Guided reading worksheet

Chapter 17

Issues

Think about these questions and make a note of your answers.

1 How accurate and useful is it, from a teaching point of view, to categorise skills as receptive (listening, reading) and productive (speaking, writing)?

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2 How effective are true-false questions (often used in coursebooks) in helping students to understand and engage with texts?

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3 How do listeners typically give feedback to speakers on the comprehensibility of their spoken messages, either in face-to-face conversations or on the telephone?

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4 Which factors can make a text 'difficult' for learners to understand and engage with?

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5 Should difficult authentic texts, e.g. extracts from Shakespeare's plays, ever be used with beginner students?

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6 If it is acknowledged that many varieties of English exist, is it fair to say that some varieties should still be disregarded as models for EFL/ESL students?

Discuss

Find a colleague to discuss these issues with. If they have a different opinion from yours, find out why. At the end of the conversation, summarise where you agree and continue to disagree, and why.

Check

1 **Match the words and phrases in the box to the definitions (1–9).**

| intensive reading | lead in | webquest | schema | top-down processing |
| extensive reading | foreignising | Type 2 | bottom-up processing | |

1 the background knowledge we have of the world which affects how comprehensible texts are to us

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2 the way in which learners (often more advanced) get a general view of a reading or listening package: the big picture

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3 learner activity which is self-motivated and usually conducted alone, and is often done for enjoyment

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4 the way in which learners (often lower-level) focus on individual words and phrases, and achieve understanding by linking these together to form a whole

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5 a short learning activity designed to activate the learners' curiosity and interest in a topic

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6 tasks which move the learner from a superficial engagement with a listening or reading text to a more detailed understanding

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7 a structured learning process involving teacher design and instruction on how to conduct research online in order to achieve learning objectives

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8 teacher-directed reading activities which aim to complete some form of structured and explicit comprehension and/or language learning goal

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9 the use of a familiar word from a language known to the learner in a way as to make it sound English: a common strategy when learners do not know or cannot recall the appropriate English word

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2 **What general differences in procedure are there between teaching receptive and productive skills?**

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3 **Identify one advantage and one disadvantage of regularly pre-teaching vocabulary to help learners understand difficult texts.**

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4 **Think of a typical day in your life and come up with examples which you could tell students which illustrate how the four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) are often used in an integrated and overlapping way, rather than as isolated activities.**

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5 **Give three examples of ways in which speakers can adapt to different audiences in order that their message comes across effectively.**

Evaluate

6 Read the following dialogue and find three examples of sociocultural rules (conventions/expectations) of conversation which you think it is important for students to be aware of when communicating with similar individuals from this context.

Conversation in a supermarket

Bob: Hey, Emma.
Emma: Hi, Bob. How are you?
Bob: Fine, but awful weather, isn't it?
Emma: Yes, terrible.
[Pause]
Bob: Yes. So, how about you? Haven't seen you for a while.
Emma: Been busy. Kids have been sick actually.
Bob: Oh, nothing serious, I hope.
Emma: No, thanks. And you? Still travelling?
Bob: Absolutely. Hong Kong next week.
Emma: Hong Kong. My sister lives there. I always wanted to go.
Bob: You can go instead of me if you want. I'm so sick of travelling!
[Laughs]

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7 Look at these three extracts in which students try to cope with a lack of vocabulary to express their ideas by using a compensating speaking strategy. Which strategy is being used in each extract?

1 So, then I went home, and was feeling, how do you say, … um … is difficult in English … erm … OK, it doesn't matter. Anyway, I picked up the phone and …

2 I sometimes hate this organisation. There are so many … how do you say … erm … reglamentations. You always need to ask someone for this, for that. It's crazy sometimes.

3 So, could you help me? I need to write a letter, erm … for a job … you know, the one you send with a resume, CV, no? What is it? You normally send this letter, explain why you want the job, … you know what I mean?

Action

8 Find an authentic text which you think would be interesting and motivating for your students to read. Identify three language constructions in the text which could be mined to support the students' learning of language. Share your ideas with a colleague.

9 Prepare a lesson for a class with a language level of your choosing. Select an audio or reading text that would be appropriate for that level. Decide how you would introduce the text with a lead-in activity. Create Type 1 and Type 2 tasks for the materials. Think about how you can get the students to study or use language from the text. Discuss your lesson plan and materials with a colleague to get feedback.

10 Discuss with your students the main advantages of using an extended project in language learning (opportunity to work on topics of personal interest, possibility to integrate several skills in a single project, etc.) and decide with them the objectives, content areas and structure of a short learning project which they can carry out either individually or in pairs during part of their study with you.

1   **1** schema   **2** top-down processing   **3** extensive reading   **4** bottom-up processing   **5** lead in   **6** Type 2   **7** webquest   **8** intensive reading   **9** foreignising

2 Broadly speaking, in productive tasks the teacher needs to take time to set up the task successfully, to monitor work as it is done, respond to it appropriately (inspire creativity, encourage a return to the core exercise), and then provide feedback on the work produced. Teaching receptive tasks is more a process of guiding the students through set tasks with answers, and then encouraging a transfer of learning with a more open activity to conclude the class.

3 One advantage of pre-teaching vocabulary is that it can reduce barriers to understanding which students are likely to encounter; one disadvantage is that it may slow down their ability to develop the skills to tackle authentic texts for general understanding.

4 For example, you might get up in the morning, turn on the radio and hear a news story. You then read about the news story in the newspaper on the way to work. Over a morning cup of coffee, you debate the news story with your colleagues. During the day, you mention that news story in an email to an international colleague and ask for their perspective.

5 (Suggested answers)
In terms of style, you may need to speak up, slow down, be more direct/indirect, increase/decrease the level of formality, etc. In terms of content, you may need to adapt the content to the level of knowledge of a specific audience. For example, if you are an evolutionary biologist speaking to a non-scientific audience about genetics and evolution, it would probably be necessary to avoid specialist biochemical terminology which few would understand, and speak in more everyday language.

6 (Suggested answers)
Polite opening with 'How are you?', which is reciprocated; talking about the weather; talking about family (kids); showing concern ('Nothing serious, I hope?'); finding things in common (relating to Hong Kong); use of humour; short interactive turn-taking

7   **1** discarding   **2** foreignising   **3** paraphrasing