assessment, besides documenting the personal growth of a learner, is that the learners themselves participate in this form of assessment. However, this will require some guidance, especially with very young pupils. Portfolio assessment allows the pupils to treat learning as a process, a continuum. They are able to see how concepts are linked to one another and develop into larger concepts, or how we use skills and information from one lesson and apply it to another. They can trace their development in reading ability and use reading in a variety of contexts.

Portfolio assessment must consist of a variety of samples. The samples may include book summaries, journal entries, a list of books read and speeches. Pupils' work samples also include assignments from written, oral and listening activities, because all are used to assess reading. Teachers and learners look for differences in writing, more elaborate ways of communicating, either orally or written, and evidence of improved comprehension (higher grades, more correct answers, the ability to write accurate summaries, etc.). Some questions will be general, used for all students, while others will concentrate on the needs of a particular pupil:

- Does Akissi express herself more clearly orally?
- Has Akissi's handwriting (word formation) improved?
- Can Akissi recognize the main idea of a reading text and develop details about the text?
- Has she been able to recognize mistakes and willing to make changes?
- Are there fewer common word errors?
- Is Akissi reading more fluently in February than in September?
- Has Akissi improved her use of capital letters and full stops?
- Akissi's spelling was strong in October. Has she made even more progress?



Teachers and administrators will want to use a school form that documents the child's abilities for the first two years of school. This document is particularly important in areas where the language of the child is not the language of instruction.

Content of a first grade portfolio folder

(from *Toward an Ecological Assessment of Reading Progress*, Wisconsin State Reading Association, 1990, p. 188.)

WORK SAMPLES

- *Lists of books read*
- *Akissi's books*
- *Tape of oral reading*
- *Journal samples*

PUPIL ASSESSMENT

- *Self-assessment conferences*
- *Interest inventory*

TEACHER OBSERVATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

- *Notes and comments from observations*
- *Interpretations of test scores*
- *Notes and comments from interviews*

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

- *Parents read to Akissi*
- *Akissi reads to her parents*

Questioning and interviewing

Questioning is a dialogue between the teacher and pupils about the text being read. Generally, questioning takes place during the class time. It involves a teacher or a pupil asking another pupil to summarize a text; it involves pupils asking each other questions about the text to determine the meaning, to predict meaning, and to clarify unclear vocabulary and concepts. The teacher or a pupil may ask questions pertaining to the lesson. These questions usually refer to a text that has just been read, or a film or play that has just been watched, or a poem just listened to.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Unit:

Poems

Focus Question:

How do poems help me to hear, see, touch, taste and smell?



Objectives

Children should be able to:

- Listen to ideas and draw inferences.
- Speak clearly and distinctly in a natural, easy manner.
- Use diphthongs, e.g. ‘oi’, ‘ow’, ‘oy’, ‘ou’.
- Use syllabication principles to determine basic unit words.
- Use clues to derive meanings of words in context.
- Apply comprehension skills.
- Spell phonetically irregular words, e.g. rough, cough, etc.
- Write own sentences.
- Use punctuation marks.

Activities

- Read poems and make pupils listen, then tap the rhythm or clap.
- Have pupils read poem ‘Pickety Fence’ and ‘Sookey Dead’. Perform poem as a class orchestra.
- Talk about how images or words picture work in poems, e.g. words that make them see, feel, touch, taste and smell.
- Read poems to suggest how these images should sound when reading a poem, e.g. ‘Big waves, little Waves’.
- Allow pupils to answer questions orally on poems.
- Pupils write a poem on their own.

Evaluation

Students will list words using diphthongs.



Example of a questioning form

1. Summarizing

Learners state what they read. They express themselves in complete sentences and, depending on their level of development, in paragraphs.

2. Questions

Teacher leads learners in discussion about the reading selection. Eventually, the teacher allows learners to lead the discussion. Learners who ask questions must be able to answer their own questions.

3. Clarifying

Each learner takes turns at being the discussion leader. The discussion leader asks other pupils questions pertaining to difficult vocabulary, words and ideas, predictions and creating summaries.

4. Predict

As class members begin to answer questions, the teacher asks similar questions to keep the discussion going. The last set of questions pertains to making predictions about possible alternative outcomes of what they read (i.e., what if? questions).

