

LEARNING TO READ CRITICALLY THROUGH WRITING:

A Guide for Teachers using Literature in the EFL Class.

Yuranny Marcela Romero-Archila - Nancy Esperanza Barón-Pereira



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Universidad Pedagógica y
Tecnológica de Colombia

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ENFOQUE: FORMACIÓN
ÁREA OCDE: IDIOMAS Y LITERATURA
Disciplina: Idiomas específicos
Colección N° 103

Aprender a Leer Críticamente a través de la Escritura: Una guía para Profesores que Integran la Literatura en la Clase de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera.
Learning to Read Critically through Writing: A guide for Teachers using Literature in the EFL Class

Primera Edición, 2025
Impresión bajo demanda (POD)
Versión digital (ePub)

© Yuranny Marcela Romero Archila, 2025
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ISBN (POD) 978-628-7863-10-1
ISBN (ePub) 978-628-7863-11-8

Proceso arbitraje doble ciego
Recepción: julio de 2024
Aprobación: diciembre de 2024

Impreso y hecho en Colombia - Printed and made in Colombia

Aprender a Leer Críticamente a través de la Escritura: Una guía para Profesores que integran la Literatura en la clase de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera/ Learning to Read Critically through Writing: A guide for Teachers using Literature in the EFL Class / Romero Archila, Yuranny Marcela; Barón Pereira, Nancy Esperanza Tunja: Editorial UPTC, 2025. 118 p.

ISBN (POD) 978-628-7863-10-1
ISBN (ePub) 978-628-7863-11-8

Incluye referencias bibliográficas.

1. Critical reading. 2. children's literature. 3. reading and writing processes. 4. Strategies. 5. Reflection..

(Dewey 370/21) (THEMA CJ- enseñanza y aprendizaje de lenguas)

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Romero Archila, Y. M. & Barón Pereira, N. E. (2025). *Learning to Read Critically through Writing: A guide for Teachers using Literature in the EFL Class*. Editorial UPTC.

doi.org/10.19053/uptc.9786287863101



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Acknowledgments

We would like to express our acknowledgements to Professor Laura Carreño and the professors from Unisabana for their support and guidance during the initial phase of this book. Their insights, expertise, and encouragement played a fundamental role in shaping the vision and structure of our work. Their dedication to academic excellence and their willingness to share knowledge have been a source of inspiration throughout the process.

We would also like to express our deepest gratitude to all the team at Editorial UPTC. This book would not have reached its current form without their thoughtful contributions and constructive feedback. Finally, we would love to thank Harold Ortegón for his dedication and patience in designing the main images of our text.

Abstract

In contemporary education, fostering critical reading has become crucial as it encourages reflective processes where students construct and articulate their own perspectives in dialogue with those from others. Accordingly, this book aims to provide EFL teachers with a set of strategies, activities, and worksheets, systematically grounded in theory to support their practice. The guided comprehension model, a teaching framework proposed by McLaughlin & Allen (2009), was adopted to provide a clear structure for teaching reading strategies through five progressive stages: explain, demonstrate, guide, practice, and reflect. The book is organized into five units, each focusing on a reading strategy: summarizing and paraphrasing, distinguishing facts from opinions, questioning, juxtaposing ideas, and examining personal responses. Each unit comprises three lessons, structured through worksheets: an introductory lesson, a lesson for guided instruction and review, and a final lesson focused on practice. After completing the lessons, students are allowed to evaluate their progress through formative assessment activities. Finally, the worksheets provide a space for self-reflection, where students can write entries in their reflective journals. These entries encourage them to examine what they have learned regarding both the strategy and the content, reflect on their emotional responses during the lessons, identify strengths and challenges, and propose actions for further learning development.

This book contributes to the field of English language teaching as it engages with children's literature, articulating theory and practice with the aim of supporting your students' process of becoming more critical and reflective readers.

Keywords: critical reading, children's literature, strategies, reading and writing processes, reflection

Resumen

En la educación contemporánea, fomentar la lectura crítica se ha vuelto fundamental, ya que a través de esta se promueven procesos reflexivos en los que los estudiantes construyen y articulan sus propias perspectivas en diálogo con las de los demás. Este libro tiene como objetivo proporcionar a los profesores de inglés como lengua extranjera un conjunto de estrategias, actividades y talleres, sistemáticamente basadas en la teoría, para guiarlos en su aplicación. El modelo de comprensión guiada, un enfoque pedagógico propuesto por McLaughlin y Allen (2009), se incorpora con el propósito de ofrecer una estructura clara para la enseñanza de estrategias de lectura mediante cinco etapas progresivas: explicar, demostrar, guiar, practicar y reflexionar. El libro se divide en cinco unidades, cada una aborda una estrategia específica (resumir y parafrasear; hechos u opiniones; cuestionar; yuxtaponer; examinar respuestas personales) y se compone de tres lecciones diferentes enfocadas al desarrollo de talleres: una lección introductoria, una lección de instrucción guiada y repaso, y una lección final centrada en la práctica. Al término de cada unidad, se incluyen actividades de evaluación formativa que permiten a los estudiantes valorar su progreso. Finalmente, los talleres ofrecen espacio para la autorreflexión. Estas entradas les invitan a analizar lo aprendido en cuanto a estrategia y contenido, reflexionar con respecto sus respuestas emocionales durante las lecciones, reconocer sus fortalezas y dificultades, y plantear acciones para seguir avanzando en su aprendizaje.

Este libro contribuye al campo de la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera, en tanto que se acerca a la literatura infantil, articulando teoría y práctica con el fin de apoyar el proceso de tus estudiantes para convertirse en lectores más críticos y reflexivos.

Palabras clave: lectura crítica, literatura infantil, estrategias, procesos de lectura y escritura, reflexión

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Introduction

Have your students ever finished reading a text without fully understanding the author's message? Or asked themselves what underlying meanings the text communicates? These challenges are common among our students, which led us to develop this book as a resource providing a structured sequence of steps and procedures to support deeper reading comprehension. First of all, it is essential to provide some definitions to enlighten the connection between theory and practice in this document. Beatty (2009) states that "*reading is a lifetime skill*" (p. 1), which emphasizes the role of reading as an integral part of daily life that extends beyond the simple decoding of written symbols to construct meaning. Readers apply several strategies to figure out what a text means. Following this assertion, Mikulecky (2008) defines reading as:

A conscious and unconscious thinking process. The reader applies many strategies to reconstruct meaning that the author is assumed to have intended. The reader does this by comparing information in the text to his or her background knowledge and prior experience (p.2).

Additional definitions focus on the characterization of different elements involved in the process of reading and writing, analyzing the latter as the first stage where meanings are created. One of these concepts has been provided by Israel and Duffy (2009) who argue "reading comprehension is a set of knowledge that reflects the communicative interactions among the intentions of the author/speaker, content of the text/message, abilities and purposes of the reader/listener, and the context/situation of the interaction." (as cited in Nampaktai et al., 2013, p.35).

These definitions are particularly relevant in foreign language contexts, where reading becomes even more complex. Learners are required not only to comprehend the literal meaning of words but also to interpret the text by considering the author's intent, their own perspective as readers, and broader contextual factors that influence meaning-making. Brown (2001, p. 299) "readers must, through a puzzle-solving process, infer meanings, decide what to retain and not to retain, and move

on.” Considering this explanation of what readers are required to do, it becomes clear the necessity for them to develop diverse reading skills when reading critically.

Building on this idea, Duke and Pearson (2002) assert that good readers are not passive recipients of information; instead, they actively engage with each text by taking notes, selecting what to read, summarizing, revising, evaluating, and questioning truth both during and after the reading process. These behaviors align with the goals of critical reading, which encourage interpretation and reflection.

Concerning reading comprehension, Yang (2002) defines it as an ability that “involves an active, dynamic and growing process of searching for interrelationships in a text” (p. 1). This perspective reinforces the idea that readers must go beyond merely decoding messages and adopt a transactional approach, moving away from a transmission model of reading. On the same line of thought, Fountas & Pinnell (as cited in Mickelson, 2018, p. 1) propose the actions readers must undertake to accurately read a text, moving from understanding words to making connections and critically analyzing the information by developing pre-reading, during-reading and post-reading strategies, in a hierarchical order similar to Bloom’s taxonomy.

Additional author’s concepts approach reading comprehension, analyzing what it enables students to do in their contexts. For instance, Tankersley (2005) proposes that when students go beyond the comprehension level, they:

can analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and interpret the text they are reading at complex levels. They can process text at deep levels, make judgments, and detect shades of meaning. They can make critical interpretations and demonstrate high levels of insight and sophistication in their thinking. They are able to make inferences, draw relevant and insightful conclusions, use their knowledge in new situations, and relate their thinking to other situations and to their own background knowledge (p. 71).

It is paramount to note the parallel connection between higher levels of reading comprehension and critical reading, which is defined as “an individual’s justifying, questioning and analyzing what is read before reaching a conclusion” (Eskimen, 2018, p. 1892). Both processes require people to develop higher-level thinking skills, a challenging purpose for a vast number of students in our society. The aforementioned dissertation matches the definition provided by Kurland, who states that “critical reading refers to a careful, active, reflective and analytic reading” (as cited in Talebi & Talebi, 2015, p. 1180). Delving into this concept, active, reflective, and analytic reading refers to the articulations readers create between the knowledges and lessons they

explore through reading and their experiences in real life. On the same matter, Richards & Schmidt (2002) define critical reading as:

reading in which the reader reacts critically to what he or she is reading, through relating the content of the reading material to personal standards, values, attitudes, or beliefs, i.e. going beyond what is given in the text and critically evaluating the relevance and value of what is read (p. 134).

Based on the authors' approach, reading critically requires readers to evaluate and question the validity and the source of the information in the text. This enterprise supports the idea that reading cannot be seen as an isolated skill; to be purposeful and meaningful, it must relate to other abilities. Consistent with this view, Grellet (2008) asserts that "reading comprehension should not be separated from the other skills" (p. 8). Based on our experience, we have observed a strong interconnection between reading and writing. As noted by Zemliansky (2008) these skills function as active processes through which new knowledge is constructed. Therefore, it is essential to briefly examine the concepts of writing to learn and writing to read.

Sedita (2013) makes a distinction between learning to write and writing to learn. The former is related to knowing how to write, while the latter is concerned with using writing as an instrument for learning something additional. Similarly, Graham and Hebert (2010) emphasize that "writing can be a vehicle for improving reading" (p. 6). Under this idea, known as writing to read, argues that when students write about what they read, their comprehension deepens. Nevertheless, writing not only aids in summarizing stories but also fosters deep reflection about them. Through writing, readers can develop efficient practices to enhance understanding, such as connecting new information with prior knowledge and personal experiences, posing and answering questions, and reflecting on meaning.

In this sense, *writing to read* aligns closely with the principles of critical reading, as it engages learners in techniques that require developing more complex cognitive processes, including summarizing, inferring, and questioning. These practices are beneficial to explore beyond surface-level comprehension and foster deeper analytical thinking and consistent reflection. While writing, readers actively think about information; they organize it and interpret it in their own words. Simultaneously, they are pushed to assess or judge the text's accuracy, logic, and relevance. Further stages of critical thinking would require them to question the author's positioning, considering the reason for specific ideas to be included or excluded from the narrative. The previously mentioned processes consolidate as these writers propose informed conclusions in their texts.

Justification

In a column published in *El Tiempo*, Vélez-Gutiérrez (2018) remarks on the urgent need to cultivate critical thinking across all educational levels in Colombia. He strongly critiques the country's polarized political landscape, noting that both left-wing and right-wing groups have a particular interest in preserving an education system that discourages independent thought, as it preserves a population of uncritical followers, who fail to question, challenge, and propose on the government's decisions. To face this concern, Vélez-Gutiérrez calls on educators from all levels to assume a leadership role by implementing pedagogical strategies to foster critical engagement with texts and ideas in and outside the classroom.

Nowadays, schools and universities increasingly report ongoing complaints from educators arguing that “Students do not know how to read in their mother tongue”. The primary concern revolves around their ability to decode the symbols and identify words and isolated phrases, while analysis of complex ideas and conscious processes of reflection are often absent. The previous statements evidence that some teachers are aware of the issues regarding the failed system to educate critical readers mentioned by Velez-Gutierrez. Nonetheless, few actions are taken to face the problem. Another matter arises when considering the role of the mother tongue. It is often argued that if students are unable to read critically in their first language, they will encounter difficulties doing so in a foreign one. Despite this, we assert that critical reading skills are not bound to a specific language; rather, once developed, reading skills can be transferred across languages and applied in both mother and foreign language contexts.

Krishnasamy and Noor (2015) have extensively argued that despite the progress critical reading has achieved, there are still multiple and varied actions to be done in the field of EFL. This book has been created to set a small step in the action path to guide you, as teachers, to use literary texts to aid reading comprehension, purposefully enriching critical reading in your classrooms.

In this book, you can find five different strategies that you can use for fostering your students' critical reading skills through writing. Each strategy is reasonably

supported through theory, displaying a brief description of classroom procedures, various teaching tips, some variations to activities, and three worksheets available to be incorporated into your lessons.






Finally, we firmly believe that learning a language widens far beyond the accurate use of grammar structures, vocabulary, and the development of traditional reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills. Language learning promotes intellectual development by nurturing people to access diverse sources of knowledge, comprehend multiple perspectives, critically evaluate information, reflect on complex issues, and become active participants in social change.

Book Structure

The purpose of this book is to provide you, language teachers, and your students with a set of strategies, activities, and worksheets articulated with theory, to guide them. This material was designed considering universities as a main educational setting; however, due to their characteristics, all materials can be adapted to different settings, attempting to promote critical reading through a diverse range of writing activities.

The development of this book was informed by the teaching framework proposed by McLaughlin and Allen (2009), which outlines five sequential stages for applying reading strategies: explain, demonstrate, guide, practice, and reflect. Such frames align closely with statements by Duke and Pearson (2002), who argue that “good comprehension instruction includes both explicit instruction in specific comprehension strategies and a great deal of time and opportunity for actual reading, writing, and discussion of the text” (p. 207). The main purpose of this book was to provide both teachers and students meaningful opportunities to engage in the practical application of each strategy, while progressively transferring responsibility for learning from teachers to students, a process McLaughlin (2012) has named the “gradual release of responsibility” (p. 436). The following section explores concrete explanations of each stage in the framework, along with the corresponding symbols used to represent them throughout the book.

