

MINNESOTA WRITING PROJECT
DEMONSTRATION LESSON

Title: Successful Reading Strategies for ELL students

Grade appropriate: 6-12th grade

Length of lesson: 75 minutes (Strategy #2 or #3 would be homework)

Objectives to be covered: Improve reading comprehension through predicting, connecting with text and summarizing.

Specific standards addressed: Predicting, Summarizing

Brief summary/outline:

This is a lesson that is used close to the end of the book *Seedfolks*, by Paul Fleishman. Before this lesson students would have looked at the cover and back of the book, made some predictions based on the pictures and completed an anticipation guide. I would have taught each of the following strategies one at a time and practiced them (as a group, in pairs and individually) using various chapters throughout the book. Students would also be working on other reading strategies, primarily vocabulary building, using context clues, skimming and re-reading.

Below is a sample of a before, during and post-reading strategy that worked well with level 3 ELL students.

1. Probable passage - pick out 10 important words from a chapter. The words should include characters, setting, problem, outcome and some unknown (important) words. Have students place the words in the appropriate boxes. (See p. 87 in "When Kids Can't Read", by Kylee Beers) Go over their choices on an overhead together. Students can move words and some words may be in 2 boxes. Have students help define unknown words, if possible. Finally, have students write a gist statement using as many of the 10 words as possible. Students share their statement with a partner and ask a few students to share their statements with the whole class. This gives students some idea of what might happen in the chapter and allows them to correct their "gist statements" after reading the chapter. It increases students' interest in the text.
2. Double Journal Entry (text to self connections) - while reading the chapter, students will make a t-chart and write down at least 3 quotes from the chapter that resonate with them and write their response/comment next to it. Students will

share in pairs and groups of four. Ask if some students would be willing to share with the class. (Beers, p. 127)

3. Somebody Wanted But So - after finishing the chapter the students do a summary using the SWBS strategy. Students write somebody - wanted - but - so at the top of their page. They then pick out words to put under each of those topics, thereby creating a summary. Then they use the words to write complete sentences about what happened in the chapter. This really helped to focus the ELL students who had great difficulty picking out the main ideas/important events in a chapter. (Beers, p. 144)

Resources:

Beers, Kylene. *When Kids Can't Read. What Teachers Can Do*. Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH. 2003.