Interviewing is a more structured interaction between the teacher and an individual pupil. The teacher asks the pupil questions about what material has been read, to make predictions, summarize, etc. This method is used to find out a pupil's interest in different subjects for reading and writing. Examples of questions include:

Example of interview questions

(adapted from Wisconsin State Reading Association, 'Process Interview'.)

Interview

1. How do you choose something to read?
2. Do you read the title of the book before you begin reading a book?
3. Do you read at home?
4. When a paragraph is confusing, what do you do?
5. When you come to a word that you do not know, what do you do?
6. Do you like to read?
7. What do you do after you have read a book?
8. Do you remember what you have read?

Questioning and interviewing encourage the teacher to interact with the learners, to talk to them and encourage them to respond and participate in classroom discussions. It gives learners the opportunity to discuss what they think about a text and practise expressing themselves clearly.



Self-assessment

Pupils are taught to assess and evaluate their work and progress in order to take responsibility for their learning. Pupils are taught strategies to learn a concept. They must next appropriately apply these strategies. In order to evaluate whether or not they have correctly applied these strategies, they must have a self-evaluation form, or a set of guidelines provided by the teacher. In addition, reading journals or diaries are recommended ways of allowing pupils to express their thoughts and reflections, and note their challenges and successes (Irwin, 1967; Carter, 2000).



Before actively engaging in self-evaluation, a pupil should set personal academic goals. A goal is an end that a person tries to reach, such as listing all the continents of the world in alphabetical order (Schunk, 1990). Goals enable learners to set personal standards so they can determine their progress (Irwin, 1967; Schunk, 1990). Goals motivate learners to put extra time and effort into their work, and make use of strategies that help them learn (Irwin, 1967; Locke and Latham, 1990).



Chapter 6: Suggested procedure for developing a diagnostic reading achievement test



In order to create a reading programme and assessment for a reading programme effectively, teachers, education officers and head teachers must work together to collect as much information as possible about the learners. There are several stages for creating a diagnostic test based on a variety of reports by UNESCO.

1. School officials and/or teachers administer a preliminary study of the pupils, the background of the school and the conditions of the school.
2. Educators are formally trained to create a diagnostic test, and to ensure the quality and validity of the test.
3. The educators who participated in and successfully completed the training prepare the test.
4. Teachers administer the test in selected schools in both urban and rural environments.
5. Educators analyse the test results.
6. Remedial work on the basis of the results undertaken over a three-month period.
7. Educators administer the test for a second time to the same groups.
8. Educators analyse test results and identify persistent difficulties.



A sample preliminary study

Pupil data

1. Indicate the total number of learners in the school and the numbers by gender.
2. Indicate the number of learners in each grade by gender.
3. Indicate the number of learners who reach the highest grade in the school without repeating a grade by gender.
4. Indicate the number of learners who entered the school without knowing the language of instruction, by gender.

Teacher data

1. Indicate the total number of teachers engaged in teaching reading, their qualifications and number of years of service.
2. List what type of training background the teachers have and state the type of institution. Examples will include, but are not limited to, training colleges, in-service courses, distance education programmes, and training from supervisors, reading specialists, school principals, and/or teachers' centres, etc.

Materials data

1. Make a list (book inventory) of all the reading materials used at each grade level, such as textbooks, children's magazines, supplementary readers, etc.
2. Indicate the number of pages in each text.
3. Indicate whether these texts are black and white or in colour.
4. Indicate if these texts come with pupil workbooks and/or teacher handbooks.
5. State whether the text is printed by a governmental organization or by a private publisher.
6. Write comments on the relevance of the content, the information in the book, of these materials for the age level and interests of the learners.
7. State whether or not there is space in the classroom or in the school for reading areas, such as libraries, reading corners, and bookshelves. Specify whether these areas are accessible to the pupils or not.
8. Describe how books are ordered. Who determines what books and materials are ordered? What is the process for ordering materials?
9. State where books are stored.
10. Describe how books are distributed. Who gets what book and why?
11. Take an inventory of all the supplies in the school (outside books and other reading texts). Supplies include crayons, chalk, chalkboards, etc. State each item available and the number available.
12. Indicate the types of records teachers use to monitor reading progress. If different teachers use different types of assessment, indicate which classes use which forms of assessment. The pupils' grades or marks are included.