Table 1. *Characterizing the Framework*

Stage and symbol	Definition
 <p data-bbox="453 635 544 662">Explain</p>	<p data-bbox="738 492 1238 656">The teacher provides an explicit description of the strategy, outlining when and how it should be implemented to support students' comprehension and engagement with the text.</p>
 <p data-bbox="432 895 576 921">Demonstrate</p>	<p data-bbox="738 778 1238 901">Teachers, students, or both apply the strategy by practicing thinking-aloud techniques to model and support comprehension.</p>
 <p data-bbox="469 1160 539 1187">Guide</p>	<p data-bbox="738 1024 1238 1187">Students and teachers implement the strategy together. The role of the teacher focuses on advising the students' processes and clarifying doubts, in order for students to properly model language and ideas.</p>
 <p data-bbox="459 1426 555 1453">Practice</p>	<p data-bbox="738 1310 1238 1412">Students work autonomously while applying the strategy. This stage is developed in and/or outside the classroom as independent work.</p>
 <p data-bbox="464 1712 549 1739">Reflect</p>	<p data-bbox="738 1524 1238 1729">The purpose of the stage is to raise the students' metacognitive awareness by monitoring their use of the strategy, identifying their strengths and weaknesses. To carry out this process, they use a notebook to document their reflections and learning progress through several entries.</p>

This book is divided into five units. Each unit contains information about a specific strategy to foster critical reading through writing. Every single unit has been divided into three different lessons for the development of a special worksheet. There is one introductory lesson, one lesson for guiding and reviewing and a final lesson for practicing. At the end of each unit, there are opportunities to assess the work done through formative assessment. Finally, a space for self-reflection is given for your students to write entries on their reflective journals about what they learnt throughout the unit in terms of the strategy itself and content as well as how they felt during the lessons, their strengths and difficulties they experienced and further actions to be taken.

A self-reflective journal was chosen as a technique for the reflection stage because it allows students to express “their thoughts, feelings, experiences, personal values and beliefs” in a spontaneous and comfortable way (Farrah, 2012, p. 999); besides the fact of allowing a “conversation with oneself” (Professional Development for Academics Involved in Teaching, 2006, p. 1) provides your students with opportunities to think about their own learning – metacognitive strategies- as well as self-regulated and self-efficient learning. The structure of the units is summarized in the next table.

Table 2. Describing the Units

Units	Lessons	Worksheets	Assessment	Reflection
Unit 1 Summarizing and Paraphrasing	Lesson 1: What is the difference? (Introductory lesson)	Worksheet #1	Formative	Self-reflective Journal
		Worksheet #2		
	Lesson 2: Hands-on the text (Guiding lesson)	Worksheet #3		
	Lesson 3: Time to practice (Practicing lesson)	Worksheet #4		

Units	Lessons	Worksheets	Assessment	Reflection
Unit 2 Facts or Opinions	Lesson 1: Distinguishing facts and opinions (Introductory lesson)	Worksheet #5	Formative	Self-reflective Journal
	Lesson 2: What is my opinion? (Guiding lesson)	Worksheet #6		
	Lesson 3: Fact or Opinion? (Practicing lesson)	Worksheet #7		
		Worksheet #8		
Unit 3 Questioning	Lesson 1: Raising Awareness (Introductory lesson)	Worksheet #9	Formative	Self-reflective Journal
	Lesson 2: Beyond literal questions (Guiding lesson)	Worksheet #10		
	Lesson 3: Asking and answering questions (Practicing lesson)	Worksheet #11		

Units	Lessons	Worksheets	Assessment	Reflection
Unit 4 Juxtaposing	Lesson 1: Moving beyond the obvious (Introductory lesson)	Worksheet #12	Formative	Self-reflective Journal
	Lesson 2: Juxtaposing non-fiction texts (Guiding lesson)	Worksheet #13		
	Lesson 3: Connecting with your knowledge (Practicing lesson)	Worksheet #14		
Unit 5 Examining personal responses	Lesson 1: Reading the World as a Path to Self-Reflection (Introductory lesson)	Worksheet #15	Formative	Self-reflective Journal
	Lesson 2: My thoughts and feelings (Guiding lesson)	Worksheet #16		
	Lesson 3: Are there viable solutions? (Practicing lesson)	Worksheet #17		

As a teacher using this book, you may choose to follow the full sequence of the five units or select the sections that best respond to your students' specific learning needs. This resource alone will not make your students critical readers; nevertheless, it offers a range of strategies that can easily be implemented and adapted. Moreover, it is intended to trigger your curiosity to explore and experiment with additional techniques that may be more effective in your particular teaching context.

UNIT

1

Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Theoretical and Rationale Foundations of the Strategy

According to Axelrod and Cooper (2002, as cited in Nasrollahi et al., 2014), summarizing and paraphrasing are two of the ten essential strategies for improving critical reading. Considering the overlapping concepts and cognitive skills involved in both strategies, they have been integrated into a single unit within this book to favor comprehension and strengthen students' ability to use both effectively.

Regardless of the points previously discussed, it is paramount to present the distinction between summarizing and paraphrasing that Willcutt & Stankey (2018) propose. The authors explain that the former involves condensing the information by focusing on the main ideas and reducing the length of the text. In contrast, paraphrasing requires a reorganization of the text using different structures and words, keeping a similar length to the original version. Additionally, the authors argue that both terms have key similarities as they both require thorough comprehension and analysis of what is being read, not only in terms of language usage but also in terms of content and context. Moreover, in both cases, the use of the reader's wording style is essential, which reflects a deeper level of cognitive involvement and textual engagement.

These similarities are aligned with the perspective of Dole et al. (1991) when they assert that "the ability to summarize requires readers to sift through large units of texts, differentiate important from unimportant ideas, and then synthesize those ideas and create a new coherent text" (p. 244). This view is further supported by Teweles (2001), who notes that paraphrasing contributes to the development of reading and writing skills by helping EFL learners expand their vocabulary, expand their grammatical and syntactic knowledge, and improve their overall comprehension of the text.

The strategies included in this unit were selected purposefully to answer the need for students to progress from simple reproduction of ideas, such as verbatim copying, to achieve higher complexity levels of interpretation, analysis, and reflection, fundamental for synthesizing information and expressing arguments in their own words. Furthermore, the choice of strategies is grounded in Tovani's (2000) view that, before engaging in complex tasks such as analyzing or questioning, students must first achieve a clear interpretation of specific data in the text.

Working on summarizing and paraphrasing initially does not imply that these are easy tasks; conversely, they require a lot of practice and guidance. Authors such as Hirvela & Du (2013), Keck (2006), Willcutt & Stankey (2018), Uribe-Enciso (2015), Tantillo (2016), Khoshnevis & Parvinnejad (2015), and Grellet (2008) agree when arguing that summarizing and paraphrasing are important and complex exercises for first and second language students (L1 and L2, respectively). The writers remark on the value of teaching learners how to accurately summarize and paraphrase and the need to practice these strategies constantly inside and outside the academic context.

The rule-governed approach settles the foundation for developing the strategies included in this unit. According to Duke and Pearson (2002), this approach was originally proposed by McNeil and Donant in the 1980s as a method for teaching summarization. As far as this book is concerned, the approach has been adapted to support the task of teaching paraphrasing. The rule-governed approach encourages learners to repeatedly read a text, focusing all attention on lexical choices and key arguments. During this process, teachers guide students through a sequence of steps aimed at constructing a new version of the original document. For summarizing, these steps involve identifying key ideas, omitting non-essential information, and composing a concise new version of the text (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Thus, for paraphrasing, the steps focus on identifying the author's message and key terms, selecting accurate synonyms and alternative expressions, and creating a version using different wording while preserving the original messages. A structured process that fosters both comprehension and language development by encouraging learners to engage critically with the text.

The main objective for this unit is to help your students analyze the difference between paraphrasing and summarizing and their usefulness for better comprehension and evaluation of a text. Additionally, students will be provided with cognitive tools to synthesize texts and to create their summaries and paraphrases through a scaffolding process, bearing in mind the framework proposed by McLaughlin & Allen (2009), explained previously in the book.

Unit One: Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Lesson 1: What is the Difference?

Explain and Demonstrate Stages

Material: Video beam; markers; fragment from a text; quote; text; worksheet #1; worksheet #2; monolingual dictionary or thesaurus webpage; blackboard.

Time: 70 minutes approximately.

Suggested Procedure

Step 1- Explain the similarities and differences between paraphrasing and summarizing. You can use the previous information to guide you in the process.

Step 2- Project a fragment from a text and explain to students how it could be summarized using the “Rule-governed approach”.

Step 3 - On the board, propose a quote and demonstrate to students how to paraphrase a fragment. Make sure to use diverse synonyms and different linguistic structures.

Step 4 - Give students a text and ask them to thoughtfully examine the ideas presented; then ask them to identify the main idea, key supporting details, and expressions, as well as irrelevant information that could be deleted. Encourage your students to write their responses in the document. As a whole class, write together a first draft of the summary (Worksheet #1).

The purpose of this section in the worksheet is to raise your students’ awareness of the importance of a good comprehension of the text to summarize it; moreover, it aims at helping to get your students get familiar with the rule-governed approach and its steps. A crucial point to successfully developing this material is to remind your students that summarizing, like all the strategies, needs time and practice. Worksheet #1 can be used as many times as necessary, integrated into class activities, or your students’ independent work.



Step 5- Have your students read and critically interpret the following quote: “The power of a story is not to be denied. In prehistoric caves, during Irish famines, in Nazi concentration camps, stories were as important as food” (Hearne, 1999, p. 4); then, ask them to write as many synonyms as possible and word variations of the quote expressions or words in the boxes. You can follow the format presented in the image below.

The worksheet template consists of a central box containing the following text:

“The power of a story is not to be denied. In prehistoric caves, during Irish famines, in Nazi concentration camps, stories were as important as food”
Hearne (1999, p. 4)

Surrounding this central box are eight empty boxes, each with a label at the top and a folded-bottom effect:

- Top-left: Power of a story
- Top-middle: Deny
- Top-right: Prehistoric caves
- Middle-left: Irish Famines
- Middle-right: Nazi concentration camps
- Bottom-left: Stories
- Bottom-middle: Important
- Bottom-right: Food

Step 6- Divide the class into pairs and ask each pair to share their answers. After that, have your students discuss and rewrite the quote using their own words and some of the vocabulary in worksheet #2.

Step 7- (Optional) On the board, write some of the phrases written by students. Integrating the whole class, analyze their strengths and delve into critical improvements.

As with the previous worksheet, the primary purpose is for students to rehearse their cognitive skills to understand, reconstruct, and analyze the authors’ ideas when engaging in critical reading, as well as to highlight the value of paraphrasing in achieving comprehension. Worksheet # 2 provides a specific space for writing quotations and an additional one for students to write synonyms and word variations to rewrite the idea of the author in the students’ words. Although we present a suggested quote, the worksheet can be used to work on other quotes depending on your pedagogical endeavors and your students’ preferences.

Worksheet #1: Summarizing (Photocopiable)

Title: _____

Author(s): _____ Year: _____

<p>The main idea of the text is</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>(Take it directly from the text)</p>
--

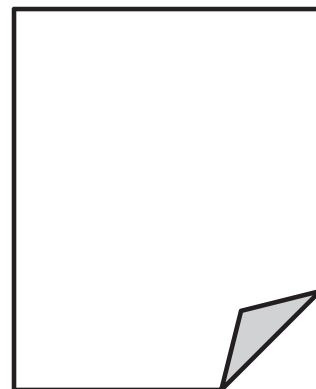
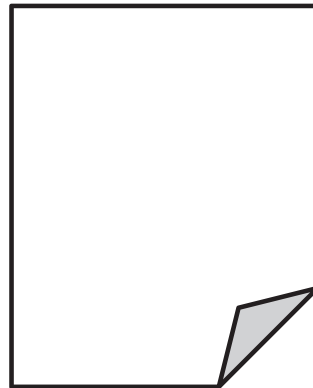
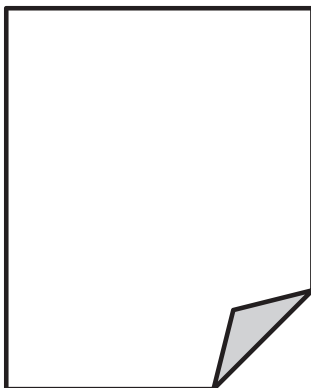
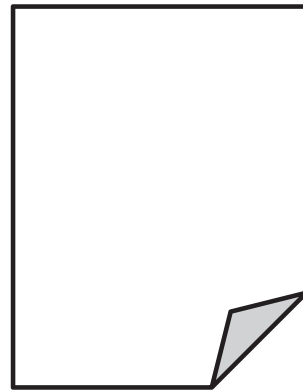
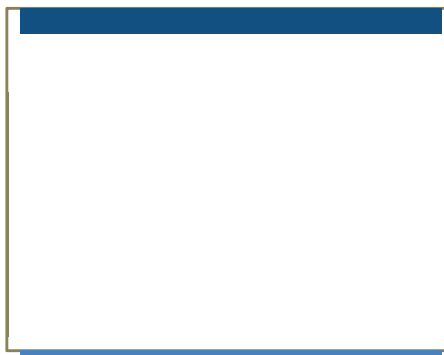
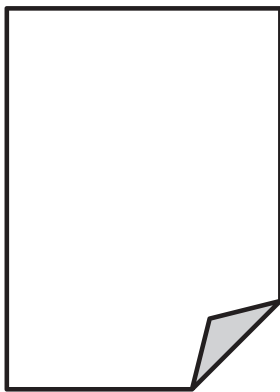
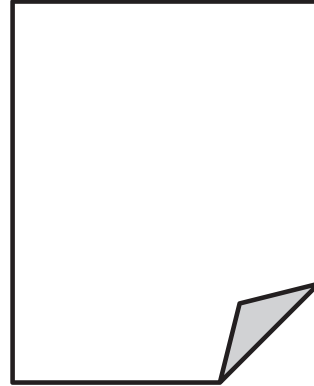
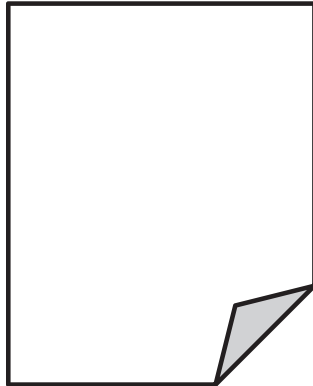
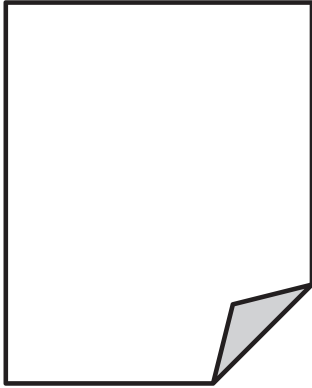
Key words (Taken from the text)	Relevant details (Taken from the text)	Reasons for omitting some details

Summary (use your own words)

<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

Worksheet #2: Paraphrasing (Photocopiable)

Directions: Write as many synonyms or variations of the word(s) as possible.



