

Week 2 Reading Homework (due Week 3)

Task:

Read the attached text and complete a 1-page summary with your reflections.

The summary should include a list of key points and a section with your reflections.

Reflections can include:

- your examples, such as activities or materials you have used in your teaching
- thoughts or opinions related to the content of the text
- how it will affect your future teaching

Example of a 1-page summary with reflections:



Submission guidelines:

- Create a new text document for your answers
- Include your name and student number
- Use 12 point Arial font, single spaced
- Try to keep your answers to about one A4 page
- Save the file as a .doc or .pdf file before you submit - don't submit Hangul .hwp files
- **Submit your file using Edmodo.** Log in and go to our class page. Click 'Turn in' on the correct assignment post, click the small square file button (📎), upload your file, finally click the blue 'Turn in Assignment' button.

Part 1: Methodology

Chapter 1: Storytelling, an introduction

The development of storytelling

The educational value of using storybooks (also referred to as realbooks and picturebooks) and the technique of storytelling has rarely been disputed. However, when the first edition of this book was published in 1991 there was some resistance among teachers to using stories in the primary English language teaching classroom. This was for a variety of reasons:

- a lack of confidence in their ability to tell stories or read storybooks aloud
- a feeling that the language in storybooks was too difficult
- a feeling that the content of storybooks was sometimes too childish
- a lack of understanding about the true value of using storybooks
- a lack of understanding of how to use storybooks and of time to prepare a plan of work.

A number of developments have subsequently helped overcome some of this resistance.

1. Experience, expertise and support

Primary English language teachers are now more familiar with an acquisition-based methodology, and recognise the true value of using storybooks and the technique of storytelling as a way to create an acquisition-rich environment and ideal learning conditions. Hester (1983), Garvie (1990), Ellis and Brewster (1991, 2002), Cameron (2001), Ghosn (2002, 2013), Enever and Schmid-Schönbein (2006), Read (2007), Dunn (2012) and Bland (2013) write about the benefits of using stories with children. Consequently, many ELT coursebooks for children now contain a strong story element. There have also been a number of handbooks for teachers that deal solely with this technique – notably Wright (1995, 1997), Zaro and Salaberri (1995), Gerngross and Puchta (1996) and Mourão (2003). In addition, magazines and newsletters for teachers have been devoted to storytelling and children's literature and there are numerous websites and blogs to consult. See page 204 for references and further reading. Primary English language teaching has witnessed an accumulating bank of attractive resources representing a wealth of experience, expertise, teacher support and growing confidence in the use of storybooks.

2. The globalisation of English

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world and classroom practices reflect a greater emphasis on 'world Englishes'. Carefully selected stories from the rich world of children's literature provide a ceaseless source of material to expose children to varieties of English as spoken around the world and to discover other cultures.

3. Variety of intelligences

Each child is a unique learner and there has been a growing awareness of the need to take into account the different types of 'intelligences' (Gardner 1993), including emotional intelligence, that manifest themselves in different ways in each child. Consequently, teaching approaches and materials need to cater for a range of intelligences. The richness of storybooks in terms of their content and illustrations and the variety of activities suggested in the story notes, allow the teacher to cater for all learner types and intelligences and to make learning experiences meaningful for each child.

Reasons for using storybooks

Children enjoy listening to stories in their mother tongue and are familiar with narrative conventions. For example, as soon as they hear the formula *Once upon a time...* they can make predictions about what to expect next. For this reason, storybooks can provide an ideal introduction to the foreign language as they present language in a repetitive and memorable context. Storybooks can also provide the starting point or act as a springboard for a wide variety of related language and learning activities, which are described in the accompanying notes. Below are some further reasons why teachers use storybooks.

- Stories are motivating, challenging and enjoyable and can help develop positive attitudes towards the foreign language, culture and language learning.
- Stories exercise the imagination. Children can become personally involved in a story as they identify with the characters and try to interpret the narrative and illustrations. This imaginative experience helps develop their own creative powers.