13. Indicate whether or not homework is given. If homework is assigned, then how much and how often? There may be differences between the practices of different teachers. In that case, list how each teacher treats homework separately.
14. State whether or not instruction is always by group, always individualized or a mixture of both.
15. Indicate the type of teaching method that the teacher uses.
16. Give the amount of time given to teaching reading per day and per week. State whether or not this time is flexible.
17. List and briefly explain the major obstacles encountered in teaching reading. These may include absenteeism, large classes, a difference between the language spoken at home and the language spoken at school, a shortage of materials, disruptive children, lack of partitions between classes, etc.

QUESTIONNAIRE: Background data on school and pupils

Name of school:

Address of school:

Name of the principal:

Area (e.g. rural, urban, industrial, agricultural, semi-urban, etc.):

Home backgrounds of pupils (professional, agricultural, manual workers, varied, etc.)

Total number of pupils :

Number of pupils in Grade 1 : Boys : Girls :

Number of pupils in Grade 2 : Boys : Girls :

Number of pupils in Grade 3 : Boys : Girls :

Number of pupils in Grade 4 : Boys : Girls :

Number of pupils in Grade 5 : Boys : Girls :

Number of pupils in Grade 6 : Boys : Girls :

Number of drop-outs Grade 2 : Boys : Girls :

Number of drop-outs Grade 3 : Boys : Girls :

Number of drop-outs Grade 4 : Boys : Girls :

Number of drop-outs Grade 5 : Boys : Girls :

Number of drop-outs Grade 6 : Boys : Girls :

Number of repeaters Grade 2 : Boys : Girls :

Number of repeaters Grade 3 : Boys : Girls :

Number of repeaters Grade 4 : Boys : Girls :

Number of repeaters Grade 5 : Boys : Girls :

Number of repeaters Grade 6 : Boys : Girls :

Comments by the school principal and teachers on the teaching of reading

1. What are the main problems faced in the teaching of reading and what remedies are suggested?
2. What steps should be taken at the national level?
3. What steps should be taken at the local level?
4. What steps should be taken to meet the needs of a) handicapped children and b) gifted children?
5. What are the main causes of low level reading achievement?

After completing a preliminary study and collecting background information on the school and its pupils, teachers and administrators are then able to administer a diagnostic test. This test should be used at the end of the second year of primary education and then again after the completion of each Grade. Pupils by that time will have had one year of reading instruction. The teacher is better able to see what aspects of instruction were effective and what aspects were not. It is recommended not to wait until the end of the primary school years to administer diagnostic testing, because it is then too late to take any corrective measures in the instruction. Instead, diagnostic testing should be made at the end of every year, to guide instruction for the following year. The following are examples of some of the skills children should be able to perform at the end of their primary school years.

- Word recognition
- Vocabulary knowledge
- Knowledge of synonyms and antonyms
- Meaning of words from context clues
- Understanding sentences that have similar meanings
- Ability to describe the meanings and ideas expressed in a paragraph
- Ability to create titles to reading passages
- Ability to understand and evaluate reading passages in different texts

Individual records should be kept that document each pupil's reading ability on arrival at school and progress made. Once the pupils begin to learn how to read, a reading record may be used to document their reading abilities and challenges. This record helps the teacher analyse the difficulties of each pupil better. The following is an example of a reading record:

Sample reading record

LESSON PLAN

Name of pupil **Grade:** **Age:**

Attendance:

Home language (if home language is different from medium of instruction):



| Skill | Diagnosis | Remedial measures | Progress | Remarks |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|----------|---------|
| Oral expression and communication | | | | |
| Reading ability Vocabulary | | | | |
| Comprehension | | | | |
| Ability to draw inferences | | | | |
| Challenges | | | | |
| General behaviour | | | | |

Diagnostic chart

| Diagnosis of difficulties | Details of difficulties | Suggested remedial work |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | |



Sample diagnostic test

1. Complete sentences with appropriate words selected from multiple choice.

The little girl _____ in the ocean.