Unit One: Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Lesson Two: Hands on the Text

Guide Stage

Material: Set of cards - worksheet #3; dice; pencil; paper; transcriptions of the paraphrased sentences; rubric (peer-assessment).

Time: 55 minutes approximately

Suggested Procedure

Preparation: Copy and cut the set of cards with quotations and excerpts from worksheet #3.

Step 1- Explain to your students the rules of the game:

1. The activity is developed by working in pairs.
2. If a student rolls the dice and gets an odd number (1, 3, 5), they are asked to paraphrase a quote (small cards). Two minutes are given to read the quote and construct the necessary notes.
3. If a student rolls the dice and gets an even number (2, 4, 6), they must summarize the excerpt (bigger cards). Three minutes are provided for reading and formulating notes.
4. Once time is up, students paraphrase or summarize the card using their own words. Another partner is then tasked to transcribe what has been said (Adapted from Díaz, 2014)
5. Both members of the group must be actively engaged to transcribe or summarize/paraphrase.

Step 2- (Optional) If necessary, model the acts of speech you expect to mediate the activity.

Step 3- Organize students in pairs and give each a dice and a set of quotation and extract cards respectively. Ask them to start playing while you monitor the exercise



and provide guidance for summarizing and paraphrasing. Discuss actively your feedback for each team of students.

Step 4- Once your students are done playing, ask them to compare the quotes with their paraphrased version in terms of vocabulary and transmission of the corresponding message. (Díaz, 2014)

Step 5- Give students a copy of the rubric and request them to assign a score to each of the paraphrases.

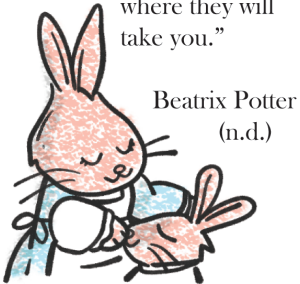
Step 6- Have your students analyze the written summaries, identifying the main idea, the most important details, and the less relevant ones.

Step 7- Provide students with a copy of the rubric and ask them to grade each of the summaries.

Designing Worksheet #3 draws elements of the PAIR-A-PHRASE activity originally proposed by Díaz (2014), tailored to the pedagogical purpose of our unit. The objective of this worksheet is to offer students opportunities to practice summarizing and paraphrasing while enforcing critical thinking, with the guidance and support of both teacher and peers. Furthermore, incorporating time constraints and a scoring component introduces a component of motivation and engagement, encouraging active participation in the activities.

Worksheet #3-A: Paraphrasing Quotes (Photocopiable)

“There is something delicious about writing the first few words of a story. You can never quite tell where they will take you.”



“Who in the world am I? Ah, that's the great puzzle.”

Lewis Carroll (n.d.)



“Life itself is the most wonderful fairy tale”

Hans Christian Andersen (n.d.)



“Books shouldn't be daunting, they should be funny, exciting and wonderful; and learning to be a reader gives a terrible advantage.”

Roald Dahl (n.d.)



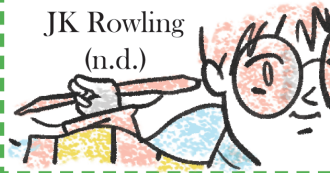
“Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living; it's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope.”

Dr. Seuss (n.d.)



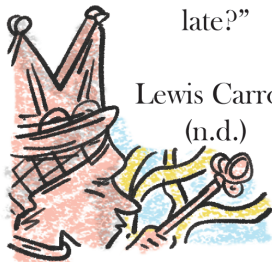
“I don't believe in the kind of magic of my books, but I do believe something very magical can happen when you read a good book.”

JK Rowling (n.d.)



“Which form of proverb do you prefer Better late than never, or Better never than late?”

Lewis Carroll (n.d.)



“Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment, until it becomes a memory.”

Dr. Seuss (n.d.)



“One day you will be old enough to start reading fairytales again.”

CS Lewis (n.d.)



Worksheet #3-B: Summarizing Texts (Photocopiable)



Children's literature plays a crucial role in shaping personality and social development. During their formative years, children are highly impressionable, and literature can help them grow into compassionate, intelligent, and sociable individuals. According to developmental psychologist Jean Piaget, as children transition from the pre-operational to the operational stage of cognitive development, they become less self-centered. While young children in preschool and kindergarten tend to focus primarily on themselves, older students begin to recognize and consider the feelings and perspectives of others. Developing empathy and selflessness is essential, as Norton (2010) emphasizes that strong relationships require an understanding of others' emotions and viewpoints (p. 27). By exposing students to diverse perspectives, children's literature promotes social growth and encourages acceptance of different people and cultures (Crippen, 2012).

Children's literature plays a crucial role in fostering emotional intelligence in students. Stories have the ability to support both emotional and moral growth by presenting characters who face dilemmas, make ethical choices, and reflect on their decisions—an essential skill for children to observe and learn from (Norton, 2010, p. 34). For instance, *Guji Guji* (Chen, 2004) tells the story of a crocodile raised by a family of ducks. When confronted with the choice of betraying his adoptive family to align with his biological kind, he ultimately follows his own values and remains loyal to his family. Similarly, *The Scar* (Moundlic, 2007) helps children process grief through the story of a boy coping with his mother's death, a concept that many young children struggle to understand. By engaging with such literature, students are encouraged to explore and reflect on their own emotions more deeply (Crippen, 2012).



Providing children with access to a wide range of literature is essential for their success. Educators, parents, and community members should encourage a love for reading, as it not only enhances cognitive skills necessary for academic and professional achievement but also offers many additional benefits. Donna Norton (2010), in *Through the Eyes of a Child*, highlights several key advantages of children's literature. It allows students to engage with stories, deepens their appreciation of both their own and other cultures, fosters emotional intelligence and creativity, supports personal and social development, and preserves important literary works and themes across generations (Crippen, 2012).

Children's books are important because they help kids grow socially and emotionally. Young children are very influenced by what they learn, and stories can shape them into kind, smart, and friendly people. Psychologist Jean Piaget explains that as kids grow, they start thinking less about just themselves and more about others. While very young children mostly focus on their own needs, older kids begin to understand the feelings and opinions of those around them. Learning to consider others and not be selfish is a skill that adults should help kids develop. Norton (2010) points out that good relationships depend on understanding other people's feelings and perspectives. Books for children play a key role in teaching kids to accept others and embrace differences. (Crippen, 2012).

Unit One: Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Lesson Three: Time to Practice

Practice Stage

Material: A text; worksheet #4.

Time: 45 minutes approximately.

Suggested Procedure

Step 1- Instruct students to read the text carefully and re-read it to ensure a thorough understanding of its content and structure.

Step 2- Ask students to write a summary of the text in no more than 100 words, applying the principles of the rule-governed approach by identifying key ideas, omitting non-essential information, and synthesizing the main points in their own words.

Worksheet #4 guides students in developing cognitive tools to apply summarizing and paraphrasing strategies independently, without relying on direct teacher guidance. It has been designed with flexible activities, allowing learners to decide the order in which they complete tasks. Additionally, the material's design permits teachers and students to apply independent sections, or all the lessons based on their teaching/learning objectives. Finally, it is crucial to mention that this worksheet can be integrated inside or outside the classroom.



Worksheet #4: Time to Practice (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____ Year: _____
Title: _____ Author(s): _____

Directions: Read and re-read the text; then, write a summary and paraphrase the three chosen quotes.

Write a summary

Choose and write 3 direct quotes that called your attention from the text.

Paraphrase the text.



Unit Assessment

Assessment of this unit will be carried out through peer assessment. Students use the rubric below to evaluate the summaries and paraphrases produced by their classmates. According to the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC, 2015), peer assessment offers significant opportunities for learners to give and receive constructive feedback. Although it is commonly acknowledged that peer feedback may not always follow the characteristics of teacher input, evaluating a partner's work is certainly highly beneficial for the reviewer. This task encourages critical comparison, promotes reflection, and helps students identify strengths and areas for improvement in their own work. Along the same lines, the Teaching and Learning Services (2017), remark on peer assessment as a powerful tool for fostering critical reflection and improving students' engagement with the learning process.

Reflection

The reflection stage is a space for students to express their emotions when dialoguing about the values of children's literature, focusing on critical elements of the content, and their points of view regarding the application of each strategy.



Summarizing and Paraphrasing Peer-assessment Rubric (Photocopiable)

Student's name: _____

Reviewed by: _____

Directions: Re-read the transcript of the summaries proposed by your partners and give a score from 0 to 5 to each of the items below. Then, provide some comments to help your partners to improve their texts.

Item	Points			Comments
The text presents clearly the main idea	0	1	2	
	3	4	5	
Relevant details have been identified	0	1	2	
	3	4	5	
Comprehension of ideas is evidenced on the use of own words	0	1	2	
	3	4	5	
Ideas in the summary are properly organized	0	1	2	
	3	4	5	
Strengths / Weaknesses				
Suggestions for improvement				

UNIT

2

Facts or Opinions

Theoretical and Rationale Foundations of the Strategy

The Writing and Communication Centre (2019) remarks on the importance of judging the facts and opinions presented in a text in order to evaluate whether they are objective or subjective. Furthermore, Kadir et al. (2014) mention that “we [teachers] do not want them [EFL learners] to be submissive readers all the time” (p. 210). Consequently, the authors point out the need to implement explicit instruction to develop critical reading skills and educate readers to critically judge information, avoiding taking anything for granted. Their call is for professors to encourage readers who identify and agree or disagree with the arguments presented in the text, considering that lots of the content can represent speculative or unfounded opinions that lack factual data. As stated by Rashtchi & Aghajanzadeh (2008) “[EFL] readers need not accept the words on the page as given” (p. 120) In order to do so, it is necessary to analyze and evaluate the texts to distinguish between facts and opinions.

Identifying facts and opinions is seen as a strategy to foster critical reading for authors such as Axelrod and Cooper (2002, as cited in Nasrollahi et al., 2014), Raashtchi & Aghajanzadeh (2008), Fitzell (2011), and Anuar & Sidhu (2017), among others. The scholars argue that the ability to distinguish between facts and opinions aids readers in progressing from simply remembering data to developing higher-order cognitive processes such as evaluation, as outlined in Bloom’s Taxonomy. In this sense, distinguishing fact from opinions not only enhances comprehension of the author’s intentions but also enables readers to articulate their own viewpoints and engage with the text from a more critical, analytical, and reflective perspective.

Cottrell (2005) defines facts as “items of information that can be checked and proved,” whereas opinions are described as “a belief that is believed to be true, but which is not based on proof or substantial evidence. An opinion may be a personal point of view” (p. 141). Franco (2016) expands upon the concept by arguing that facts present objective information that can be verified as accurate or inaccurate based on actual evidence. Opinions, conversely, are inherently subjective as they vary from one person to another and lack reliability. Likewise, the author calls for students to carry out rigorous processes of critical evaluation of the information presented in texts, as opinions can be presented as facts or may include speculative elements without offering verifiable support for the claims.

When designing Unit Two, we considered the criteria to differentiate facts from opinions provided by the Public Schools of Roberson County (n.d.). They have created a lesson plan for distinguishing facts from opinions, where it is argued that words like “believe, feel, possibly, probably, should/ should not, think, best (good)/ worst (bad), always/ never, least/most, all, suggest” (p.2) are hints to determine the text contains opinions. On the other hand, the document indicates that elements such as “names, statistics, places, dates, and times” (p. 3) serve as indicators for identifying factual information.

This unit aims to foster students’ ability to critically engage in the evaluation of non-fiction texts by distinguishing between facts and opinions, identifying false or misleading information, and reflecting on the authors’ positions. Students are also encouraged to formulate their own viewpoints based on their analysis. Implementing this strategy throughout the unit is essential, since it promotes a critical stance toward textual content. Rather than accepting information as absolute truth, students develop techniques to analyze, evaluate, and interpret the authors’ arguments, which subsequently allows them to suggest reasoned agreements or disagreement.

Unit Two: Facts or Opinions

Lesson 1: Distinguishing Facts and Opinions

Explain and Demonstrate Stages

Material: Video about facts and opinions; worksheet #5

Time: 55 minutes

Suggested Procedure



Step 1- Explain the differences between facts and opinions. You can use the video titled *Distinguishing between Fact and Opinion* by Franco (2016) where several strategies for identifying facts and opinions are discussed. Pause the video and provide explanations and/or additional examples when necessary.

Step 2- Write a list of statements (Facts and Opinions) about a topic your students are familiar with. Subsequently, apply the think aloud strategy to exemplify the process for deciding whether the statements are facts or opinions and what clues can help to distinguish one from the other.

Step 3- Distribute worksheet #5 to each of your students individually. Ask them to analyze each statement to determine if they are facts or opinions, providing justification for their conclusions.

If considered appropriate, model the process by judging the first statement collectively as a class, encouraging discussion to explore the reasons for categorizing it as a fact or opinion. Once students have finished the activity, instruct them to compare and discuss their responses with a partner. Be prepared to give feedback and address questions.

Step 4- (optional) Have your students reflect and share their insights on the importance of distinguishing facts and opinions when reading.

