

Word Splash

Before Reading:

- A. Teacher orally dictates the list of vocabulary words that originate from a specific text. Students should circle the words they think they know the meaning of and they should underline words that they are unsure of their spelling.
- B. Students have five minutes to independently write a story using all of the above words.
- C. Students pair/share their stories.

During Reading: Students listen to the teacher read the specific text aloud. As they listen, they look for the vocabulary words in their print copy of the text.

After Reading:









1. Students edit (as needed) the spelling of their original dictation.
2. Students complete the vocabulary chart with their partners to consider the meanings of the vocabulary words. After a few minutes each pair joins another pair of students and compares work.
3. Students return to the text. They independently write down three or four things

they learn about _____ from the text. The students pair share their responses.

4. Teacher solicits volunteers' responses and probes them with the question, "*How do you know?*" The teacher links their responses to inferencing.
5. Students think about how they learned in this lesson: "*How did I learn? What did I do? How did I figure out meanings?*" Students can pair/share responses. The teacher gets them to consider how they used prior knowledge and context clues to determine vocabulary meanings. She/he also helps them to see the role of inferencing in gathering information.

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Literacy Focus

 Before Reading	 Fluency
 During Reading	 Comprehension
 After Reading	 Vocabulary
	 Writing
	 Oral Language

Text Impressions

This readiness strategy creates a situational interest in the content to be covered by capitalizing on students' curiosity. By asking students to form a written or oral impression of the topic to be discussed or text to be read, they become eager to discover how closely their impression matches the actual content (Brozo, 2004). The strategy may not automatically engender an overall and long-lasting appeal for the topic, but helps keep youth focused and engaged at a particular point in time and in a given setting, or least during the timeframe of the lesson. This is what we mean by situational interest. This "impressions" strategy can also be used before students encounter any information source, including a textbook or tradebook chapter, a lecture, a guest speaker, a DVD, a WebQuest, a field trip, and so on. For that reason, it's a versatile strategy that can increase motivation by heightening anticipation and providing a meaningful purpose for learning (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004).

STEP-BY-STEP

The basic process of conducting a lesson impression is:

1. Review the material for the day's lesson and select several key terms students will read or hear. Nouns and verbs work best and sometimes it's appropriate to include two, or three, word phrases, such as "cold spring" or "crash landing."
2. From the initial long list of words, identify a smaller number of them that stand out as suitable for leaving students with a pretty good impression but not a complete picture of the content.
3. Present the smaller list of the ideal words to students. This can be done in a number of ways. Words can be written or projected on the board, given in handout form, or even spoken for students to write in their notebooks. Words should be presented in the order in which students will encounter them in the lesson.
4. Tell students they are to use the words to make a guess as to what will be covered in class that day. Depending on the nature of the content, students should be encouraged to write a short descriptive passage, a story, or an essay. Be sure to remind students they are to use every word in their impression writing. Tell the students they do not have to use the words in their writing in the same order in which they received them.
5. Allow a reasonable amount of time for students to complete the writing while monitoring their progress and clarifying the task.
6. When students finish their short compositions, invite volunteers to read what they have written to the class. Anticipation is heightened when several students share their different impressions, leaving the class wondering whose impression is closest to the actual content.

7. Present the content. Students will read or listen closely to compare their impression writing with the text, lecture, or other information source. To help students keep track of the similarities and differences, they can be asked to make a Venn diagram. In one circle they can list their ideas; in the other, the actual information; and in the overlapping space, the common ideas.

APPLICATION AND EXAMPLES

Teachers from every discipline can use the lesson impression strategy to increase motivation and help students focus more closely on the content of any given lesson. For example, an 11th-grade English teacher employed the strategy as a prelude to reading Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*.

First, she began by presenting her students with a list of words and phrases taken directly from the story content about to be read. For example, the following words were written on the board:

Gregor
sleep
morning
insect
sister
fear

Next, she asked the students to write a story or description that included these words. The idea behind this strategy is that the words give just an impression of the initial plot action in the story, leaving students to try to fill in the gaps with their hunches, guesses, and creative imaginations. She allowed any student who had difficulty writing his or her own impression story to team up with a classmate and dictate a story. When finished writing, volunteers were asked to read their stories aloud and lead the class in a discussion about the similarities and differences among them. One student's text read:

There once lived an unhappy man named Gregor. He was unhappy because every night while he would sleep, an insect would sting him. One morning he woke up and his sister saw that he had a big red sore from an insect bite. She was filled with fear and took him to the doctor right away.

A team of two students crafted the following piece:

Gregor loved insects. He took long walks in the forest just to look at them. In his sleep he dreamt about them. One morning he left for the forest and didn't return by the end of the day. His sister called the police out of fear that something had happened to Gregor. The next day when the police found him they learned he had gotten lost following a beautiful butterfly.

After a variety of impressions were shared, the class was eager to discover which one was the most accurate. At this point, she passed around paperback copies of the novella and read the opening of the *The Metamorphosis* aloud as students followed along in their books. While reading she asked students to listen to how closely their impression stories matched the events of the actual story.

The teacher has noticed how the lesson impression strategy helps her students become more engaged listeners and readers. As their attention to story content increases, their comprehension and retention improves as well.

References

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- Guthrie, J. T., & Humenick, N. M. (2004). Motivating students to read: Evidence for classroom practices that increase reading motivation and achievement. In P. McCardle & V. Chhabra (Eds.), *The voice of evidence in reading research* (pp. 329–354). Baltimore: Brookes.
- Kafka, F. (1993). *The metamorphosis and other stories* (translated by Joachim Neugroschel). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.