- a) slept b) laughed c) swam d) crawled

2. After reading a sentence, choose from the multiple-choice a word of similar meaning to the one given in the sentence.

LESSON PLAN

Objectives

Pupils will be able to:

- Hunt for a word.
- Fill in a missing word.
- Use letters to make words.

Material

Cards with 'find a word', flash cards, letters of the alphabet (sets).

Activities

- Pupils revise previous reading lesson playing the game 'I spy' with words.
- Put pupils in groups, and give them sets of letters of the alphabet to find as many words as they can.
- List words on a chalkboard.
- Use these words to fill in missing spaces.
- Give each child in small groups a card. Make the pupils line up in the order in which sentences should be read.
- List sentences on a chalkboard.

Assessment

Pupils copy sentences in books. Do 'hunt a word' exercise.

Evaluation

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| V | T | L | C | T | X | S | R | E | B |
| N | R | R | A | B | B | I | T | A | N |
| A | Y | R | T | S | A | N | D | D | S |
| G | O | R | F | J | K | H | G | L | F |
| B | R | U | S | L | E | E | P | B | E |
| A | K | N | B | T | T | O | B | J | Z |
| K | I | T | V | C | O | R | E | D | P |
| A | B | I | L | L | Y | A | D | H | K |

| | | | | | |
|-------|------|--------|------|------|-------|
| CAT | NAG | RABBIT | BIT | TAN | SLEEP |
| BE | CORE | DAY | BAKE | SAND | AND |
| POOL | TO | PEEL | ORE | BEDE | PILL |
| BILLY | AT | LOOP | HE | KIT | AN |

LESSON PLAN – Ms Veronica Smith and Ms Ann Grant

Objective

Pupils will be able to:

- Find a classmate with the same word.
- Match a word on flash cards with words on a chalkboard.
- Identify a missing word.
- Sing a song to the tune of ‘Solos Market’.
- Make sentences with a given word.

Materials

Flash cards

Activities

Guided by the teacher, pupils will:

- Sing a song in their local dialect to the tune of the folk song ‘Solos market’.
- Give instructions to help pupils find a matching word.
- Pupils will be told that when they find the word they will sing ‘Woi oh mi find eh’.
- List given words on the chalkboard.
- Use words on a chalkboard to help pupils to identify words better.
- Pupils close eyes as the teacher rubs off a word. Pupils open eyes and show the word that is missing on a flash card.

Assessment

Pupils use the words they have to make sentences.

Children find word matches from a given set of words made up by song in their local language.



(Tune to 'Solos Market')

Come we go dung a grade) repeat

Fi go find me word match

Come we go dung) repeat

Come we go find we word match

Come we go dung

Come we go dung fi go find we word match

Child's response when the word is found: 'Whai oh me find it!

3. After reading a sentence, from multiple choice select a word of opposite meaning to the one given in the sentence.
4. From a list of five words, choose one that is different in association from the other four.
5. Two sentences are given with the same sentence structure. One sentence has a missing word which is to be selected from multiple choice so that two sentences have the same meaning;
6. Five short reading passages are given and five titles. The most suitable title for each passage is chosen.
7. A short narrative passage is given. Words are selected from multiple choice which refer to elements in the passage.
8. Six rhymes are given and six titles. The most suitable title for each rhyme is chosen.
9. Pick out from multiple choice a correct statement after the reading of a passage.
10. Answer questions beginning with What? When? Where? Why? How? relating to sentences in the paragraph.
11. Find the correct answers to questions from multiple choice after reading a short narrative.
12. Identify incorrect statements relating to a narrative passage from multiple choice.
13. Choose phrases that correspond best to other phrases from multiple choice.
14. After reading a narrative, choose words and phrases, which correspond in meaning to what is stated in it.

LESSON PLAN

Objectives

Pupils will be able to:

- Identify words on flash cards.
- Read sentences as instructed by the teacher with a given word.
- Unscramble sentences.

Materials

Reader, sentence strips, flash cards.

Activities

1. Guided by the teacher, pupils will play the game:
 - I am in a well (pupil)
 - How deep (classmates)
 - Seven feet (pupil)
 - Who would you like to take you out? (classmates)
 - Call a name with the word 'Come' (student)
2. List words taken from the well on the chalkboard.
3. Pupils use words to constructs sentences.
4. Pupils read sentences as selected, e.g. read sentence with the word 'beg'.
5. Pupils the read sentences from sentence strips.
6. Pupils again play a game using a sentence strip.

