

READING ACTIVITY

Scaffolding* (For struggling learners)

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Objective : Enabling readers to read on their own but providing a supportive system, especially for struggling readers, till they acquire the required skills.

Participation : Individual.

Material : Any lesson in a textbook.

Preparation : Reading the lessons before taught with strategies for better linguistic and content comprehension.

Procedure :

- Learners should (be instructed to) pre-read a particular lesson before being taken up in the class as against the usual practice of teachers' leading the way. This exercise is primarily to make learners identify their areas of difficulty and hence, as and when those parts are dealt with by a teacher, they could have a focused attention to get them clarified. And, it is a common knowledge that not all learners learn in similar ways so the problems encountered by them are also not alike.
- Teachers should have a repertoire of scaffolding strategies to cater to differing demands of learners. The common problems most students encounter in English classes are a) unfamiliarity of words and b) lack of prior knowledge of the content to aid their comprehension. To generate interest in reading, the text has to be made accessible, which means familiarizing them with the vocabulary items. Scaffolding strategies such as discovery method, analogies, pictures, splitting up of words and so on can be employed keeping varying level of students to facilitate them to make sense of what they are reading.
- Tapping prior knowledge about the main idea and leading them to relate the content of the lesson to their own lives will increase their comprehensibility. Teachers can scaffold this with strategies such as being anecdotal or sharing well-known examples to enable them to grasp and personalize the content.
- Teachers have to employ a number of scaffolding strategies to make leaning meaningful and interesting to every learner. Once the scaffolding or assistance is not required they have to withdraw allowing students to continue building more advanced skills on their own for greater comprehension of texts.

Learning outcomes:

- 1) Learners realize that they need to engage with textbooks on their own prior to teaching to understand the individual challenges of comprehension.
- 2) Learners recognizing the difficult parts of lessons in advance and seeking the kinds of scaffolding required from the teacher vary from learner to learner.

Further activity: Reading textbooks without being taught with appropriate scaffolding strategies.

***Scaffolding:** The term scaffolding is derived from the construction engineering. While a building is constructed, a supportive structure is built along with it and on the completion of the building the scaffolding is dismantled. Similarly, in reading scaffolding is to be given to struggling learners and once they acquired the skill it is to be withdrawn and letting them develop more advanced skills.