

UNIT STRUCTURE

Teaching How to Locate Information in a Passage

CLASS – VII

Unit Overview	Rationale	Unit Outcomes				Methodology Support					Additional Reading		
		Learning Outcomes	Learning Gaps to be addressed	Related Lessons	Unit Objectives	Introduction	Case Study 1	Activity 1	Case Study 2	Activity 2		Summary	Suggested Questions
<p>Overview of the language skill</p> <p>What the Gunotsav assessment shows us</p>		<p>LO 7.11 : The learner reads to seek information in print/online, noticeboard, signboards in public places, newspaper, hoardings etc.</p> <p>LO 7.13 : The learner infers the meaning of unfamiliar words by reading them in context.</p> <p>LO 7.15 : The learner reads a variety of texts for pleasure e.g. adventure stories and science fiction, fairy tales, biography, autobiography, travelogue etc. (extensive reading)</p>	<p>Sub Area: i. plan activities to help students read and locate information in a passage</p> <p>Sub Area: ii. develop ways of helping students guess the meanings of new words in their contexts</p>	<p>Unit 3 Gopal in the Hilsa Fish</p> <p>Unit 4 The Shed That Made Trees Bloom</p> <p>Unit 5 Chivvy Quality Trees</p>	<p>In this unit you will read ways of helping learners to:</p> <p>(a) plan activities to help students read and locate information in a passage</p> <p>(b) develop ways of helping students guess the meanings of new words in their contexts</p>	<p>What this unit will teach you</p>	<p>Locating information from a text</p>	<p>Helping students to locate information from a text</p>	<p>Guessing meaning from the context</p>	<p>Working with different texts</p>	<p>What you learnt in this unit</p>	<p>Sample Question : Q. Choose the correct spelling: (a) PAPYAA (b) PAPAYA (c) PAAPYA (d) PAAPAAYAA</p>	<p>➔ www.tess-india.edu.in</p>

Overview

The National Curriculum Framework (2005) emphasises competency in reading, writing and knowledge of grammatical elements as means of learning a language efficiently. Thus, learners of English need to be equipped with the skills that enable them to read, write and use the grammar of the language effectively. Good reading helps a learner to comprehend any reading material easily. Good writing helps a learner to express themselves clearly, and the knowledge of the grammatical elements of the language helps a person to communicate with others in appropriate ways.

By the time children are in Class VII, they are expected to be able to do various things in English. They are expected to be able to listen and understand English spoken in and outside the classroom, speak, read and write fluently, and with confidence, in various situations. However, it is found that not all children have been able to acquire these skills and abilities.

Rationale

The analysis of data obtained from assessment of Gunotsav 2017 results reveals that learners of Class VII have not yet acquired the level of English they are expected to. Many of the learning outcomes have not been met, and these have been called 'grey areas'. Examples of grey areas include locating information related to life situations (only 45% have been able to answer questions relating to this), sentence formation (44%), reading information from a table (44%) and the use of appropriate articles (34%). To help our students to achieve their expected learning outcomes, we need to involve them in language practice activities in the class. We also need to know what other teachers have done in similar circumstances, so that we can try out their ideas in our situations too.

Introduction

In Class VII, reading is no longer just about reading words, or even lessons from the textbook. By this class, students are expected to be able to read various kinds of texts both inside and outside the classroom. These skills, however, develop only with practice. As the Gunotsav performance of students show, many students are still unable to read the textbooks with comprehension, let alone other types of texts. As teachers, we have to stop and question ourselves: Where does the problem lie? Is it because children are uninterested in reading English, or is it because they do not get enough practice? Whatever the reason, we need to give children enough practice in reading skills, so that they can read without our help by the time they move to Class VIII. In this unit, you will read about ways of engaging your students in reading activities to develop the skills of reading, so that they are able to read and understand texts in the outside world, infer information from them, and also develop the habit of reading for pleasure. You will read about helping your students locate important information from a text, guess the meanings of unfamiliar words, and also read different texts with confidence.

Unit Objectives

In this unit you will read ways of helping learners to:

- (a) to plan activities to help students read and locate information in a passage
- (b) to develop ways of helping students guess the meanings of new words in their contexts

Case study 1 : Locating information from a text

Mitali Gogoi teaches English in Class VII. She tries various techniques to make her students read English easily. Rather than reading out lessons line by line and explaining the meaning of each sentence, she tries to involve the students in the reading process. She knows that reading and explaining the lesson herself is the easy way out, but she also realises that this will not help her students. After all, when they are outside the classroom, no one will go and explain to them the meanings of every notice or advertisement or signboard they read.

Here she discusses one technique she uses to train her students to locate important information in a text.. The example is from Lesson 5 - Quality - of the Class VII English textbook Honeycomb. This is what she says:

'When we started the lesson, I announced to my students that they had to read the first paragraph, which went like this:

I knew him from the days of my extreme youth, because he made my father's boots. He lived with his elder brother in his shop, which was in a small by-street in a fashionable part of London.