Assessment

Pupils will unscramble sentences, e.g. 'Name My Tom Is'.

Evaluation

This will be determined by the teacher.

Developing a reading test

Teachers are encouraged, whenever possible, to develop their own reading tests for the lessons. This, however, requires some formal training. It is suggested that teachers design tests that represent what has been taught in the classroom and that reflect the learning styles of the pupils. Also, the activities on any test should be varied in skills: multiple choice, true and false, fill in the blank, inferential questions, drawing a visual design, creating a jingle, writing a story or a poem. The skills that are used on the test are the skills that were practised during the lesson.

Directions should be written in very clear terms. Sometimes, pupils do not perform well in tests simply because the directions were not clear. There should be an example to accompany the directions so pupils can see how to respond correctly to the questions being asked. The teacher should read the directions aloud so that each pupil is sure to understand the directions. After having read the directions, the teacher asks the pupils if they understood the directions (if there is any doubt, the teacher may ask certain pupils to repeat the directions in their own words). Before the actual test begins, the teacher tells the pupils the amount of time they have to complete the test. A sample reading test created by Mavis Irwin is given below.



A reading test

This test is an example of a reading diagnostic test. It is used to diagnose and analyse individual differences in reading achievement for a group of pupils in Grade 7.

Test directions:

(to be given orally before work begins)

The allotted time for the test is one hour maximum.

1. Attempt all questions. If you cannot answer a question, do not lose time, but go on to the next.
2. Make any alterations in your answers clearly.
3. The examples are to assist you to understand what is required.
4. Read and work carefully. Guessing will reduce your marks.
5. Ask no questions.
6. Raise your hand when you have finished.

I. Underline in the brackets () the word that means most closely the same as those underlined in the following sentences:

1. My father is **rich**.
(proud, wealthy, grand, busy, happy)
2. She talked **quietly** in the same room where the sick boy slept.
(fearfully, hastily, sweetly, pleasantly, softly)
3. The king **governed** his people for ten years.
(taught, ruled, helped, worried, burdened)
4. Do not **enquire** about the lost books.
(speak, tell, explain, ask, complain)
5. The master will come here **soon**.
(today, fast, suddenly, early, quickly)
6. The thief stole some **costly** jewels.
(pretty, lovely, dainty, glittering, expensive)

II. Read the following passage:

The king was old and weak. He lived in a huge castle, guarded by many brave soldiers. A silly servant told the king's secrets to his enemies who killed him. So ended a long and peaceful reign.

Now answer these questions. Underline in the brackets () the words that mean the opposite of those in the capital letters:



1. WEAK
(worthless, meek, strong, cruel, wonderful)
2. HUGE
(tiny, neat, fine, frail, medium-sized)
3. SILLY
(obedient, thoughtful, kind, sensible, great)
4. ENEMIES
(soldiers, friends, craftsmen, subjects, labourers)
5. PEACEFUL
(powerful, unhappy, warlike, useless, disappointing)
6. MANY
(any, few, some, all, several)

III. Complete each sentence by underlining the most suitable word from those in the brackets (). Here is an example:

Mr Smith, who paints beautiful pictures, is called a (painter, manufacturer, artist, welder, photographer). 'Artist' is underlined because it makes sense. Now do these:

- 1 One day we watched the mother goat feeding her... (kitten, calf, cub, fawn, kid)
- 2 It is easy to find out the position of mountains and rivers by using my ...
(dictionary, atlas, journal, newspaper).
- 3 The writing material we need, can most readily be bought from the...
(accountant, printer, librarian, stationer, typist).
- 4 Every night I write an account of the day's work in my
(timetable, register, diary, historybook, list)
- 5 A person whose special duty is to take ships into or out of harbour is called a ...
(sailor, pilot, boatman, diver, captain).
- 6 They ate the prisoners whom they had captured and because of this they were called...
(cannibals, warriors, bushmen, hunters, chiefs).

