

READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

Aims:

To develop students' reading skills

To develop students' speaking and listening skills

To develop students' writing skills

Level:

Elementary (A2)

STEP 1. WARM-UP

Objective:

To help students understand text message abbreviations

Introduction

Students do lots of texting in their L1 and are often keen to learn how to text in English too. In this lesson students have a discussion, learn some useful texting abbreviations and read an essay written by a Scottish student.

Procedure

Lead in: Discussion

Introduce the topic of mobile phones. What language do you use when you text your friends?

Task 1: Translating. Write the full word(s) or expressions near the abbreviations

CUL8R	see you later	WUCIWUG	
BF		RU there?	
LOL		v - vvv	
GFI		STU	
4ever		gr8	
HAGD		TYVM	
UOK?		EZ	
zzz		GF	

Task 2: Translating an essay from text language

Tell students they are going to read a Scottish girl's essay extract.

Task 2. This is part of an essay written by a Scottish 13-year-old secondary school pupil. Read the texting and 'translate' it into English.

My smmr hols wr CWOT. B4, we used 2 go 2 NY 2C my bro, his GF & thr 3 :- @ kds
FTF. ILNY, its gr8. Bt my Ps wr so {-/ BC o 9/11 tht thay dcdd 2 stay in SCO & spnd
2 wks up N. Up N, WUCIWUG -- O. I ws vvv brd in MON. O bt baas
& ^^

STEP 2. DEVELOPING READING SKILLS

Objective:

To develop students' reading skills

Introduction

Students tend to read without focussing on meaning. The following grids help them understanding how to develop reading strategies.

Procedure

Students are given the following table to understand how to develop effective reading strategies. They never think that reading means lots of work to be done before and after.

Then they are given a self-evaluation grid, to assess their process and concentrate on the way they really work.

BEFORE READING		WHILE READING		AFTER READING	
GOAL	HOW TO WORK	GOAL	HOW TO WORK	GOAL	HOW TO WORK
Getting focussed and orientated in the text	<p>Activating and using background knowledge.</p> <p>Read indexes, titles, subtitles, pictures, graphs to predict topic</p>	Understanding information and selecting the most useful pieces.	<p>Read carefully, checking in the dictionary the words you don't know.</p> <p>There are several techniques to understand the meaning of the text:</p> <p>1.K-W-L: what I Know - what I Want to know - what I Learned;</p> <p>2.request: reciprocal questioning;</p> <p>3.visualising through graphs and mind maps;</p> <p>4.asking and answering questions;</p> <p>5.putting heading to each paragraph.</p>	Reworking in order to memorize.	<p>Reformulate what you found in the text, summarizing, repeating aloud, explaining graphs and mind maps, tables, charts, etc.</p> <p>Fill in self-assessment grids.</p>
This stage is useful to link prior knowledge to the text.		This stage helps you learning something new. At the end, you must say: "now I know more".		This stage helps you remembering what you have discovered.	

Self-assessment grids

FLIP

FRIENDLINESS OF THE TEXT	Look at indexes, titles, sub-titles, pictures, graphs, etc. What do you think the text is about?	
LANGUAGE	Underline the words you don't know and see if they irrelevant to your understanding of the text.	
INTEREST	Do you like to the topic or do you find it boring?	
PRIOR KNOWLEDGE	Do you know anything about the topic?	

SMART

Stop reading after each paragraph and ask yourself how much you have understood. Then, fill in this chart:

UNDERSTOOD	NOT UNDERSTOOD
SUMMARISE THE PARAGRAPH USING YOUR OWN WORDS	ASK QUESTION TO SOLVE YOUR PROBLEMS

Step 3: Students are given a part of the general conduct to be followed by students in an Irish school. They must follow the two grids in order to really understand the content.

School Rules and Regulations

The school rules have been established in partnership with the community over a long period of time. They reflect the school community's expectations in terms of acceptable standards of behaviour, dress and personal presentation in the widest sense. Students are expected to follow the school rules at all times when on the school grounds, representing the school, attending a school activity or when clearly associated with the school i.e. when wearing school uniform.

Students have the responsibility:

- To attend school regularly
- To respect the right of others to learn
- To respect their peers and teachers regardless of ethnicity, religion or gender
- To respect the property and equipment of the school and others
- To carry out reasonable instructions to the best of their ability
- To conduct themselves in a courteous and appropriate manner in school and in public
- To keep the school environment and the local community free from litter
- To observe the uniform code of the school
- To read all school notices and bring them to their parents'/guardians' attention

A. GENERAL CONDUCT

Students are representatives of our school from leaving home until they return and are thus expected to set themselves a high standard of behaviour both inside and outside the school.

B. THE SCHOOL UNIFORM and GROOMING

should be worn tidily and correctly both at school and between home and school. The full school uniform must be worn at all times. Shirts are to be tucked in; socks are to be pulled up; heel straps in place. Where a situation arises concerning a student's uniform, written requests for temporary wearing of non-regulation items must be referred to a Dean or Deputy Headmaster.

Students are to be clean-shaven at all times while representing the school.

No visible jewellery is to be worn. Jewellery of religious or cultural significance may be worn but must be covered at all times.

No piercings are allowed. In particular, clear plastic studs, or otherwise, used to maintain the piercing, are not allowed.

A student's hair must be kept clean and tidy at all times. The length of the hair should not be shorter than a "number 2" razor cut. Hair should not be touching the shirt collar and should be off the face. The fringe when straightened /combed down must not hang in the eyes. The style of the hair should not be extreme including but not limited to mohawk, afro, shaved styles and/or patterns, hair tied up and braided. The colour must be the student's own natural colour; no dye nor highlights are allowed.

Once they have understood the text fully, they compare the expected behaviour in the Irish school with ours. They will summarize the results in a poster.




Step 5. Students are given another text, this time a story, about a girl's first school day. This time they use the techniques of K - W - L and request. First they work alone, then in pairs. They summarize the text, then write about their first school day.

Step 6.

They are given a similar text, this time as a test, which will be evaluated by the teachers.

Step 7. Evaluation

Students are given a grid in order to evaluate the whole process.

Things I can do now:	 with difficulty	 better than before	 really well
I look for clues before I start reading			
I look for difficult words in the dictionary			
I use the dictionary only if I don't understand from the context			
I put headings near each paragraph			
I ask myself questions if I don't understand the meaning of a paragraph			
I reformulate paragraphs			
I think I improved my reading skills			
I know what I have to do if I don't understand a text			