For the development of this first lesson, we considered and adapted some of the ideas, suggestions and worksheets available literacy ideas (<https://literacyideas.com>) and education.com (<https://www.education.com/>). The purpose of this worksheet is to help your students better comprehend and distinguish what facts and opinions

are. It is an ideal source for developing the explanation and demonstration stages of the framework proposed along this book.

In Worksheet #5, you can find a series of statements taken from the New York Times newspaper article about the Broadway musical “Hamilton” that have been included to ask your students to attentively analyze them and choose if they are facts or opinions and argument their conclusions. While some of the statements may seem simple, they require an elaborate reflective and analytical approach that can help the teacher assess the students’ understanding of the topic and strategy.

Worksheet #5: Hamilton Facts and Opinions (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read and re-read the following extracts taken from the article: *Hamilton and History: Are they in Sync?* from the New York Times newspaper and choose if they are facts or opinions; then, explain how you know they are a fact or an opinion. This worksheet was adapted from Text-based Fact or Opinion worksheet (www.education.com, 2019)

Fragments from the text	Fact or Opinion?		How do you know?
Lin-Manuel Miranda, who created the hit Broadway musical <i>Hamilton</i> , has received many important awards, including the 2015 George Washington Book Prize. (Schuessler, 2016)	Fact	Opinion	
It's a fantastic theatrical production, but I'm worried that people might mistake it for actual history. (Schuessler, 2016)	Fact	Opinion	
Eliza, Hamilton's widow, sings in the show's final song that if he had lived longer, he could have done much more to oppose slavery. (Schuessler, 2016)	Fact	Opinion	
Eric Foner thought the show should have shown a more balanced view by mentioning that Hamilton was elitist and cared more about property rights than fighting slavery. (Schuessler, 2016)	Fact	Opinion	

Unit Two: Facts or Opinions

Lesson 2: What is my Opinion?

Guide Stage

Material: Worksheet #6 (For designing it, we considered some ideas proposed by Public Schools of Robenson County, 2025).

Time: 45 minutes approximately

Suggested Procedure

Step 1- Hand out worksheet # 6 to each student in your class.

Step 2- Tell your students to read the document of facts and opinions about J.K Rowling twice.

Step 3- Have your students write their opinions on the statements written in worksheet #6. Encourage them to thoughtfully analyze the information and state their opinions based on their own feelings and insights. Monitor the task and support its development by raising problematizing questions.

Step 4 – Ask your students to reflect on what their perceptions and explore what these reveal about their personal positioning and ideologies. Throughout this step, it is relevant to explain learners that all authors consciously or unconsciously represent their opinions in their texts, the reason why these ideas influence our conclusions as readers.

Constructing informed opinions requires writers to formulate more than a personal judgment. It involves engaging with the text, exploring the emotions and thoughts it evokes and considering the prior knowledge about the topic. Worksheet #6 encourages this level of involvement by asking students to share their thoughts on what they have read. In doing so, the task strengthens a distinction between fact and opinion. This task corresponds to the “guide” stage in McLaughlin and Allen’s (2009) instructional model, when activities require consistent guidance and feedback from teachers.



Worksheet #6: J.K. Rowling Facts and Opinions (Photocopiable)

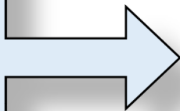
Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read the following facts and opinions about J.K. Rowling. Write your own opinions about those statements. Use your thoughts, feelings and previous knowledge.

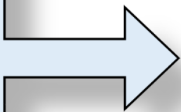
FACTS

MY OPINIONS

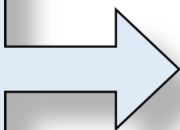
The book “Harry Potter and the Philosopher Stone” was published in 1998. Its movie was released in 2001. (Cable News Network, 2024)



Just in the USA, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows sold more than 8 million copies in less than 25 hours. (Cable News Network, 2024)



In 2009, J.K. Rowling was accused of plagiarizing the book “The adventures of Willy the Wizard” Written by Adrian Jacobs in 1987. She was found innocent in 2011. (Cable News Network, 2024)



Unit Two: Facts or Opinions

Lesson 3: Fact or Opinion?

Practice Stage

Material: Worksheet #7

Time: 60 minutes

Suggested procedure



Step 1- Introduce the activity by referring to Dr. Seuss and Roald Dahl as two famous children’s literature authors. Delve into their backgrounds from a positive or negative perspective for students to raise biased opinions.

Step 2- Divide the class into two groups. Distribute Worksheet #7 – section titled *Student A* to one group and Worksheet #7 – section named *Student B* to the other. Instruct students to attentively review the factual statements about each author. Following the perspective assigned, students must propose a series of biased opinions. This activity has been proposed to foster critical awareness of how bias can shape the interpretation and presentation of factual content.

Step 3- Tell your students that writers normally include, consciously or unconsciously, their opinions in their texts. Have your students write a paragraph about the author, integrating information from both sides (facts and opinions). Encourage your students to write a first draft, carefully stating opinions so they look unbiased.

Step 4- Once your students finish, ask them to fold the worksheets so that the only section visible is the paragraph. Thereafter, require students in group A to look for a partner to work with in group B. They join to exchange paragraphs; hence, student A will receive student B’s worksheet and vice versa.

Step 5- Tell your students to review the texts written by their partners and circle the statements they consider to be factual and those that look like opinions.

Step 6 – (optional) Ask students to work with their peers to compare and discuss their responses. Promote a reflective discussion on how an author’s opinions can cause a text to be biased and emphasize the critical reader’s role in identifying and evaluating such bias.

Step 7 – Once your students have additional information about who Dr. Seuss and Roald Dahl are, assign half of the group to read “The Lorax” book written by Dr. Seuss. Meanwhile, the other half of the class reads “Matilda” by Roald Dahl; have them watch the movies as well!

Step 8 – Organize students into small groups to dialogue about the diverse perspectives presented in the book regarding current national or international issues, such as politics, environmental challenges, education, or technological advancements. After discussing collectively and reaching a consensus on their perspective about the topic, each group should complete Worksheet #8, distinguishing factual information from opinions.

Worksheet #7 has as its main purpose raising students’ awareness of how readers can be easily influenced by the author(s) of a text when there is a critical evaluation of what is objective and what is subjective in a non-fiction reading is not carried out. Furthermore, it encourages students to evaluate the text to distinguish facts and opinions and not to believe everything stated in a text. Finally, it is paramount to explain that the content was selected to connect national or international realities about social issues with the main message of a children’s book. In this way, learners engage in critical dialogue, serving also to acknowledge that children’s literature can go further entertainment. Worksheet #8 can be used with the proposed books in the suggested procedure or with any other book you consider useful.

Worksheet #8: The Facts and Opinions Honeycomb (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

The worksheet features a yellow honeycomb background with six white hexagonal cells arranged in a 2x3 grid. Each cell contains five horizontal lines for writing. A callout box on the right side of the top row contains the text: "You can practice your summarizing strategies here as well". A callout box on the right side of the bottom row contains the text: "Your opinions as well as the author's intended opinion". A callout box on the left side of the middle row contains the text: "Facts" with a red arrow pointing to the leftmost cell of that row. Red arrows are drawn on the worksheet, starting from the top-right cell, moving left to the top-middle cell, then down to the middle-middle cell, then left to the middle-left cell, then down to the bottom-left cell, and finally right to the bottom-right cell.

Unit Assessment

Assessment for this unit is applied through self-assessment. Have students analyze their own process and use a checklist to portray their strengths and weaknesses for distinguishing facts from opinions.

Reflection

Your students will have the opportunity to write their reflections in their journals. They will assess contents, benefits and difficulties in their learning processes, while distinguishing facts from opinions.



Facts and Opinions Self-assessment Checklist (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

After finishing the proposed activities for fostering critical reading skills (distinguishing facts from opinions), I can:

- Easily distinguish facts from opinions.
- Distinguish when a text is being biased by the author(s).
- State my own opinion of a topic based on real facts.

Further actions I can take include:

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

Facts and Opinions Self-assessment Checklist (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

After finishing the proposed activities for fostering critical reading skills (distinguishing facts from opinions), I can:

- Easily distinguish facts from opinions.
- Distinguish when a text is being biased by the author(s).
- State my own opinion of a topic based on real facts.

Further actions I can take include:

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

UNIT

3

Questioning

Theoretical and Rationale Foundations of the Strategy

The human condition comes with an innate tendency toward inquiry. Many of the most remarkable and thought-provoking innovations in history originated when a person showed a willingness to question and explore particular issues. In the field of education, questioning has been widely recognized as an engine for improving learning and teaching. Sánchez-Alfonso (2017) traces the origins of the concept to Socrates and the tradition of Socratic questioning, later approaching the contributions of Dewey, particularly associating it with the constructivist paradigm of teaching. For applying this strategy, the role of educators has been extensively discussed. Vélez-Gutiérrez (2018) encourages educators to create spaces where students are invited to question and answer the context surrounding them. Nevertheless, he cautions that these questions must stimulate complex thinking, prompting students to engage in reflection, generate their own ideas, and move beyond logical responses to deeper levels of thought.

The previous statements are aligned with the ideas presented by McLaughlin & DeVogd (2005), mentioning that “inquiry underpins critical literacy. When we read from a critical stance, we use questions to challenge the text, to see past the literal meaning of the text to examine issues such as what the author wants the readers to believe” (p. 62). In terms of critical reading, Sousa (as cited in Talebi & Talebi, 2015, p. 1180) argues that questioning is another strategy to enhance critical reading in the EFL classroom.

Based on our own experience as teachers, students need to work on asking and answering questions for a better understanding, analysis, and reflection of the texts,

rather than just focusing on recalling and repeating information. Our argument is supported by Grellet (2008), who states that “it is often more fruitful to ask questions to which there is not one obvious answer” (p. 229). Nonetheless, we must remark that questioning requires a structured process with a dual purpose; students look for answers to questions, and they pose new doubts regarding these inquiries. Furthermore, allowing students to take action and initiate questioning for others and themselves promotes agency, according to Harmer (2011).

Self-questioning is defined by Taboada & Guthrie (2006) as “a reading strategy in which learners attempt to comprehend and recall a reading text through asking and answering high-level questions about a reading text” (p. 2). Considering its complexity supports the idea that working on questioning is not a process to be done overnight; it requires to follow a series of steps to help students raise awareness of the types of questions to ask and answer about the texts. The questions can be proposed by following diverse frameworks, nevertheless, in this case, we have considered the one proposed by Anderson & Krathwohl (2001), who revised Bloom’s taxonomy to make a hierarchy for thinking skills categorizing them as “Lower Order Thinking Skills” (LOTS) and “Higher Order Thinking Skills” (HOTS). From lower to higher levels students are asked to remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate and create.

The main objective for this unit is to help students identify different types of questions and their importance for critically reading information. Furthermore, learners must be able to pose questions and answer them at different levels of thinking aiming to achieve Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS).

Unit Three: Questioning

Lesson 1: Raising Awareness

Explain and Demonstrate Stages

Material: Worksheet #9; Text (optional).

Time: 55 minutes.

Suggested Procedure



Step 1- Have students read and analyze a short text (two paragraphs). Then, write three questions about it (Worksheet #9, part A).

Step 2- Ask students to exchange worksheets and answer the questions posed by their partners (Worksheet #9, part B).

Step 3- Instruct students to rate the level of difficulty of the questions and to reflect on the cognitive processes they engaged in while formulating their answers (Worksheet #9, Part C).

Step 4- Explain the types of questions bearing in mind the QARS and how to classify them.

Step 5- As a group, students classify their questions. Direct the process by highlighting the thinking processes that students develop to answer.

Step 6- (Optional) Open a space to reflect on the most frequently proposed questions. Highlight the relevance of all the questions, especially analyzing and encouraging the interpretive and evaluative ones.

The purpose of worksheet #9 is to make students aware of the type of questions they normally ask after reading a text and how easy or hard it is to answer some of the questions. This worksheet is divided into three parts (A, B and C) and it is used to work on the “explain” and “demonstrate” stages of the framework explained previously.

For using this worksheet, it is important to bear in mind the concepts of the Question Answer Relationship Strategy, henceforth QARS. Raphael (as cited in Nguyen & Nguyen, 2018, p. 35) proposed and explained the different types of questions in QARS

by labeling them as “‘Right there’, ‘Think and search’, ‘Author and me’, and ‘On my own’” questions. The answer to the first type of questions, as stated in the name, can be found explicitly in one part of the text. For answering the “‘Think and search questions’”, it is necessary to look at various segments of the reading to find the answer. The third type of questions refers to the ones that can be solved when there is a connection between the readers’ previous knowledge and implicit information in the text. The last type of questions helps the readers to associate the reading with real life, personal experiences or thoughts (Raphael, as cited in Nguyen & Nguyen, 2018, p. 36).

PART B

Title: _____
Author: _____
Your name: _____

ANSWERS

Once you have read and understood the text, answer the three questions posed by your partner.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Please move in to **part C**.

PART A

Title: _____
Author: _____
Your name: _____

QUESTIONS

Once you have read and understood the text, write three questions about it.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Once you have written your questions, exchange the worksheet with a partner.

Title: _____

Author: _____

Your name: _____

REFLECTION

1 On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being hard and 5 being easy...

• How would you rate the level of difficulty of **question 1**? _____

• How would you rate the level of difficulty of **question 2**? _____

• How would you rate the level of difficulty of **question 3**? _____

2 Could the answer be explicitly found in the text?

If so, which one(s)? _____

3 Did you have to connect the information in the text with your own experience to answer any of the questions? _____

If so, which one(s)? _____

Unit Three: Questioning

Lesson 2: Beyond Literal Questions

Guide Stage

Material: Worksheet #10; Text.

Time: 70 minutes

Suggested Procedure

Step 1- If you think your students already know the types of questions in QARS, go to step two (2). If not, start by reviewing them with an emphasis on “author and me” and “on my own” questions.

Step 2- Have your students read and analyze the text thoroughly.

Step 3- Divide your class into pairs (or groups of three students); have them brainstorm different questions about the text.

Step 4- Provide each group with worksheet # 10 and have students reflect and discuss possible questions to be posed in each section.

Step 5- Have your students, in each group, write two questions in the sections “Author and me” and “On my own”, respectively.

