

## ESL Developmental Continuum P–10

### Teaching strategy – After reading – Fiction

#### 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 – Fiction texts

#### Retelling

Retelling a text can be done in various ways. When retelling, students can be guided to use the language features of the text as a means of recycling language.

- **Oral retelling:** After reading a text, students retell what happened in the text orally to a partner or in a small group.
  - Pictures can be provided as a prompt to help them sequence the main events.
  - Key words and structures can also be provided to help sequence the events, for example, First..., then,..., after that..., or to support the use of a particular language feature, for example past tense: went, looked for, saw etc.
- **Visual:** Students draw their own pictures to represent the key elements of the text and use these to support their retelling.

- **Written:** Retell the main ideas of the text:
  - Students write sentences to retell the main ideas of the text or dictate sentences for the teacher to write. These can be reviewed so that sentences can be added or deleted to provide a concise retell of the text.
  - Alternatively, students can be given a written retelling of the text which has been jumbled. Students reorganise the sentences or paragraphs to retell the story.
- **Writing frames:** Provide a series of sentence beginnings for the students to complete. For example:
  - This story is about ...
  - The main characters are ...
  - A problem occurs when ...
  - The problem is resolved when ...

Students can write or draw responses to complete the prompts.

### Story map

Students draw a map which represents the setting and events which involve the key characters. Labels, arrows, phrases can also be used to help follow the story map. The map can be used to support a retelling of the text.

### Character Analysis

Descriptions of characters are usually conveyed through adjectives, but verb groups and adverbials also provide some insight into characters because they tell something about what a character does and how the character acts.

- Identify the main characters in the text.
- Individually or in pairs, students write words on cards which:
  - describe the characters (adjectives)
  - relate what the characters do (verb groups)
  - describe how the characters act (adverbials).
- Alternatively, students can focus on one character.
- Use different coloured cards for each group of words. It would also be useful to limit the number of words students are to write about each character.
- Working in a small group of four or six, students contribute their lists of words to the group.
- The students then sort the cards and place them on a chart for each character (or for the one character if this option has been given). As they sort the cards, the students need to discuss and justify which words are best suited to the character.

The chart can then be used as reference for a written description of the character if needed.

### 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, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.