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# STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES USED IN HOME READING CLASSES

*This article gives the description to the strategies and how to use activities according to the strategies. According to the communicative methodology teachers can easily work with students as a facilitator give directions, advices etc.*

Language instructors are often frustrated by the fact that students do not automatically transfer the strategies they use when reading in their native language to reading in a language they are learning. Instead, they seem to think reading means starting at the beginning and going word by word, stopping to look up every unknown vocabulary item, until they reach the end. When they do this, students are relying exclusively on their linguistic knowledge, a bottom-up strategy. One of the most important functions of the language instructor, then, is to help students move past this idea and use top-down strategies as they do in their native language.

Effective language instructors show students how they can adjust their reading behavior to deal with a variety of situations, types of input, and reading purposes. They help students develop a set of reading strategies and match appropriate strategies to each reading situation.

Strategies can help students read more quickly and effectively include

Previewing: reviewing titles, section headings, and photo captions to get a sense of the structure and content of a reading selection.

Predicting: using knowledge of the subject matter to make predictions about content and vocabulary and check comprehension; using knowledge of the text type and purpose to make predictions about discourse structure; using knowledge about the author to make predictions about writing style, vocabulary, and content.

Skimming and scanning: using a quick survey of the text to get the main idea, identify text structure, confirm or question predictions.

Guessing from context: using prior knowledge of the subject and the ideas in the text as clues to the meanings of unknown words, instead of stopping to look them up.

Paraphrasing: stooping at the end of a section to check comprehension by restating the information and ideas in the text.

Instructors can help students learn when and how to use reading strategies in several ways. By modeling the strategies aloud, talking through the processes of previewing, predicting, skimming and scanning and paraphrasing. This shows students how the strategies work and how much they can know about a text before they begin to read word by word.

By allowing time in class for group and individual previewing and predicting activities as preparation for in-class or out-of-class reading. Allocating class time to these activities indicates their importance and value.

By using of fill in the blank Exercises to review vocabulary items. This helps students learn to guess meaning from the context.

By encouraging students to talk about what strategies they think will help them approach a reading assignment, and then talking after reading about what strategies they actually used. This helps students develop flexibility in their choice of strategies.

When language learners use reading strategies, they find that they can control the reading experience, and they gain confidence in their ability to read the language.

Reading is an essential part of language instruction at every level because it supports learning in multiple ways.

Reading material is language input. By giving students a variety of materials to read, instructors provide multiple opportunities for students to absorb vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, and discourse structure as they occur in authentic contexts.

Students thus gain a more complete picture of the ways in which the elements of the language work together to convey meaning.

Reading for content information: Students' purpose for reading in their native language is often to obtain information about a subject they are studying, and this purpose can be useful in the language learning classroom as well. Reading for content information in the language classroom gives students both authentic reading material and the authentic purpose for reading.

Reading for cultural knowledge and awareness: Reading everyday materials that are designed for native speakers can give students insight into the lifestyles and worldviews of the people whose language they are studying. When students have access to newspapers, magazines, and web sites, they are exposed to culture in all its variety, and monolithic cultural stereotypes begin to break down. When reading to learn, students need to follow four basic steps:

Figure out the purpose for reading .Activate background knowledge of the topic in order to predict or anticipate content and identify appropriate reading strategies.

Attend to the parts of the text that are relevant to the identified purpose and ignore the rest. This selectivity enables students to focus on specific items in the input and reduces the amount of information they have to hold in short- term memory.

Select strategies that are appropriate to the reading task and use them flexibly and interactively. Students' comprehension improves and their confidence increases when they use top-down and bottom-up skills simultaneously to construct meaning.

Check comprehension while reading and when the reading task is completed. Monitoring Comprehension helps students detect inconsistencies and comprehension failures, helping them learn to use alternate strategies.

Visual thinking is important in reading classes and it can be expressed in many ways. Graphic organizers are only way for visual thinkers to arrange their ideas.

There are unlimited ways to express these visual ideas. Graphic organizers have many names including visual maps, mind mapping , and visual organizers.

Although many students plan with paper and pencil, technology tools can be very helpful because they allow easy editing.

With the helping of graphic organizers, you can remove the words and focus on the connections. Second, they are great tool for activities that ask students clarity their thinking. Third, a huge amount of information can be shared on a single picture to provide the "big view" of a topic. Fourth, it is easy to edit, revise, and quickly add to a visual map. Fifth, graphic organizers can be used as a nice planning tool from information identification to product development. Finally, they are great for visual thinkers or those that need to practice their visual thinking.

Graphic organizers can be used in all phases of learning from brainstorming ideas to presenting findings .

They can be used individually or in large groups. For example, some teachers like to create a class concept map as a large group to review at the end of a unit or develop a character map while reading a book aloud to the class.

These tools are particularly useful in activities that require critical thinking skills.

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