



The Technology for Selecting Exercises for Teaching 7th Grade Texts Intended for Home Study

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ABSTRACT

Our article Reading Technology for Selecting Instructional Activities to Read Aloud to 7th-Grade Students at Home describes several methods that can be used in an activity-based classroom. One of the biggest challenges I faced as an experienced English teacher in the classroom was teaching motivational reading. Of course, there are pre and post-talks and various ways to make accompanying comprehension and vocabulary tasks more enjoyable, but reading itself is an inherently quiet and solitary task. In addition, we try to teach our 7th-Grade Students the standard skills, such as B. Skim, scan, predict, and infer and guess vocabulary meanings from context, practice, practice, practice. Such exercises, while useful and necessary, can feel slightly repetitive, redundant, and downright boring.

Keywords:

reading literacy, specifically designed, 7th grades students, interest, satisfaction, problem-solving

Authentic materials must be used in this activity. Although there is a wealth of quality teaching texts that focus on reading literacy, these materials were created to be accessible to learners and are therefore not authentic. This is not to say that such texts are not useful. They serve an important purpose in terms of providing accessible reading material and explicitly teaching reading literacy. However, they have their limits. The introduction of authentic materials into the classroom can serve as an extension or supplement to classroom texts. There are numerous benefits of using materials not specifically designed for learners, including increased interest and motivation. In a safe, controlled language learning environment, the learner encounters not the artificial language of the classroom but the real world and the language as it is used. Authentic materials provide a way for 7th

grades to encounter skills they need to apply when they leave the classroom. Authentic materials such as old receipts, tickets, brochures and notes lying around in most homes or classrooms also come in handy for classrooms that may not be well stocked with teaching materials. This task-based reading activity also allows 7th grades to negotiate their terms rather than being guided through each step by a teacher. In other words, 7th grades students acquire the language they need, when they need it to complete the task at hand. Such tasks not only promote authentic communication, but also lead to awareness-raising. As shown below, both phases of this activity support these goals. The first stage involves the more traditional completion of a worksheet as 7th grade students seek and discuss answers to the questions, while the second stage involves more of a problem-

solving strategy. As the seventh graders work in pairs, they offer each other support and negotiate answers. At the same time, they learn and notice the peculiarities of different types of texts on the side. As this is an assignment based activity, 7th graders are encouraged to focus on the meaning and function of the language rather than specific forms. This is important because when learners read in a non-native language, skills used when reading in the first language are often lost when reading in the second language. Even experienced readers tend to start from scratch when attempting to construct meaning in a language other than their own.

The questions that accompany my reading activity are designed to encourage top-down processing, both through the nature of the questions asked and, particularly in the second phase of the activity, by recreating a real-world scenario. The problem-solving task is designed to encourage 7th-Grade Students to use their L1 reading strategies instead of analyzing the text word by word.

This activity is also motivating. Reading, like many other skills, is best improved by using the skill frequently. And as with many other things in life, motivation is a key factor in how often you practice a particular skill. This also applies to reading, whether in one's native language or a new language. Motivation can be extrinsic (grades, fear of punishment) or intrinsic (interest, satisfaction, joy). Finally, this activity provides the extrinsic boost, is a classroom activity but also creates an environment for intrinsic motivation in a fun and interactive activity. In addition, motivation is fueled by success and a sense of ability. Using stations gives learners the freedom to make decisions and prepares them for greater success and a sense of accomplishment. The variety of questions in both activities allows 7th-Grade Students of different levels to solve all or most of the tasks. Finally, this activity is based on the use of stations. For my purposes, I define a station as a specific physical work area within a classroom. The work area could be limited by spatial separation, for example by individual desks or tables, each representing a separate station. Or, if this is not possible, all

the stations could be placed on one or two tables, with each station being sufficiently distant from the next to make them identifiable as separate. Working in train stations is somewhat common for 7th-Grade Students in the west, especially in elementary school. For example, if 7th-Grade Students are learning about animals, the teacher could set up stations, each containing a species of animal with a picture, some type of text, and possibly a task. The 7th-Grade Students move from station to station and get to know the different animals. Think of a museum.