I asked the students to guess, from the sentences, who the person referred to as 'he' was. Some of them came up with the correct answer - 'A shoemaker', and we discussed what other words can be used to describe such a profession. One child answered 'cobbler' and another said 'bootmaker'. We discussed which word would best describe the person, and why they felt so.

Although the students responded in broken English, they could tell me that because the person made boots, and lived in 'a fashionable part of London', the word 'cobbler' would not be appropriate. They should call him a 'shoemaker' or a 'bootmaker'. I was very happy with their responses, and told them they were actually practising a reading technique called 'inferring information from a text'. Then I asked them if they wanted to practise other reading techniques with this lesson. They were all eager, so I spent the rest of the class time in making them look for specific information from the text.

They read the next paragraph:

The shop had a certain quiet distinction. There was no sign upon it other than the name of Gessler Brothers; and in the window a few pairs of boots. He made only what was ordered, and what he made never failed to fit. To make boots—such boots as he made—seemed to me then, and still seems to me,

mysterious and wonderful.

I asked them to find out answers to these questions as they read -

1. Was the shop a busy one? Where in the paragraph do you find this information?
2. Did he sell boots in the store? How do you know?

The students read the paragraph twice or thrice, and were able to tell me that the shop was not busy because of certain words ('quiet', 'no sign', 'a few pairs of boots', 'made only what was ordered'). They also said he did not sell boots, because the paragraph mentions that 'He made only what was ordered'.

In this way, by looking for specific information in the paragraph, the students could read and understand things that were not even stated in the lesson. Their reading abilities were improving with every paragraph. This also made me realise that it was my duty to frame questions that made them think and read with more focus and attention.

From then on, I have always prepared for my lessons by forming questions on the main ideas in a text, and giving these to students while they read, rather than after they finished reading.'

Let's stop and think

1. What is the value of teaching children to look for information while reading? Will it help them read more actively?
2. Mitali talks about the importance of preparing questions beforehand. Have you ever tried doing that? Do you agree that it helps them become better readers?
3. Looking for information does not only mean looking for things the writer has not said. What other kinds of information can you ask your students to look for when they are reading a lesson?

Activity 1 : Helping students to locate information from a text

As you know, the learning outcomes for Class VII reading includes the ability to read 'a variety of text for pleasure, adventure, stories and science fiction, folk tales, biography, autobiography, travelogue' for practice in extensive reading. Here is an activity that you can try out with your students to give them practice in looking for information efficiently while reading.

Bring to the class a page out of the Sunday supplement of a local English newspaper like *The Assam Tribune*, *The Sentinel*, *The North East Times*, *The Telegraph* or *G Plus* (these are also available online). *The Telegraph* has a Wednesday supplement called *Wizkids* which has very interesting reading material for young children.

If you have the resources, make photocopies of the page. If not, dictate the contents to the students before the activity. Make sure you choose a text that is interesting for students and not difficult to understand. Here is an article on Stephen Hawking written by a Class VII student, published in the Planet Young section of *The Assam Tribune* dated March 29, 2018.

Stephen Hawking – an icon for mankind

Professor Stephen William Hawking, one of the most famous physicists, cosmologists and mathematicians, was born in Oxford, U.K., on January 8, 1942, exactly 800 years after Galileo's death. He died on March 14, 2018, on the 76th birth anniversary of Albert Einstein... a surprising coincidence indeed! His father, Frank Hawking, was a well-known biologist and his mother, Isobel Hawking, was a political activist. Stephen Hawking's primary education started at St. Alban's School, Hertfordshire. After completing school, he studied Physics and Chemistry at the University of Oxford, in 1959. In 1962, he went to Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and completed his Ph.D. in the year 1965.

At the age of 21, Hawking suffered from a motor neuron disease A.L.S., commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. The doctors even declared that he would not be able to survive the age of 23. He proved the doctors wrong, but was forced to become fully dependent upon his wheelchair, which was specially made for him by the Intel Corporation Company, which could actually read his thoughts and express it out in the computer. One of his many famous discoveries were Black Holes. Black Holes are the places in space which contain such strong gravitational force that any kind of matter cannot move out from it once entered, not even light!

Some of the many popular books written by Stephen Hawking are – *A Brief History of Time*, *The Grand Design*, *The Theory of Everything*, and *The Nature of Space and Time*. The book *A Brief History of Time*, published in the year 1988, became a bestseller and has sold more than ten million copies till now.

