

ESL Developmental Continuum P–10

Teaching strategy – After reading activities – Factual texts

Focuses on

Speaking Listening **Reading** Writing

Most useful for students at stages

A1 A2 BL B1 **B2 B3** SL **S1 S2 S3 S4**

Purpose of this activity

After reading activities are used to help ESL students to think about and respond to texts they have read. They support students to consider what they have read and are used to help students organise and record information which they might use for other language and literacy related activities such as presentations or writing texts.

How this helps ESL students in particular

After reading activities:

- help students to locate and record relevant information
- support students to make connections with what they know and between texts
- provide a framework for summarising key ideas within a text
- support students to make inferences and generalisations
- help students to substantiate or reconsider their own ideas.

After reading activities to use with ESL students – Factual texts

Key words

Key ideas are usually represented through the content words in a text, that is, the noun groups, verb groups and adverbials.

After reading a text, highlight the key words in a text. Begin with a small section of the text or even a sentence to model the process to the students. Explain why you have highlighted the words you have. Ask students to complete the same task on another section of the text. Ask them to share their choices and reasons with a partner or the group.

Identifying text features

The purpose of a text and its intended audience impacts on the language structures and features of the text. After reading a text, ask students what they think the purpose of the text was and for whom it was written. Go through the text and look for evidence to support their ideas. For example:

- look at the features of the layout such as visuals, heading, sub-headings
- identify words or groups of words that might suggest that the text is written to appeal to young children, adults, boys or girls, teenagers etc.

Bundling

- After reading, ask students to write down a set number of pieces of information that they now know about the topic, e.g. five or six sentences.
- Write each sentence on one strip of paper or cardboard. When they have finished, students work in small groups to share their sentences.
- Students take turns reading what they have written. If more than one student has written a similar sentence, they must decide which one to keep.
- Once all of the sentences have been read and selected, the group organises the sentences in categories, or in a logical sequence. The group may then add other sentences to fill in any missing gaps.

Data charts

Create a chart using headings or questions that guide the students to look for particular information within one or more texts. Students record information in the chart using key words or extended notes. The information in the chart can then be used to write a text.

	Description	Habitat	Behaviour	Food
tigers				

Flow charts

Flow charts are useful for factual texts which have a sequential element to their structure, for example, explanations or procedures.

- Identify main ideas, steps or stages and record using pictures, words or sentences.
- Use arrows to show the progression or links between the steps or stages.

Three level guide

The three level guide supports the development of literal, inferential and applied comprehension (Morris & Stewart-Dore, 1984).

Students read a series of statements targeted at each level of comprehension to determine their relevance to the text:

- Level 1 statements focus on literal comprehension and require the reader to find the information directly in the text.
- Level 2 statements focus on the author's intended meaning and require the reader to interpret and draw inferences from the text.
- Level 3 statements challenge the reader to read beyond the text and to consider the underlying issues and their implications.

In developing a series of statements for a text:

- First write applied statements (Level 3) to reflect the main ideas and concepts which form the focus of the text and the task.
- Next, write literal statements (Level 1) to support the reader to locate relevant information in the text.
- Finally, write interpretive statements (Level 2) to guide the students to interpret the author's ideas.

Students read the statements and identify which ones are relevant to the text. They then discuss their responses with other members of the group to reach a consensus, providing evidence from the text to support their ideas.

Acknowledgments/reference

Education Department of Western Australia (2004). *Reading: Resource Book, 2nd ed.* Port Melbourne: Rigby Heinemann

Morris, A. & Stewart-Dore, N. (1990). *Learning to Learn from Text: Effective Reading in the Content Areas.* North Ryde, NSW: Addison-Wesley.