The exhibitions are placed in different areas, and people move around the room to see the exhibitions, stopping briefly at some and staying long at others. The purpose of using stations is that the materials don't move, the 7th-Grade Students do. This keeps the materials organized, forces 7th-Grade Students to move around, and allows them to choose the order in which they want to do things. According to Diller, such stations provide hands-on learning that engages 7th-Grade Students while encouraging autonomy as learners are required to make their own decisions. Freedom of choice increases engagement and motivation; In addition, physical exercise is a sure way to activate the brain. And on a more basic level, workstations offer 7th-Grade Students a break from the usual routine of sitting at desks, eyes, and ears on the teacher or the text. Also, because work is done in teams, there are more opportunities for collaboration and authentic communication while learners negotiate the task and know how best to accomplish it.

Task-Based Reading Activity: This activity takes place in two separate phases. In the first phase, a worksheet is filled out and answers to questions are discussed, while in the second phase, the 7th graders solve problem-solving tasks. **Task 1: Procedure.** In the class I originally designed this activity for, I had 16 seventh years, so I created nine stations and divided the seventh years into eight groups; I had an extra station for flexibility and timing. I later made a simple adjustment to accommodate larger groups. When

demonstrating this activity to a group of 60 teachers, I divided them into large groups and set up 12 stations; The group members took turns going to the stations and reporting to their larger groups. For my nine stations I have collected nine varied texts: a travel guide, a novel, a menu, a museum brochure, a map, a newspaper, a grammar book, instructions from a deck of cards and a copy of the English Teaching Forum. I placed these on the tables in the classroom and labeled tables 1 through 9.

An alternative would be to post a series of questions at each station and have the 7th grade students write the answers in their notebooks to avoid as many photocopies as possible. Questions 1 through 6 were common to all stations and included general questions about the nature of the text and its purpose, the intended audience, and whether Year 7 students would like to read the text. Questions 7 and 8 were detailed or concluding questions about the material. At the beginning of the lesson, I gathered the 7th grade students, distributed the worksheets, and gave directions for the assignment. The seventh grade students began at any station and filled in the appropriate questions related to the appropriate text. I didn't set a time limit and the 7th graders could visit any station in any order. They were encouraged to try to answer any questions, but were allowed to continue or ask for help if they got stuck.

Long Read Another use for this activity is to provide long read options to a class. Rather than just looking at the book covers and half-heartedly skimming the synopsis, readers would have to weigh their options more carefully and make decisions about their reading, which would result in a greater chance that they would read and complete the books they chose.

Task 2: Approach for task 2 of the activity, I took the materials from Stage 1 and supplemented them with similar types of text (other novels, grammar books, maps, pamphlets, and game rules from websites). I created two substations on opposite sides of the room and filled them with loosely grouped text. Each substation had a specific scenario. Scenario #1 involved an English teacher who

wanted to develop and improve professionally (since most of my 7th-Grade Students were future English teachers) and corresponded to a substation equipped with teaching materials and related information. Scenario #2 involved a woman preparing to travel abroad, so this substation contained travel guides, maps, brochures, and the like. I created this scenario based on my 7th-Grade Students' interest in travel. For both scenarios, irrelevant texts were mixed with relevant ones.

Again, the 7th-Grade Students grouped together and then decided which scenario was more attractive to them (fortunately, I got a fairly even distribution). Those who chose Scenario #1 were asked to take a question from an envelope taped to the wall, go to Substation #1 and find the best materials to answer the question, and write down their answers. When they were done, they put the question back in the envelope and picked up a new question. Those who chose Scenario 2 did the same with the other questions in the second envelope, using Substation 2 materials. This part of the activity served as a relay to keep the 7th-Grade Students moving and just focused on the task at hand.

Conclusion:

Our article Reading Technology for Choosing Lesson Activities to Read to 7th-Grade Students at Home describes several methods to use in an activity-based classroom. Types of text and tasks intended for reading can be controlled in a variety of ways for many purposes and levels of difficulty. What remains constant is that the strategy encourages 7th-Grade Students to explore, make their own decisions, and think critically while transforming their physical space. The result will be an active, interesting, and effective reading session

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