The great scientist was awarded a number of honorary awards. In 1984, Hawking was awarded the Nobel Prize. He also won the Albert Einstein Medal in the year 1979. Hawking won the Wolf Prize in Physics in the year 1988, and the Copley Medal in 2009. By the end of the 20th century, he became one of the best and most famous scientists in the world. His death is a big loss for the entire world and a museum has been created that may not be filled for many years to come.

Hawking leaves behind his wife Elaine Mason, former wife Jane Hawking, his children Robert, Lucy and Timothy, and his grandchildren. Today the world of science mourns the death of the great scientist. His discoveries, works and the books written by him will always be remembered by the future generations.

Widdhanta Datta Bhattacharya, Class-VII, Don Bosco School, Guwahati.

To make them learn how to read for specific information, involve them in making questions. Divide the class into five groups, and give each group one paragraph to work on. Ask each group to read and

discuss their paragraph and make questions on the important information. Practice one question with them, such as 'When was Stephen Hawking born?', so that they are clear about what to do in the group.

Once their questions are ready, ask each group to exchange their set of questions with the group next to them. Now they will have to find answers to the questions by reading quickly through the paragraph on which the questions are based. When one group finishes finding answers for one paragraph, they should take the questions for a different paragraph, until they have found answers for the whole article.

In this way, without realising it, they will have learnt to read with focus even without waiting for you to 'teach' them. While formulating or answering questions children may make mistakes, either in sentence construction or in information. So while they are doing group study, you can move around and help them write the questions and answers correctly. This will save you time, and help them to learn from their mistakes.

Let's stop and think

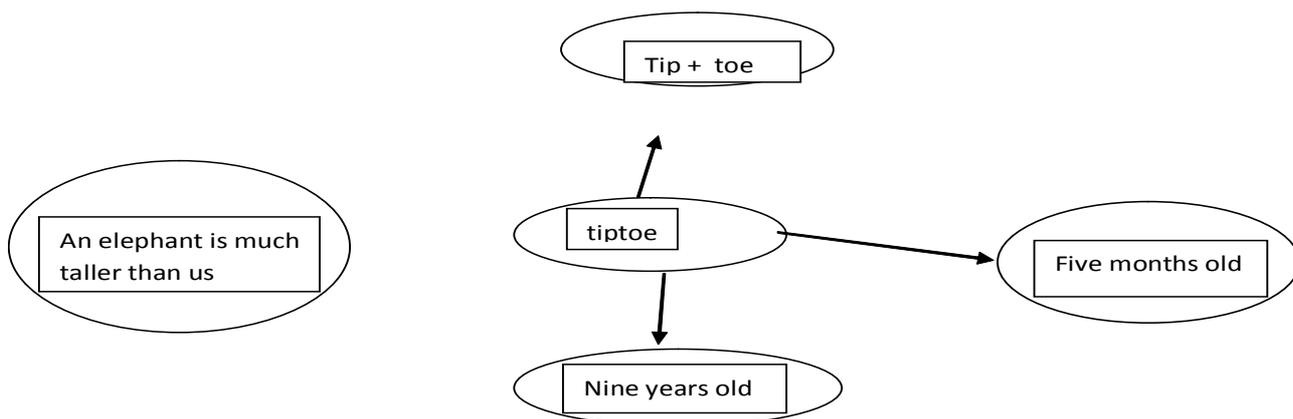
1. Do your students feel confident to read by themselves? Do you think they will enjoy this kind of a reading activity? What can you do to make them eager to read?
2. When students are doing group reading and discussing a text, there is bound to be noise. What can you do to control the noise level so that it does not disturb other classes?
3. Do children have English materials they can bring to class? Or do you think it is your duty alone to provide different kinds of reading material? What are the advantages of encouraging children to bring a variety of texts to the class?

Case Study 2 : Umananda Mili teaches his students to guess meaning from the context

Umananda Mili, a Class VII teacher, always worried that his students did not understand the meanings of many words in their lessons, and he had to spend a lot of time telling them word meanings. Then he had a chance to attend a training workshop, where he learnt techniques about teaching reading. He liked a particular activity, which he decided to try out in his own class. Here is what he did: 'First I took a passage from their supplementary reader 'An Alien Hand' - Bringing Up Kari'. The first paragraph of the passage was this:

"Kari the elephant, was five months old when he was given to me to take care of. I was nine years old and I could reach his back if I stood on tiptoe. He seemed to remain that high for nearly two years. We grew together; that is probably why I never found out just how tall he was. He lived in a pavilion, under a thatched roof which rested on thick tree stumps so that it could not fall in when Kari bumped against the poles as he moved about.

I asked the students to read the paragraph and tell me the words they did not know. I had prepared for this activity, so I knew they would mention the words 'tiptoe', 'pavilion', 'thatched', 'stumps' and 'bumped'. When they told me they did not understand these words, I put the words up one by one on the blackboard, making a word web like this:



I asked them to guess what the word could mean, by drawing their attention to the following:

- i. the structure of the word: tip + toe
- ii. the surrounding words: five months old, nine years old etc.
- iii. their background knowledge: what elephants look like and how tall they grow.