For using this worksheet, it is important to consider the types of questions in the QARS. Its purpose is to guide your students on how to ask “Author and me” and “on my own” questions to move from literal to more interpretative questions.

Worksheet#10 is divided in two sections. The first part displays silhouettes of the author and the reader, representing the connection between the information in the text and the ideas of the reader. The parallel is key for proposing and answering “Author and me” questions, which must be written in the speech bubbles. The second section depicts a character and his reflection in the mirror, where the questions must be written. The drawing represents the internal process when creating “on our own” questions, since these ideas express the students’ knowledge.

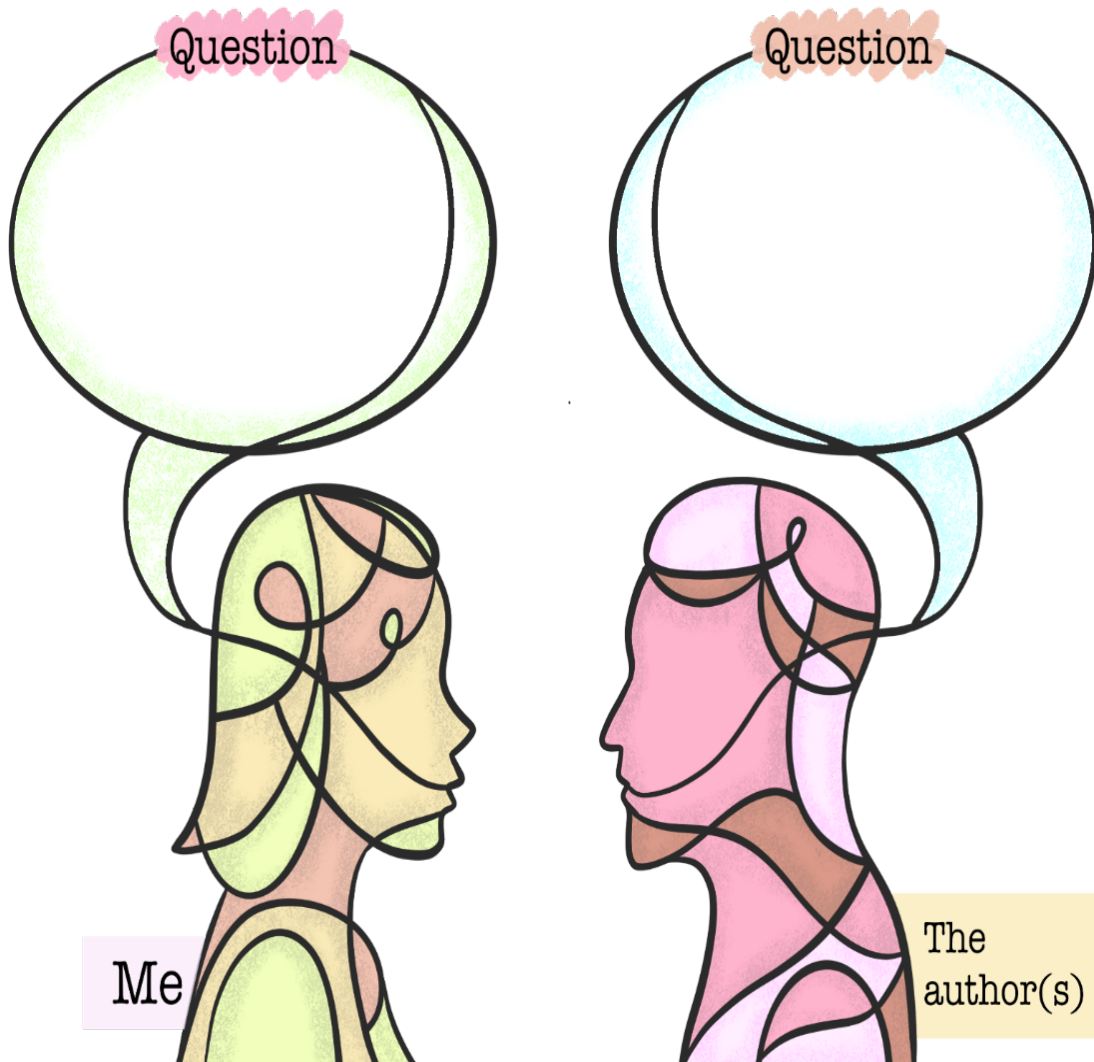
Considering this worksheet focuses on the “guide” stage of the framework (McLaughlin & Allen, 2009), during the development of the lesson, the teacher works along with students, helping them solve doubts and encouraging them to ask what they are really interested in knowing.

Worksheet #10-A: Author and Me (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read the text carefully; then, pose two “author and me” and “on my own” questions respectively.

Author and me



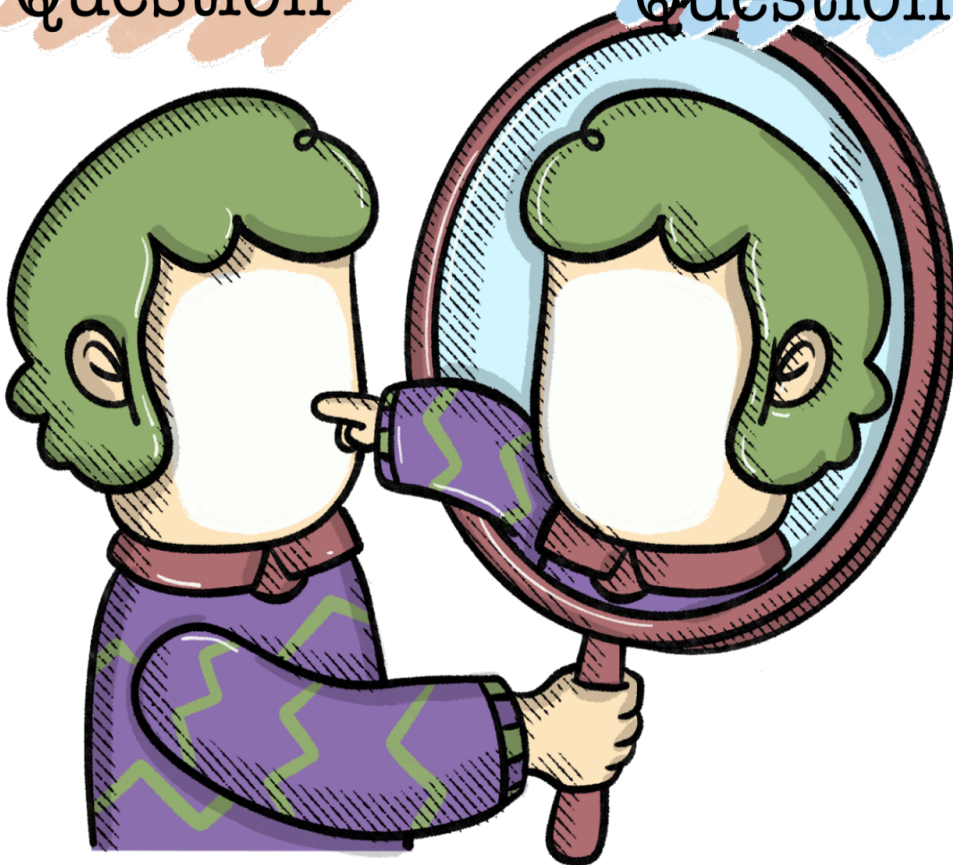
Worksheet #10-B: On my Own (Photocopiable)

On my own

Write the questions in the heads of the character and his reflection.

Question

Question



Remember

Own thoughts + own knowledge =
Answer of "on my own" questions

Unit Three: Questioning

Lesson 3: Asking and Answering Questions

Practice Stage

Material: Worksheet #11; text.

Time: 90 minutes.

Suggested Procedure:



Step 1 – Instruct students to read and analyze the text thoroughly.

Step 2 – Distribute Worksheet #11 and ask students to formulate two questions for each of the four cognitive categories (Remembering, Understanding/Applying, Analyzing, and Evaluating/Creating) based on the interests and doubts arising from the reading.

Step 3 – Have your students exchange their worksheets with a classmate, who will then add two additional questions per quadrant. Repeat this action until each worksheet contains a total of 16 different questions.

Step 4- Have students read the questions and choose some per quadrant to be answered. Follow the next criteria: Select one (1) out of remembering, one (1) out of understanding/ applying, two (2) out of analyzing, and two (2) out of evaluating/ creating.

Step 5- Have your students turn the page and find the Response Creation Chart (RC2) worksheet. Have them answer the six (6) questions they chose in the previous step (Worksheet #11 – Response Creation Chart RC2).

Step 6- (Optional) As part of the students' independent practice and to reinforce the strategy, provide a new reading and encourage them to formulate and respond to two questions per cognitive quadrant.

The purpose of this worksheet is to provide students with opportunities to pose and answer questions based on specific question starters that follow the framework of Bloom's Taxonomy, specifically its revised version categorizing LOTS and HOTS. The "practice" stage of the framework for strategies of teaching (McLaughlin & Allen,

2009) guides its development.

Regarding the theoretical support behind the design of this worksheet, it is crucial to go back to the two sections comprising it: The Question Creation Chart and the Response Creation Chart. Ideally, they are printed or photocopied back-to-back for an appropriate implementation.

For the purpose of this book, we adapted the Question Creation Chart (QCC) proposed originally by Wiederhold (1997) and revised by Finney (2012) in *Let's Talk Science*. The QCC, also known as Q-Matrix, is a technique developed in the 90s whose objective was to provide teachers with a series of question starters to move from factual questions to evaluative ones (Idek, 2016). Helping students to be conscious of the structure and the types of questions may support students to delve into complex thinking skills, proposing inquiries to achieve a deeper understanding, analysis, and reflection of texts. Eventually, rehearsing these abilities will cause a positive impact on the students' oral and written production.

Thus, what have we added to the QCC? The reader can write the basic information about the text and formulate questions that, although they do not follow the question starters, still align with the appropriate cognitive category. The final addition was a numbered format to organize the set of questions.

The Response Creation Chart (RC2) was inspired by the need to include a suitable space for students to consolidate answers to the questions posed. This format allows learners to categorize answers and remember the characteristics of each level of critical thinking since they are all clearly presented in the chart. Furthermore, the organization of the Response Creation Chart contributes to people focusing their attention on the questions connected to analysis, evaluation, and creation. The space provided for writing these answers is larger, which encourages a wider dissertation of your thoughts. Another relevant element is decision. Students answer the questions they feel more engaged with, which reminds them that building arguments to support a position is the core of critical thinking. Finally, an adjustment of the colors in both charts has been made so that the quadrants could match and be more user-friendly.

Worksheet #11-A: Question Creation Chart – QC² (Adapted from: Let’s talk science – Explore curiosity, 2016)
 (Photocopiable)

Title: _____ **Author(s):** _____ **Type of text:** _____

Year of publication: _____ **Directions:** Once you have read the text, write one question for each quadrant. Then, exchange worksheets with a partner and write a different question in each quadrant.

	Is/ are/ was / were	Did / do / does	Can	Could / Should	Will / Would	Might	Other structures
Who	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
What	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17
When / Where	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21
Remembering (Right there questions)							
How	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q28	Q29	Q30	Q31
Why	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q32	Q33	Q34	Q35
Evaluating / Creating (on my own questions)							

Worksheet #11-B: Response Creation Chart (Photocopiable)

RC²: Response Creation Chart

Directions: Read the questions posed in the QCC and choose some of them to be answered in each quadrant. Do not forget to write the number of the questions.

Evaluating/creating question:

Evaluating/creating question:

Analyzing question:

Analyzing question:

Understanding/applying question:

Remembering question:

Title:

Author(s):

Name:

Date:

Unit Assessment

Give your students a self-assessment checklist to be completed considering the process carried out throughout the unit. Your students need to add a tick symbol next to each of the statements if they consider they have achieved this goal.

Reflection

In class, your students write an entry of their reflective journal where they analyze their learning. Moreover, they are asked to write about their emotions, strengths and difficulties they experienced during the development of the activities proposed for the questioning unit. Reflecting about the process, students write further actions to improve their understanding of the topic and strategy.



Unit 3 Questioning Self-assessment Checklist (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

After finishing the proposed activities for fostering critical reading skills (questioning), I can:

- Write some questions about texts I read
- Distinguish the types of questions I usually ask after reading a text.
- Ask and answer more questions that make me reflect and better analyse the text.

Use the self-questioning when working on other subjects and different types of texts.

Further actions I can take include:

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

UNIT

4

Juxtaposing

Theoretical and Rationale Foundations of the Strategy

Before explaining the relevance of this strategy, it is necessary to clarify what the terms juxtapose, compare, and contrast refer to. According to Rundell (2008), the terms *juxtaposing* and *comparing* are conceptually similar as they both require learners to identify differences in a text. However, they diverge in usage: *juxtaposing* implies placing elements next to each other physically or conceptually, analyzing similarities and differences indistinctively. Contrarily, *comparing* does not necessarily require proximity. It refers mainly to the examination of differences (Rundell, 2008). In this unit, the term *juxtapose* is used to name the analysis of both similarities and differences within texts displayed in parallel.

Researchers like Lapp & Fisher (2010), Ozdemir & Guler (2017), and McNicol & Duggan (2015), among others, agree that comparing and contrasting can be implemented differently across diverse genres (fiction and non-fiction), regardless of the students' age. For instance, McNicol & Duggan (2015) proposed to contrast characters and situations within the same fiction story, whereas Thomas & Choi (2017) examined the results of contrasting multiple non-fiction texts. In both cases, the findings validated the inclusion of contrasting in the development of critical reading skills.

Salisbury University (as cited in Handayani, 2018, p. 43) identifies juxtaposing and comparing similar passages as effective strategies for promoting critical reading. This perspective aligns with the one argued by McLaughlin & De Voogd (2004) who state:

Juxtaposing involves examining two contrasting texts or two pictures next to each other to make the contrast between the obvious. It is used as a strategy to help the reader disrupt the common place and see the text in a different way (p.50)

This process enables students to identify multiple perspectives on a topic, critically evaluate information, and decide their positions after actively analyzing rather than passively accepting taken-for-granted truths. In the context of the EFL classroom, Rashtchi and Aghajanzadeh (2008) similarly argue that “exploring likenesses and differences between texts can help [EFL] readers to understand them better” (p. 121). Multiple perspectives can add specific details for students to integrate into a complete framework of the events in the texts.