IV. In the following lists of words four of the words are alike in some way and one is different. Underline the different one. Look at this example:

Potato, carrot, cabbage, cheese, pumpkin

'Cheese' is underlined because it is not a vegetable. Now do these:

1. Bicycle, automobile, diesel, kerosene, airplane
2. Lamp, tablet, bulb, candle, flashlight
3. Monday, Tuesday, January, Friday, Sunday
4. Clothes, stockings, trousers, blouses, skirts
5. Tailor, woman, teacher, postman, child



Chapter 6: Suggested procedure for developing a diagnostic reading achievement test

V. Underline from among the words in the brackets the word which will make the sentence in Section B mean the same as that in Section A. Here is an example:

A

B

The flower is pretty. The flower is (dainty, fine, beautiful, pink).
Beautiful is underlined because it means nearly the same as 'pretty'.
Now do these:

A

B

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. My hat has three corners. | It is (round, square, oblong, triangular, straight). |
| 2. He left here at dawn. | Dawn is the same as (morning, sunset, sunrise, noon, morning). |
| 3. He planted the tree in the centre of the garden, means | The (end, front, middle, beginning, edge). |
| 4. The little man who sits at the gate is so old. | The little man is (needy, wealthy, penniless, aged and grey, sad and lonely). |

VI. Here are five passages and six headings lettered A, B, C, D, E, F.

Choose the heading that best fits each passage and put its letter in the bracket.

- Headings:
- (A) The gardener
 - (B) Bird-hunting
 - (C) Well-punished
 - (D) At the butcher's shop
 - (E) A blackout
 - (F) Morning duties

1. He was busy with saw, machete and knife while we stood by the counter looking at the scale and waiting to be served. _____
2. He ploughed the land, removed the large stones and packed them in heaps, but the weeds he put in a large hole. _____
3. Soon the room was in darkness. I could not see my way out. Father struck a match and lit a candle that was on the table. We could not do our homework as father said dim light would hurt our eyes. _____
4. Mr Brown carried a bag of shots and his long gun. I had my sling-shot. My dog, Rover, wagged his tail and barked with glee as we tramped over the hills. _____
5. She had not done her home duties that morning so her mother was cross with her when she returned home and gave her more work to do. _____

VII. Read the following:

Jim had a new bicycle that his father had given him on his birthday. Tom, who always wanted one, wished that Jim's bicycle was his. Pat was always ready for a fight, so he took the bicycle and rode it down the road. This made Jim angry and soon the two boys began to fight. John, seeing the fight, decided not to accompany his friends on the bike, and returned home where he finished reading *Treasure Island*. Soon after John left, a savage-looking man appeared out of the bushes and glared at the boys who escaped as fast as they could.



Now answer these questions:

1. Tom wished that Jim's new bicycle was his.

Underline the word that best describes Tom.

generous/envious/sorrowful/anxious

2. Pat was always ready for a fight.

Underline the word that describes Pat.

artful/pugnacious/cruel/courageous

3. Treasure Island is not a true story.

Underline the word that best describes *Treasure Island*.

humorous/fictitious/uninteresting/foolish/ historical

4. John decided not to accompany his friends on the bike.

One of these words describes his feelings about going out with his friends.

Underline it.

reluctant/impatient/ignorant/comfortable/proud

5. The savage-looking man glared at the boys.

Underline the phrase that best describes how he looked at them.

stared long/ glanced shyly/ gazed with interest/

peeped cautiously/ looked crossly

VIII. Read this passage:

Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank and having nothing to do; once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it. 'What is the use of a book,' thought Alice, 'without pictures or conversations?' So she was considering in her mind (as well as she could, for the hot day made her very sleepy and stupid) whether the pleasure of making a daisy chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies, when suddenly a white rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her.

The following questions are about what you have read. Underline in the brackets the correct answer to each in order to complete the sentences.

1. Alice thought that her sister's book was (interesting, attractive, dull, stupid, useless).
2. A daisy chain is made from (iron, steel, gold, flowers, pictures).
3. Alice could not think very clearly because (she wanted to make a daisy chain, the heat made her feel drowsy, she wanted to read a book with pictures).
4. Alice did not enjoy sitting on the bank any longer because (she preferred making daisy chains, she could see the words in her sister's book, she wanted to chase the rabbit, she was bored).



