
ENJOYING LITERATURE WITH TEENS

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SUMMARY

- Materials selection
- The Approach
- Pre-reading activities
- While reading activities
- Post-reading activities
- References

MATERIALS SELECTION

The texts selected are:

short

often have audio support (downloadable mp3's)

can be read on screen

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/resources/secondary/stories-poems>

THE APPROACH

- The focus is on WHAT LANGUAGE CAN DO not on literary analysis
- The text is a stepping-stone for the learners to develop responses
- Activities based on the text are provided aiming at language awareness as well as cultural awareness
- The approach is intertextual and intercultural, aiming at a fluid dialogue between:
 - each reader and the text (encouraging personal response and interpretation)
 - each reader and other readers (through group activities such as debates and collaborative tasks)
 - the text and other texts (by presenting intertexts which are related thematically and suggesting further reading)
 - the culture(s) represented in the text and the learners' culture(s) (by encouraging reflection on the customs and values presented in the texts and those of the readers)

THE APPROACH

- The approach integrates four macroskills (reading, writing, listening and speaking)
- The approach encourages **CRITICAL THINKING AND CULTURAL AWARENESS**
- The approach encourages textual intervention (activities that invite students to adapt the text, change it and extend it creatively):
 - Writing a missing scene
 - Changing the point of view
 - Imagining a character's thoughts
 - Dramatising what is told, narrating what is communicates through dialogue
 - Illustrating
 - Trying the “what if?” question and so changing the story as crucial points
 - Changing the ending

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

- An essential component
- Meant to motivate readers to **read for pleasure**
- Consists of:
 - 1. **prediction activities** (such as anticipating what the story will be about by reading the title or a few opening lines)
 - 2. **contextualization activities** aimed at activating students schemata (their knowledge of the world, their preconceptions) and so challenge stereotypes and facilitate an open-minded encounter diversity)

WHILE READING ACTIVITIES

- These are step-by-step activities to help students in their reading of an authentic text
(EXAMPLE, *EMERGENCY LANDING* by LOUISE COOPER, p. 29):
 - work on the title and activate schemata on planes and emergency landing procedures
 - context section (checking comprehension and predicting how the story will go on encouraging textual intervention)
 - EXAMPLES, p. 30

POST READING ACTIVITIES

- Changing the ending (it's up to the teacher and the students to decide how much work to do on a particular story)
- Teachers should avoid “killing” a story by using it too much as an excuse for language practice
- IF THE PLEASURE OF READING IS TO BE NOURISHED, LITERARY TEXTS IN THE CLASSROOM SHOULD BE MORE THAN PURELY INSTRUMENTAL PASSAGES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING
- *Tasks and projects focusing on content, cultural issues, values, exemplify the usefulness and versatility of language to express meanings, to invite us to use our imagination to build the world of the text anew in our minds – and it is probably awareness of that power that is the single most effective motivation to learn a language.*

REFERENCES

- BritLit: Using Literature in EFL Classroom: *E Book* (2009). London: British Council
- Brumfit, C. J. & Carter R. A. (1985) *Literature and language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press