Furthermore, the use of Bloom’s taxonomy is required when evaluating different texts (Thomas & Choi, 2017), where it is crucial not only to identify and describe differences and similarities, but also to move beyond and judge the information, create new concepts, and points of view. Nevertheless, changes spread beyond documents. Lapp and Fisher (2010) assert that engaging with multiple texts simultaneously causes several elements to improve: the reader, the text, the topic, and the knowledge, all experience benefits constructed throughout the reading process. In a similar vein, they claim that “it is difficult for students to engage in critical literacy reading one text at a time.... students become increasingly aware of power relationships and social dynamics when they read multiple texts focused on a theme or question” (p. 158). This occurs because stereotypes and complex social issues may be difficult to discuss when a single perspective or source is examined, reason for juxtaposition of texts to reveal contrasting viewpoints that encourage deeper analysis and reflection.

The world is a complex web of interactions, where a system of hierarchies dominates most of the positions of people. On this matter, McLaughlin & De Voogd (2004) argue that “as readers, we examine alternative perspectives for the purpose of understanding the complexity of the world or power relationships” (p.120). Under this perception, applying this strategy with students becomes increasingly relevant since they comprehend the relevance of building informed stances about information. Besides, when juxtaposing texts, students can find diverse socially perceived and accepted ideas in texts and see them differently to promote equity through social action.

During the development of this unit, your students will have the opportunity to juxtapose various types of fiction and non-fiction texts. The activities included in the book might serve as a guide for us as teachers to include other types of exercises, so our students have more opportunities to practice in the ongoing process of learning. Key information about these exercises is that, due to space constraints and the length of the text, the readings are not placed together in the worksheets.

Unit Four: Juxtaposing

Lesson 1: Moving Beyond the Obvious

Explain and Demonstrate Stages

Material: Worksheet #12.

Time: 80 minutes.

Suggested Procedure



Step 1- Explain to your students what the terms compare and contrast refer to. Use daily life examples and allow them to come up with their own.

Step 2- Have your students work in pairs for reconstructing and remembering what the story of the three little pigs is about.

Step 3- Write the titles of the stories on the board.

They are: “***The three little pigs and the big bad wolf***” adapted by Educational Insights (2015) and “***The three little wolves and the big bad pig***” by Trivizas (1997). Use the titles to portray the process to find some similarities and differences. Engage your students to predict what the second story is about and encourage them to go beyond the obvious by thinking outside the box.

Step 4- Hand out the two stories and give students some time to read the stories thoroughly.

Step 5- Once the previous step is concluded, along with your students analyze the similarities and differences found within the two texts by using worksheet #12. Explore the characters (personality, appearance, attitudes, actions, beliefs, etc.), the setting (time, space, artifacts, etc.), and the plot (problem, climax, resolution, etc.). Demonstrate with one example and have your students complete part A of the worksheet. Then, your students compare their charts in pairs.

Step 6- Explain to your students how to compare and contrast the texts with real life. For instance, think aloud and reflect on the reason why the stories lack “important” women roles, what preconceived concepts – stereotypes- regarding “people”

(characters) are represented, or how conflicts are approached in fairytales and real life.

Step 7- Have your students work in pairs and critically read the texts searching for other issues that deserve attention. Ask them to write their perceptions and thoughts (Worksheet #12, part B).

Step 8- (Optional) More discussions and sessions could be planned to engage your students into the discussion and help them contrast the fictional stories with their realities.

Worksheet # 12 is divided into two sections (A and B). In the first part, students need to juxtapose the texts for completing the charts and identify how the characters, setting and plot relate or oppose to each other. They should be encouraged to explore beyond the obvious and approach the texts from different perspectives. In the second part, learners need to connect what they have delved into in part A with real life situations. Developing these activities to formulate a critical stance about the stories and their real lives constitutes the purpose of this worksheet.

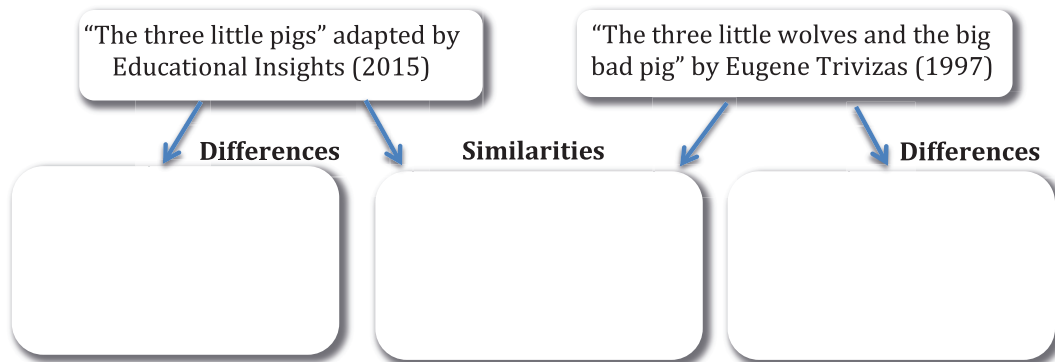
Worksheet #12: Fractured Fairytales (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

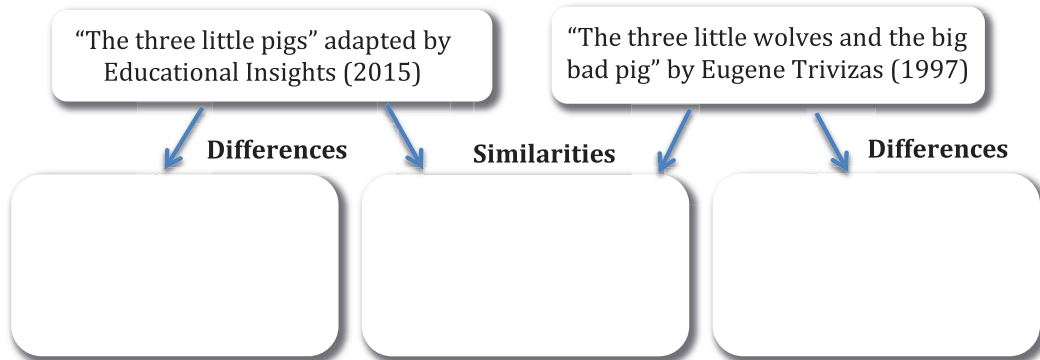
Part A

Once you have read the stories, find similarities and differences in terms of characters, setting and plot.

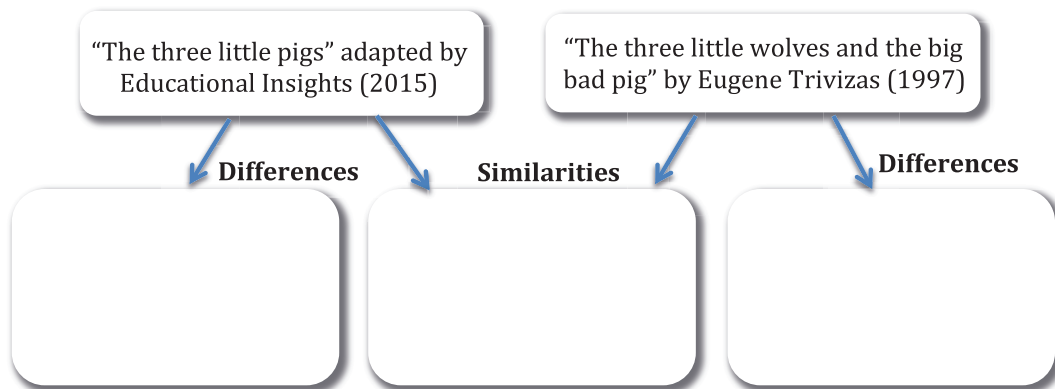
CHARACTERS



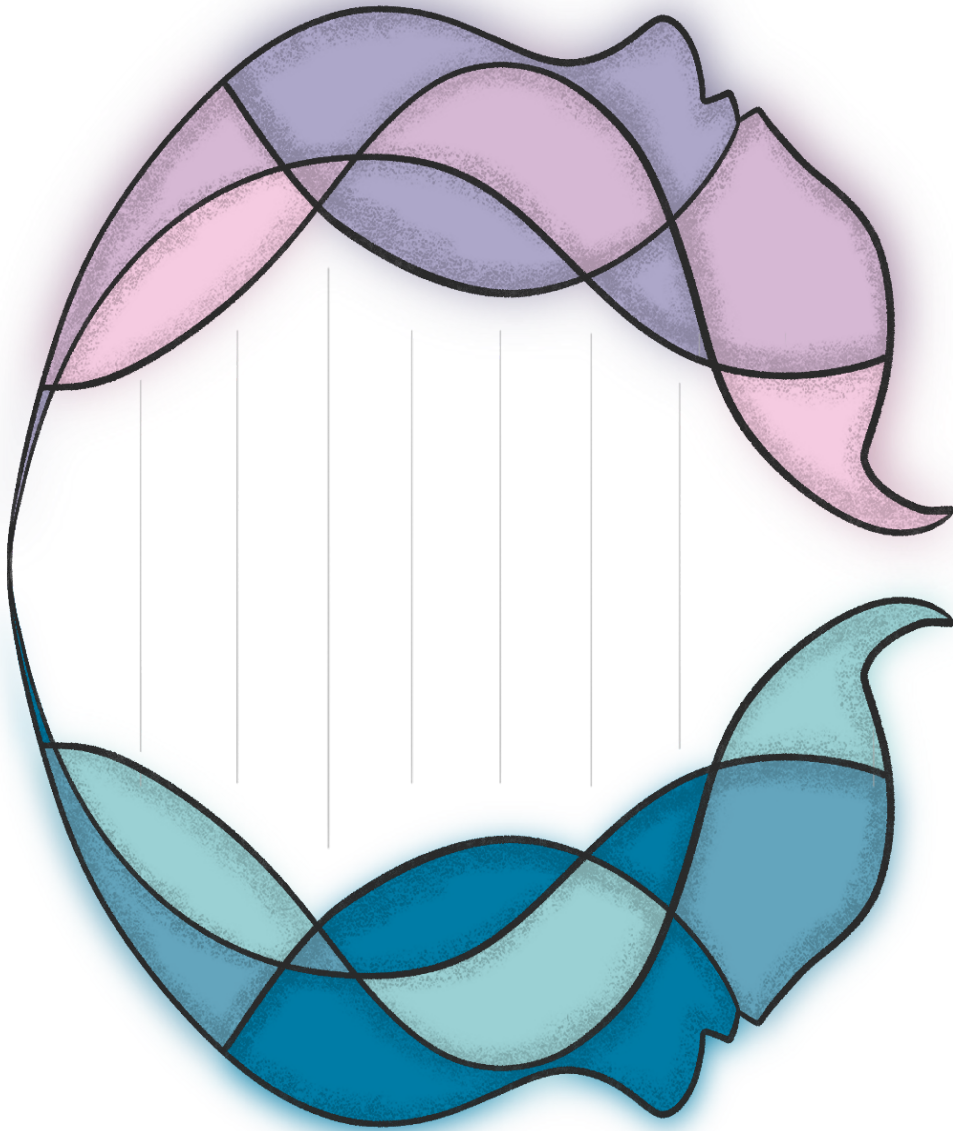
SETTING



PLOT



Part B: Compare and contrast the story with the real world. In pairs discuss and write your comments, thoughts and reflections.



Unit Four: Juxtaposing

Lesson 2: Juxtaposing Non-fiction Texts

Guide Stage

Material: Worksheet #13; Articles about Lewis Carroll written by Muñoz-Alonso (2015) and Roiphe (2001) respectively.

Time: 90 minutes

Suggested Procedure:



Step 1- Initially, Worksheet #13 is developed individually. Deliver the worksheet and instruct your students to find similarities and differences in the headings and sub-headings of two articles that see Lewis Carroll from two different perspectives. Then, have your students compare their answers in pairs, allocating some time for discussing and predicting the authors' positions. Your role is to guide students to go beyond what might seem evident.

Step 2- Have your students read, juxtapose and re-read the texts for full comprehension. Pose some questions, not only for checking understanding, but also for triggering your students to contrast their views about the articles and find possible bias from the authors.

Step 3- Ask your students to complete the charts where they need to juxtapose the texts to find similarities and differences in terms of main ideas, points of view, their evidence, and other relevant aspects to juxtapose.

Step 4- (Optional) Have your students share their position and insights (feelings, concerns, questions, etc.) about the information presented in the two juxtaposed articles.

Step 5- Tell your students to imagine they can contact Lewis Carroll and the authors of the articles via social networks. Ask them to post their opinions (in a text no longer than 280 characters) to express their impressions and reactions towards the information in the texts. Additionally, encourage them to pose some questions to promote a debate with the authors.

Worksheet #13 was designed to guide your students to contrast two articles with diverse opinions about the children's author Lewis Carroll. In addition to allowing your students to find basic similarities and differences within the articles, they implement the document as a tool to identify the authors' positions and beliefs about Lewis Carroll. Furthermore, it empowers your students to engage in a practiced interaction with the authors of the articles, express their reactions towards the information from the passages and express their concerns to the authors the text refers to.

Worksheet #13: Which Version do you Believe? (Photocopiable)


Name: _____ Date: _____

Part A

Directions: Read the titles and the headings of the two articles, what differences and similarities can you find? Write the first words that come to your mind


THE NEWS

A BBC documentary explores the possibility that Lewis Carroll, the author of Alice in Wonderland, may have been a pedophile, as suggested by his photographs.



THE NEWS

Just good friends? Lewis Carroll's interest in seven-year-old Alice Liddell may not have been as sinister as it seems.



SIMILARITIES:

DIFFERENCES:

Part B

Directions: Read and analyze the two articles, then complete the charts.

SIMILARITIES

Main idea	
Point of view of the authors	
Facts and evidence	
Other: _____ _____	

DIFFERENCES

Main idea

Point of view of the authors

Facts and evidence

Other:



Unit Four: Juxtaposing

Lesson 3: Connecting with Your Knowledge

Practice Stage

Material: Article entitled: “Dr. Seuss’s Responses to Nazism: Historical Allegories or Political Parables?” by West (2015); Worksheet #14; Cartoons drawn by Dr. Seuss about WWII.