- Stories are a useful tool in linking fantasy and the imagination with the child's real world. They provide a way of enabling children to make sense of their everyday life and forge links between home and school.
- Listening to stories in class is a shared social experience. Storytelling provokes a shared response of laughter, sadness, excitement and anticipation which is not only enjoyable but can help build up the child's confidence and encourage social and emotional development.
- Children enjoy listening to stories over and over again. This frequent repetition allows certain language items to be acquired while others are being overtly reinforced. Many stories contain natural repetition of key vocabulary and structures. This helps children to remember every detail, so they can gradually learn to anticipate what is about to happen next in the story. Repetition also encourages participation in the narrative, thereby providing a type of pattern practice in a meaningful context.
- Listening to stories allows the teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures by exposing the children to language in varied, memorable and familiar contexts, which will enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech.
- Listening to stories helps children become aware of the rhythm, intonation and pronunciation of language.
- Storybooks cater for individual interests and diverse learning needs by allowing children to respond at their own linguistic or cognitive level.
- Storybooks cater for different learner types and intelligences and make learning meaningful for each child.
- Storybooks reflect environments and the culture of their authors and illustrators, thereby providing ideal opportunities for presenting cultural information and encouraging intercultural understanding.
- Storybooks develop children's learning strategies such as listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesising. In particular, they can develop the child's listening skills and concentration via:
 - a. visual clues (high-quality pictures and illustrations that support children's understanding)
 - b. audio clues (sound effects, onomatopoeia)
 - c. their prior knowledge of how language works
 - d. their prior knowledge of the world.
- Storybooks address universal themes that go beyond the 'utilitarian level of basic dialogues and mundane daily activities' (Ghosn op cit: 175). They allow children to play with ideas and feelings and to think about issues that are important and relevant to them.
- Storybooks allow the teacher to use an acquisition-based methodology by providing optimal input (Krashen 1981: 103) – language input that is slightly above the level they are expected to produce.
- Stories provide opportunities for developing continuity in children's learning since they can be chosen to link English with other subject areas across the curriculum.
- Storybooks add variety and provide a springboard for creating complete units of work that constitute mini syllabuses and involve pupils personally, creatively and actively in an all-round whole curriculum approach. They thereby provide a novel alternative to the coursebook.
- Learning English through stories can lay the foundations for secondary school in terms of learning basic language functions and structures, vocabulary and language-learning skills.

Storybooks and learning

There are four main ways in which stories can add to a whole-school approach to learning and general education:

1. Cross-curricular links

Carefully selected stories can be used to develop other subjects in the curriculum:

- **Maths:** time, numbers (counting and quantity, addition and subtraction), measuring
- **Science:** the life cycle of insects, animals, skeletons
- **Art and Design:** making a box, making books
- **Computing:** using technology safely and respectfully, using technology purposefully to create, organise, store and retrieve information
- **Design and Technology:** drawing, making masks, hats, cards, collages, puppets
- **Geography and the Environment:** using a map, using an atlas, different shopping places, conservation
- **History:** prehistoric animals, understanding chronology/the passing of time

- **Music and Drama:** singing songs, playing instruments, role play, miming, acting out stories and variations the children make up
- **Physical Education:** moving like different animals, moving to music.

2. Learning to learn

Stories are a means of developing children's potential as autonomous learners. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. Learning how to learn in the context of storytelling involves:

- developing an awareness of learning and reinforcing strategies such as planning, hypothesising, self-assessment, reviewing
- developing specific strategies for learning English, for example, guessing the meaning of new words, training the memory, self-testing, predicting
- developing study skills, for example, making, understanding and interpreting charts and graphs, learning to use and making dictionaries, organising work.

Throughout the story notes you will find many interesting examples of language-learning activities that develop learning strategies.

3. Conceptual reinforcement

Stories can be used to reinforce conceptual development in children, for example, colour, size, shape, time, cause and effect. For example, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear...* reinforces the concept of colours, *Princess Smartypants* can be used to develop ideas of cause and effect, problems and solutions.

4. Citizenship, diversity and multicultural education

Helping to teach the notion of citizenship and multicultural education and to raise awareness of diversity includes developing intercultural awareness, understanding rights and responsibilities, promoting equal opportunities and developing attitudes and values of democracy and harmony.

Carefully selected storybooks provide a very rich resource for teaching this notion. There are two types of storybooks. The first, is where a citizenship and diversity focus is explicit through the story content. For example, *Something Else* makes important points about sameness and difference and develops tolerance, understanding and acceptance of others. *Princess Smartypants* raises questions about stereotypes, sexism and the role of girls and women in society. Stories from other cultures, such as *The Kangaroo from Woolloomooloo* and *The Clever*

Tortoise show both how cultures are different (e.g. exotic animals and musical instruments) and have similar characteristics (e.g. stories about animal trickery). The second type is where a diversity focus is implicit as it can be imported and linked to the story content. For example, *Jim and the Beanstalk* can be used to help develop awareness of old age. See Ellis (2010) for other storybooks and story notes that can be used to raise awareness of diversity.

Storybooks and diversity in the classroom

For any teacher of any subject, classes of children with diverse learning needs are a day-to-day reality. In addition, in the primary English language classroom, teachers are often likely to have children with varying levels of English. Working effectively with diversity is an essential part of a teacher's role and requires positively responding to the learning needs of all learners in order to maximise individual achievement. Teachers, therefore, need a range of teaching strategies in order to create an inclusive learning environment to meet the needs of all children.

Storybooks offer an ideal resource for meeting diverse learning needs. They are appealing and all children will be able to understand the overall meaning of a story with the support of the teacher's storytelling techniques and the book illustrations which give clues to meaning. Each child can then respond according to their own linguistic level and cognitive ability. For further information on creating an inclusive learning environment see Chapter 5.