Chapter 6: Suggested procedure for developing a diagnostic reading achievement test

IX. Below are six titles. Each is marked with a number. You are also given five passages. Find the most suitable title for each passage from among those given and write its number in the bracket underneath the passage.

Here are the titles:

- 1 A nonsense verse
- 2 A stream's song
- 3 Lost voice
- 4 Rainstorm
- 5 I love to travel
- 6 Be polite

Here are the passages:

(a) I trickle
I flow to the hills below
And vales that lie far under
From babblings low I louder grow
I shout, I roar, I thunder.

(b) One day a funny kind of man
Came walking down the street,
He had a shoe upon his head
And hats upon his feet.
He raised his shoe and smiled at me
His manners were polite.
Never have I seen before
Such a funny-sounding sight.

(c) I bought some food for myself and some corn for my horse
at the price of a button and was told that I should see the River Niger
early the next day. The lions here are very many. The gates are shut
a little after sunset.

(d) All through the football match, Jones had been cheering his side.
Suddenly his shouts died down. Then he turned to Smith at his side
and whispered, 'My voice is all gone'. 'Don't worry', replied Smith,
'You'll find it in my right ear'.

(e) It works in me like madness, dear,
To bid me say good-bye,
For the sea calls, and the stars call,
And oh! The call of the sky!

X. Read the following passage carefully and then answer the questions below.

Birds were there in myriads – and such birds! Their feathers were gold and green and scarlet and yellow and blue. The great toucan with a beak nearly as big as his body flew clumsily from stem to stem. The tiny delicate hummingbirds, scarcely larger than bees, fluttered from flower to flower like points of brilliant green. But they were irritable little creatures and quarrelled with each other and fought like wasps. Green parquets swooped from tree to tree and chattered joyfully over their morning meal.



Underline the right answer from words in the brackets.

1. Which bird had a beak nearly as large as its body? (hummingbird, eagle, toucan, robin, paroquet)
2. What was the colour of the hummingbird? (gold, scarlet, green, yellow, blue)
3. In what way did the hummingbirds show that they were irritable?
They: (fluttered from flower to flower, swooped from tree to tree, were not at peace with one another, flew from stem to stem, darted from branch to branch).
4. Birds were there in myriads means that: (birds were big, they were few, they were numerous, they were so many that they could not be counted, they were large and plentiful).
5. Underline the word in the following list that does not describe the hummingbirds. (tiny, elicate, scarlet, irritable, fluttering)

Conclusion

The results of the diagnostic tests are then used to create and implement corrective treatments to reading difficulties for certain pupils. These results are also used to help strengthen or refine reading skills, by allowing the teacher to create an instruction that builds on the background knowledge of the pupils. The diagnostic results, used in conjunction with the results of the reading interest inventory, help guide teachers in concentrating on pupils' specific needs, while presenting the information in activities that appeal to the pupils.



APPENDIX: Interest inventory

What I like...

Tick the appropriate box for *yes* or *no*.

| | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Do you like to read? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Do you like to write? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Do you like to draw? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Do you like to sing? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Do you like to dance? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Do you like to tell jokes? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Do you like to tell stories? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Do you like to paint? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Do you like making or building things? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Do you like performing in front of people? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Do you like sports? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Do you like inventing things? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Do you like plants? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Do you like animals? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Do you like working on activities with other pupils? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. Do you like to be alone? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. Do you like to study? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. Do you like to listen to stories? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. Do you like to count things? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

The teacher should begin by explaining to the pupils the purpose of the reading inventory to find out their interests. Next, the teacher reads the directions on the inventory sheet. Make sure that all the children understand the directions before beginning the activity. Once the teacher is ready to begin, he or she reads each question aloud as the pupils read the question silently. Then the teacher allows time for them to mark their answers.

The next set of questions requires longer written responses. For older children, they may write in their answers in the blank spaces. For younger children, the teacher may ask these questions orally in the form of a discussion and can record the pupils' responses.



What I like...

- What do you like to do after school?
- What is your favourite animal?
- What is your favourite song?
- What do you want to be when you grow up?
- What do you like about school?
- What is your favourite class?
- What are you good at doing?
- What is your favourite colour?
- What do you want to learn in school?

Comments:

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