Time: 120 minutes

Suggested Procedure

Step 1- Divide your class into two groups, A and B. Give the first group an article about Dr. Seuss and his view of II World War and the Nazis. Provide the second group with the story: “Yertle the turtle”, written by Dr. Seuss.

Step 2- Instruct students to re-read the texts and engage in a juxtaposition of the information presented in the article and the characterization within the story. They should identify both similarities and differences, drawing on their prior knowledge of Adolf Hitler to support a critical examination of the content. Students are then expected to complete the comparison chart (Worksheet #14 – Part A) and share their reflections with the class

Step 3- Have your students look at some cartoons drawn by Dr. Seuss and juxtapose the information in the images with the information in the two texts. Socialize with your students their reactions towards Dr. Seuss’s attitudes towards Hitler and World War II.

Step 4- Have students construct acrostics with the words “*Similarities*” and “*Differences*,” using each line to explore how their interpretations align or diverge from those of Dr. Seuss. Encourage your students to use rhymes as Dr. Seuss did (Worksheet #14 Part B).

Step 5 – Ask learners to draw their own cartoons where they compare or contrast Dr. Seuss’ story “Yertle the turtle” with current Colombian realities. Then, get them to work in pairs and present their cartoons. Finally, they write a reflection contrasting their cartoons based on the same reading (Worksheet #14, part C).



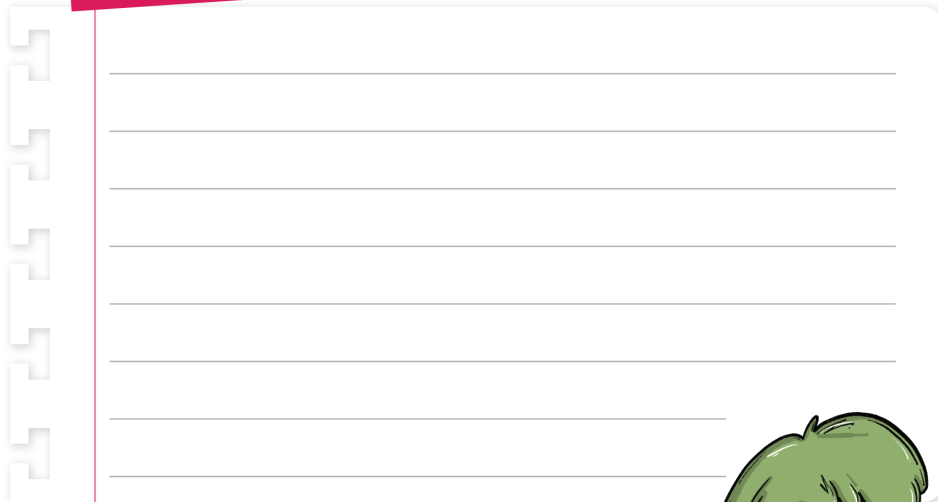
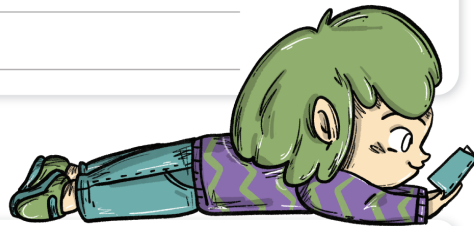
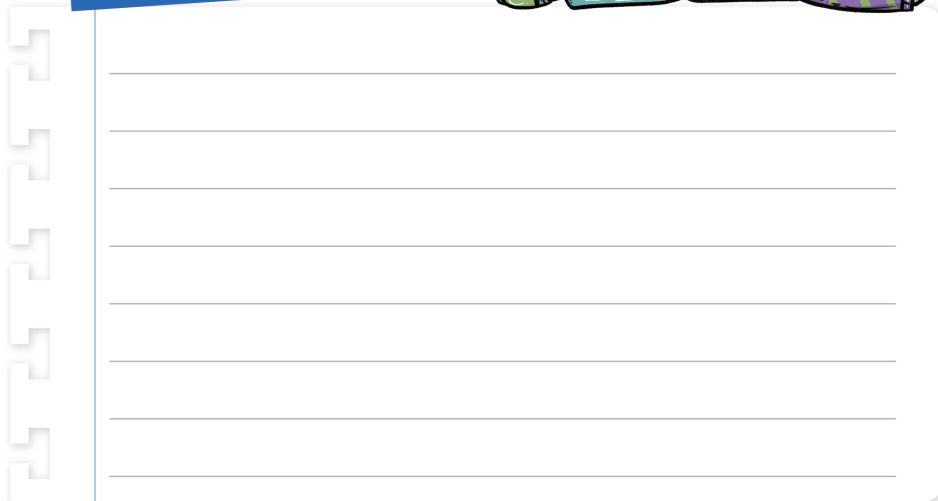
Worksheet #14 aims at juxtaposing texts and images aiming to improve your students' comprehension of the positions of the authors, connecting them with their previous knowledge and personal experiences. In this way, students can use writing as an excuse to generate new knowledge and share their insights as part of the process of creation.

Worksheet #14: Discussing and Connecting Knowledge (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

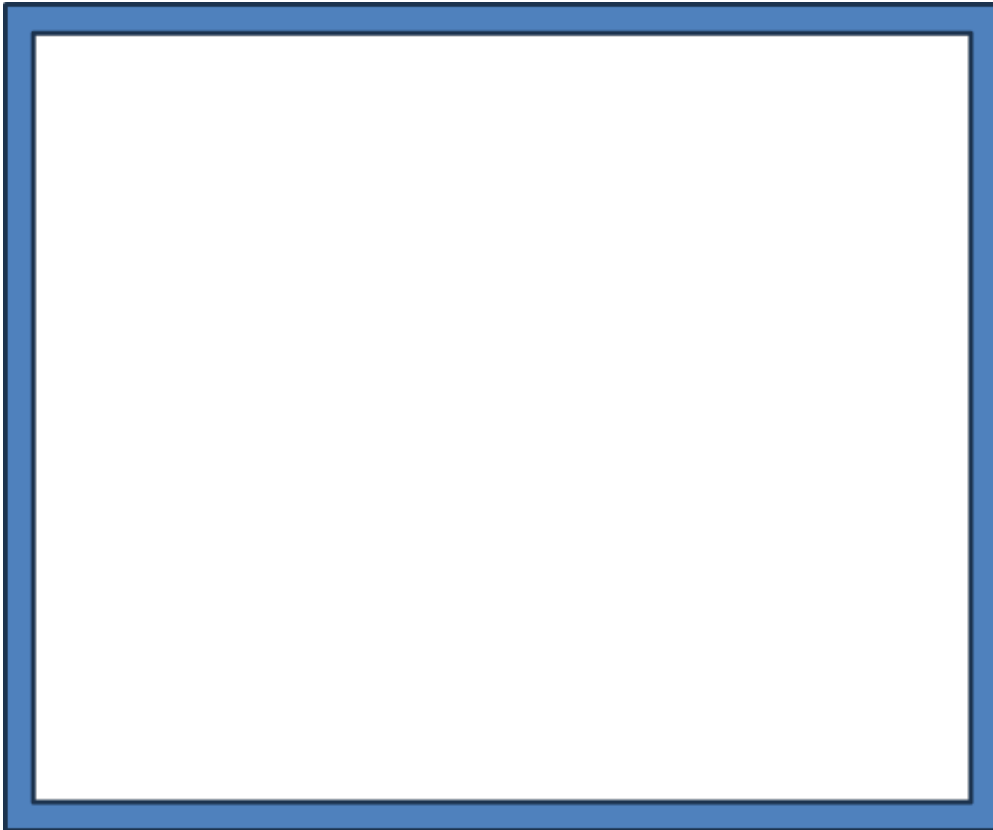
Part A:

Write and discuss some similarities and differences between the texts. Do not forget to let your voice be heard.

Similarities**Differences**

Part C:

Draw your own cartoon contrasting what Dr. Seuss expresses in his story and the current Colombian situation.



✓ Compare your cartoon with your partner's and write a reflection about how similar or different they see the story in connection with the current reality of our country

Unit Assessment

In this unit, the assessment is encouraged through peer-assessment; nevertheless, for these worksheets it will be developed in pairs. In other words, pairs of students are given a series of statements, and they need to agree on the most suitable answer based on the processes experienced throughout the unit.

Reflection

Your students are given some time for reflecting on and writing their opinions and feelings about the topics studied during the three different lessons. They express their strengths and weaknesses when developing activities for fostering critical reading skills through the stated strategy, concluding with a brief reflection about actions to be taken to improve their performance on posterior activities.



Unit Four Juxtaposing Peer-assessment (Photocopiable)

Student #1 Name: _____

Item	Comments
Aspects to maintain	
Aspects to be improved	
Advice for improvement	

Unit Four - Juxtaposing

Peer-assessment

Student #2 Name: _____

Item	Comments
Aspects to maintain	
Aspects to be improved	
Advice for improvement	

UNIT

5

Examining Personal Responses

Theoretical and Rationale Foundations of the Strategy

Reading is a two-way process in which the text and the reader interact actively. The text looks to influence or persuade the reader, while the reader makes sense of the text by drawing on their own feelings, beliefs, and experiences (Pritchard, 1993). This idea is closely connected to, which is often used in literature teaching but can also help promote critical reading through writing. Eagleton (as cited in García & Castañeda-Peña, 2015, p. 188) describes reader-response theory as a progressive evolution of literary theory, where the focus of reading has moved from the author to the text itself, and finally to the reader, who plays an important role in building meaning. As reported by García & Castañeda-Peña (2015), the origins of the reader-response theory proposed by Louise Rosenblatt date back to the 1930s through what she called the transactional theory. Rosenblatt (1978) describes the approach in the lines ahead:

The meaning of the text resides in the person rather than the words on the page; the ‘transaction’ or interaction between the reader and the text is different for every reader, and the text is different for every reader since each is a unique individual... (as cited in McIntosh, 2010, p. 120).

The analysis provided by this author supports the idea that the experience of reading differs from one person to the other, even when the text is the same. Following the dialogue, Carson (as cited in Farahian, & Farshid, 2014, p. 373) expresses that “the text itself ... is incomplete; it needs a reader’s experience to make it understood”. The link between the reader and the text is so strong that it is the reader who gives meaning

and purpose to the reading based on life experiences and previous knowledge. This last characteristic may imply that there are no right or wrong interpretations, just as different interpretations as readers are. Additionally, the impact of the reader-response theory expands to the readers' personal lives. One of the advantages of the approach is stated by Probst (1988) who discusses that implementing it helps learners to construct themselves as human beings as they read.

Although originally developed to examine literary texts, particularly fiction, the reader-response theory can also be effectively applied to short non-fiction narratives, such as those found in newspapers (Goetz et al., 1994). Non-fiction reading can evoke emotional responses and promote personal connections, as readers may identify with the events portrayed or feel personally affected by the stories. These bonds support the relevance of the reading experience, as their influence lasts longer, engaging people to become avid readers. Kahu and Gerrard (2018) highlight the role of emotional engagement in reading, noting that it enables readers to critically relate the text to their own experiences and life aspirations.

The previous section introduced the main characteristics of the reader-response theory; this one aims to explore how this approach connects with writing. Weih (2005) explains that “philosophical responses are conveyed when the reader writes about his deepest convictions on the theme directly suggested by the book” (p. 67), showing how writing allows readers to represent personal thoughts and beliefs.

Further illustrating the integration of writing and reader-response theory, Pritchard (1993) suggests providing readers with a series of prompts to write at the different stages of the reading process, so that students connect what they are reading with their own lives. The author has proposed these stages to include writing before, during, and after reading, to clarify the meaning of a text and to support an informed comprehension and thoughtful reflection, especially when working with literary texts. She warns teachers to attentively design each prompt since they must evoke personal feelings and responses for students to develop close connections with the characters, occurrences, or topics in the text. Furthermore, the author recommends considering writing as an ongoing process, asking your students to write a journal for a long span so the interaction bonds strengthen and the transactional theory occurs.

In terms of critical reading, McLaughlin and De Voogd (2004) assert that engaging with a text critically requires readers to move beyond surface ideas, incorporating their experiences, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds in the interpretative process. According to the writers, this approach allows for “exploring identities” (p. 90), as

readers draw upon personal and social knowledge to interrogate the ideas presented in the text and establish connections with their contexts. Students who engage in critical reading achieve deeper comprehension, being able to examine how texts reflect, reinforce, or challenge societal norms, values, and power structures. Critical reading constitutes a dialogic act in which meaning is co-constructed by the reader and the text, promoting autonomy and a grounded awareness of the relevance of standing from a position within broader social, political, and cultural systems.

Why do we use literary texts? According to Lazar (as cited in Farashian & Farshid, 2014, p. 373), using literary texts in the EFL classroom helps students to develop creative thoughts, critical thinking, and sensitivity. This vision is supported by Yang (2002) when stating that literature usually includes a series of everyday problems and situations that demand a reaction from the readers. Considering the characteristics mentioned, literary texts are profoundly suitable for this unit, whose purpose is to evoke emotional responses from learners through the use of fables as a highly relatable genre in children's literature.

This unit aims to encourage students to create a different meaning to the texts by connecting the experiences evidenced in the passages that resonate with students' backgrounds and perspectives. Applying this strategy is a critical component to improve students' critical reading abilities, as it guides them to feel the texts close to their realities, engaging with their personal lives, expectations, thoughts, and life experiences. In the words of García & Castañeda-Peña (2015), students' "reactions are intertwined with the readers' situated experiences as a reader and as a being in the life world" (p. 188).

Unit Five: Examining personal responses

Lesson 1: Reading the World as a Path to Self-Reflection

Explain and Demonstrate Stage

Material: Marker; blackboard; Worksheet #15; notebook.

Time: 80 minutes.

Suggested Procedure



Step 1- In collaboration with your students, begin by defining the term tyrant. Draw on the concept provided by Rundell (2008), who describes it as “someone in a position of power who behaves in a cruel or unfair way” (p. 764). Following this, guide a brainstorming activity to identify well-known historical figures commonly regarded as tyrants and record their names on the board for further discussion.

Step 2- Write the following moral on the board: “Any excuse will serve a tyrant”. It was taken from the fable “The Wolf and the Lamb” by Aesop (n.d.)

Step 3- Present to your students a personal experience in which a person repeatedly offered excuses to justify harmful behaviors toward you. Describe the situation in a reflective way, including details about your emotional response, the thoughts you had at the time, and the actions you ultimately decided to take in response to the situation.

Step 4- Distribute worksheet #15 to your students and have them read and re-read the whole fable: “The Wolf and the Lamb”. Upon completing the task, ask learners to select the emoji that best represents their emotional response to the text and briefly explain the reason behind their choice. Next, bearing in mind the definition of a tyrant, your students reflect on a similar experience they had and their actions to face the situation.

Step 5 – (Optional) Invite students to reflect on and write about situations in which they may have been tyrants themselves. Ask them to analyze the consequences of their actions, drawing comparisons with the events and the moral lessons presented in the fable. This exercise helps readers to foster critical self-awareness and ethical reasoning.

Step 6 – (Optional) Have your students share their insights of the worksheet. It would help them reflect on how a text could be perceived differently by each person depending on their own individual experiences.

Worksheet #15 was designed to explain and demonstrate to your students the wide range of responses that different readers may have to a text. These strategies align with the worksheet's purpose of encouraging students to share their insights, thoughts, and emotions after reading a fable. Additionally, attractive visual elements have been included seeking to motivate students to express their feelings comfortably, using emojis as a medium to represent their emotions.

Worksheet #15: Reflecting on my Feelings (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

- ✓ Read the fable: "The Wolf and the Lamb" by Aesop (n.d.)

The Wolf and the Lamb by Aesop

Once upon a time a Wolf was drinking from a spring on a hillside, when he saw but a Lamb just beginning to drink some water. 'There's my supper,' thought he, 'if only I can find some excuse to catch it.' Then he called out to the Lamb, 'How dare you muddle the water from which I am drinking?'


'I couldn't have,' the Lamb replied timidly. 'The water runs from you to me.'

'Well, then,' said the Wolf, 'why did you call me bad names this time last year?'

'That cannot be,' said the Lamb; 'I am only six months old.'

'I don't care,' complained the Wolf; 'if it was not you it was your father;' and with that he rushed upon the poor little Lamb and ate her all up. But before she died she gasped out: 'Any excuse will serve a tyrant.'

Fable adapted from: Planet Book.com



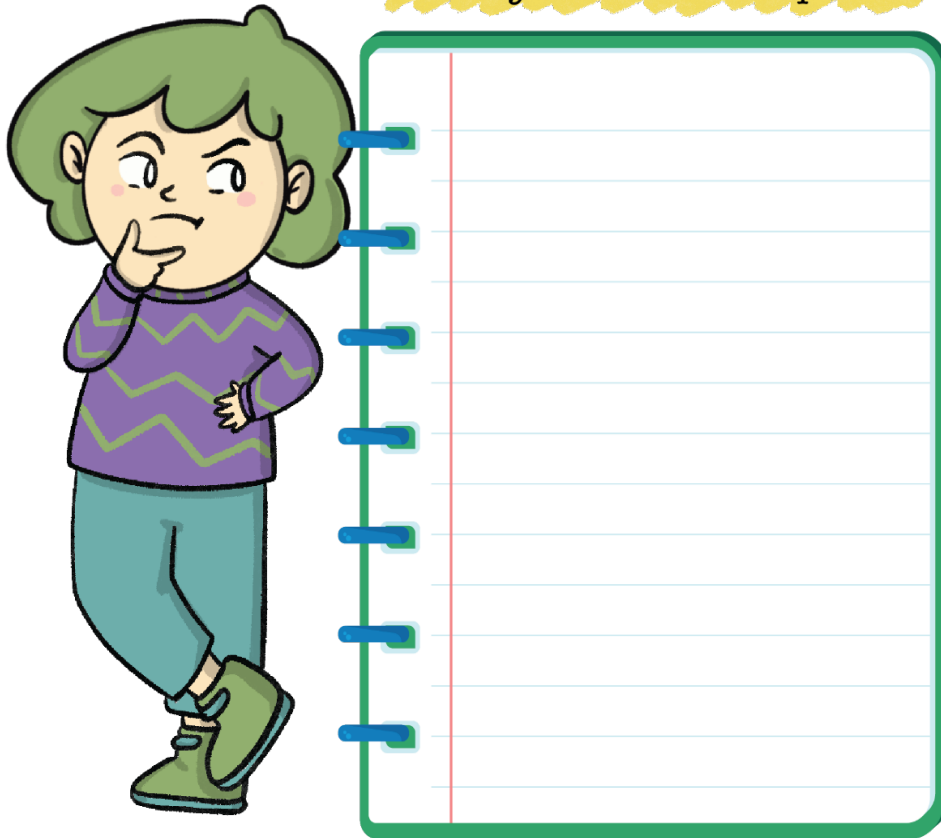
- ✓ How did you feel? Choose one of the emojis that best describes your feelings after reading the fable and explain the reasons.



Why?

- ✓ Based on the definition of a tyrant and the reading of the fable, think about a similar experience you have had. Write about it reflecting on how your experience connects with the fable.

Go beyond what is explicit!



- ✓ What actions did you take, or would you like to have taken when facing the situation described above?

Unit Five: Examining students' responses

Lesson 2: My Thoughts and Feelings

Guide Stage

Material: Worksheet #16

Time: 60 minutes

Suggested Procedure



Step 1- Give students a copy of worksheet #16 and have them read the title of the fable: “The young thief and his mother” by Aesop (n.d.). They should write about the characteristics of a good mother/son.

Step 2- Have your students read the fable and write their first reactions to the text. Guide them during the process, reminding them to go beyond literal descriptions.

Step 3- Ask students to read the text again to reflect and write about connections between the text and their own experiences and context.

Step 4- Once finished, instruct your students to read the text for a third time. Then, guide your students in the process of writing a cohesive text to share their responses in front of a set of hypothetical situations.

Step 5- (optional) Have your students share their texts in order to reflect on the new meaning they have given to the text.

This worksheet has been divided into three main sections, developed under teachers' guidance as they pose some questions to help students in the reflective process. This worksheet was designed by outlining different writing prompts that could be used before, during and after reading (Pritchard, 2003). The purpose is to guide students to respond to the fable by connecting it with their own experiences and insights, so they propose a new meaning for the text.

Worksheet #16: Where My Feelings and Thoughts Meet (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

✓ **Before reading**

Read the title of the fable: **“The young thief and his mother”** and answer the following question:

What do you think the characteristics of a good mother/son are?

✓ **During reading**

Read the fable and interpret it.

The Young Thief and His Mother

by Aesop (n.d.)

A young man, sentenced to execution for his crime of theft, requested to speak with his mother one last time. When she arrived, he asked to whisper something to her, and as she leaned in, he bit her ear nearly off. The witnesses, shocked by his violent act, demanded an explanation. He responded that he was punishing her, claiming that as a child, he had started stealing small items and brought them home. Instead of scolding him, his mother dismissed his actions, telling him they would go unnoticed. He blamed her encouragement for his downfall, believing it led him to the fate he now faced.

Fable adapted from: Planet Book.com

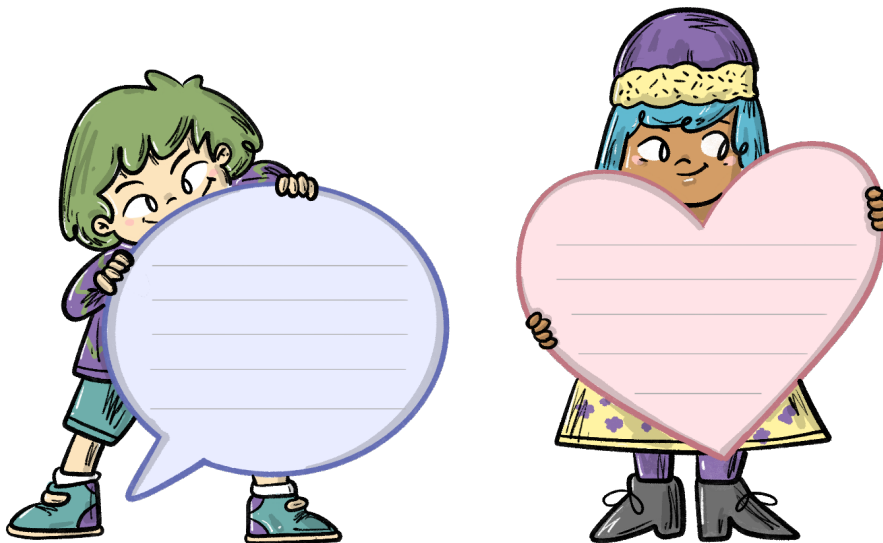


Write the feelings, impressions and thoughts that first came to your mind.

Read the fable once again. Does the “young thief” or “his mother” remind you of someone you know? Who? Why?

✓ **After reading**

What feelings and thoughts do this fable evoke on you when thinking about your own experiences?



Share your insights into what actions you think could have occurred after the young thief was executed.

Choose one of the characters of the fable, if you were him/ her, what attitudes and actions would you take in that situation?

Unit Five: Examining students' responses

Lesson 3: Are There Viable Solutions?

Practice Stage

Material: Worksheet #17.

Time: 60 minutes.

Suggested procedure



Step 1- Provide your students a copy of worksheet #17 and have them read twice the fable: “The man and the Wood” by Aesop (n.d.).

Step 2- Give your students time to write about their thoughts and feelings when connecting the fable to previous experiences they had.

Step 3- Have your students reflect and write on how the issue presented in the fable prevails in our communities (university, neighborhood, city, country). Ask them to describe feasible solutions.

Step 4- (optional) Have your students share their insights in pairs and discuss how similar or different their comprehension of to the text are. Encourage them to explore the text analyzing different perspectives they have regarding issues and possible solutions to the problem.

Worksheet #17 is designed to engage students in activities to widen their interpretation of texts, shifting from an analysis of individual to social issues. Their raised awareness helps them propose concrete solutions to real world problems. This aligns with McLaughlin and DeVoogd’s (2004) conception of social action in critical literacy, wherein readers are not only invited to articulate their thoughts and emotions but are also encouraged to plan solutions and take action. As Freire and Macedo (1987) assert, “reading the world always precedes reading the word, and reading the word continually implies reading the world,” underscoring the inseparability of literacy from sociocultural reality.

Worksheet # 17: Linking my Life and the World Through Social Action

(Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read the fable: “The man and the Wood” and complete the chart based on the connections between the text, your own experience and situations in your community

The Man and the Wood

by Aesop (n.d.)

A Man came into a Wood one day with an axe in his hand and begged all the Trees to give him a small branch which he wanted for a particular purpose. The Trees were good-natured and gave him one of their branches. What did the Man do but fix it into the axe head and soon set to work cutting down tree after tree. Then the Trees saw how foolish they had been in giving their enemy the means of destroying themselves.

Fable taken from: Planet Book.com.

My own life – Similar experience to the fable



My Community

How does the fable relate to a situation in my community (neighborhood/city/country)?



What realistic actions can I take?



Unit Assessment

Considering the lessons in this unit were developed as an individual process, self-assessment has been selected to conclude the evaluation. This type of assessment allows students to analyze their performance in detail, specifically delving into the connections between the text, their previous knowledge, experience and further actions to be taken to contribute to solving a social issue.

Reflection

Give your students sufficient time to express in their reflective journal all their comments and feelings, regarding the benefits and limitations of implementing the strategy for fostering critical thinking and the importance of building critically informed responses to information in texts.



Unit 5 Examining Personal Responses Self-assessment Checklist (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

After finishing the proposed activities for fostering critical reading skills, I ...

- Connect the information in the text with previous knowledge.
- Create a new meaning to the text by using my own experiences, thoughts and ideas.
- Express my feelings as a way to respond to the information included in the texts.
- Look for suitable solutions to contribute to the community.

Some further actions for improving my weaknesses are:

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

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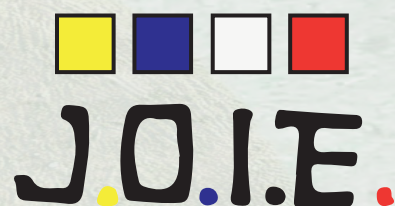
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Este libro se terminó de editar en el mes de
febrero de 2026, en la Editorial UPTC.
Tunja - Boyacá - Colombia.



The research group J.O.I.E. is committed to reimagining how foreign languages—English and French—are taught and learned, with a central focus on the human being as both the subject and the purpose of education. It promotes a pedagogy rooted in individual action and intercultural collaboration, aiming to develop communicative, personal, communicative and general competences that foster a mindset of excellence.

J.O.I.E. works to strengthen the pedagogy of action, promoting a holistic education that connects linguistic knowledge with personal, social, and cultural development. The group aims to shape autonomous, critical, and reflective individuals who grow through their own actions, recognizing the primacy of the subject in the research educational process.

The research Group J.O.I.E has the following research lines:

- Radio and Digital Tools in Foreign Languages
- Pedagogical Knowledge in Foreign Languages
- Research in the Creation of Didactic Materials in Foreign Languages
- Education in Rural Contexts and Foreign Languages
- Art and Literature in Foreign Languages



In contemporary education, fostering critical reading has become crucial as it encourages reflective processes, where students construct and articulate their own perspectives in dialogue with those from others. Accordingly, this book aims to provide EFL teachers with a set of strategies, activities, and worksheets, systematically grounded in theory to support their practice. The guided comprehension model, a teaching framework proposed by McLaughlin & Allen (2009), was adopted to provide a clear structure for teaching reading strategies through five progressive stages: explain, demonstrate, guide, practice, and reflect. The book is organized into five units, each focusing on a reading strategy: summarizing and paraphrasing, distinguishing facts from opinions, questioning, juxtaposing ideas, and examining personal responses. Each unit comprises three lessons, structured through worksheets: an introductory lesson, a lesson for guided instruction and review, and a final lesson focused on practice. After completing the lessons, students are allowed to evaluate their progress through formative assessment activities. Finally, the worksheets provide a space for self-reflection, where students can write entries in their reflective journals.



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