By making intelligent guesses, the students came up with words that would help them understand the meaning, which I put in the circles in the word web. After discussion, they guessed that the meaning of tiptoe would relate to 'standing on the tip of one's toes, because the elephant baby was very tall.' After that, I used the word in two more sentences, and asked them to supply one sentence of their own. This helped them remember the meaning of the word and also its use.

We practised similarly with the other words, looking for clues in the sentences ourselves, and also using our background knowledge. The students understood that they could guess the meanings of new words from the text itself. This made them feel more confident to read, because they did not have to wait for em to tell them the meaning every time they read a new word. Of course, I reminded them that it was important to check the meaning of the words in a dictionary too.

I found that although the children needed to struggle with the text, the act of trying to guess the meaning of a new word made them read the text with more focus. This gradually made them better readers.'

Let's stop and think

1. Why should a teacher not tell students all the meanings when they read? Do you also make your students guess meaning from the context?
2. A word may have different meanings in different contexts. Is it important to remind students of this? Do you think this improves their vocabulary?
3. To try out any new activity requires time, materials and hard work. Do you think the effort is worth it?

Activity 2: Working with different texts

As the learning outcomes for Class VII describe it, at this stage students need to be taught to read and understand information in different kinds of texts, such as that found on the notice board, signboards in public places, newspapers, hoardings, etc.

The common reading strategies for reading such texts include skimming and scanning. Skimming means the ability to read a text in order to understand the gist or main idea. Scanning, on the other hand, is reading a text quickly to get the main points. In real life, we use skimming and scanning almost daily. For example, when we read a signboard from a moving bus or car, we try to catch only the important information. When we read a newspaper in the morning before coming to school, we quickly go through the headlines and try to remember the main events.

In this activity, you will be able to help your students practise skimming and scanning.

Select a popular advertisement from an English magazine or newspaper, or from the internet. You can even take a photo of an actual hoarding on your phone and take a printout of it. Here is an advertisement taken from *The Assam Tribune* of April 9, 2018. You can use this one or similar ones. Try and select advertisements that has some amount of text, and is also about a brand that children know about, such as Amul milk, Colgate toothpaste, Surf Excel etc.

To make students practise scanning, put up questions like these on the blackboard before you make them read the text:

1. What festival is being celebrated?
2. What is the venue?
3. What are the dates of the event?

4. Where will the opening ceremony be held?
5. When will the closing ceremony be held?
6. What will happen on 11th April?

Tell them to read the questions carefully, because they will have to answer them quickly.

Then distribute the copies of the advertisement, and tell them they have just five minutes to give the answers. Setting a time limit is good, because that makes children read and locate specific information, rather than reading from beginning to end.

You can use the same text to practise skimming, by asking questions like:

1. What is the advertisement about?
2. Why is it being put in a newspaper?
3. Besides the dates and time of events, what do you see in the advertisement?

You can keep practising skimming and scanning with the lessons in the textbook too. Continued practice will make students read with both speed and understanding.

Let's stop and think

1. Why is it necessary to teach students skimming and scanning?
2. What kinds of texts can you bring to the class to practise these reading skills?
3. What kinds of questions will you make from the lessons to make students practise skimming and scanning?

Unit Summary

In this unit, you read about ways of helping children achieve the learning outcomes for reading. You read about other teachers who have to teach students with reading problems, and how they tried to face this challenge. You also learnt the value of making students read texts outside the syllabus, so that they can become efficient readers both inside and outside the classroom. The unit showed you two activities that you can use in your classroom, and what kinds of preparations are necessary for that. By trying out the strategies suggested here, you can make your students overcome their poor reading habits. You will also be able to train them to be independent readers.

Suggested Questions

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow :

Papaya is the healthiest fruit with a list of properties. It belongs to the family of Caricaceae fruit. It is commonly known as apou in Australia and mamao in Brazil. It originated in Southern Mexico and neighbouring Central America, but is now available in every tropical and sub-tropical country. Papaya helps in digestion and sunburns. We can munch on it as a salad, cooked or boiled or just drink it up as milkshake or juices. Papaya has much to contribute to the health cause. The most important virtue of papaya is its protein digesting enzyme in the milky juice or latex. It assists the body with its maximum nutritional value, provide energy and body building materials. Papaya cures many diseases like deficiency in gastric juices, dyspepsia and intestinal irritation. The juice of papaya seeds also assists in curing habitual constipation, bleeding piles and chronic diarrhea.

The juice used as a cosmetic removes dark spots due to exposure to sunlight and makes the skin smooth and delicate. The black seeds of the papaya are highly beneficial in the treatment of cirrhosis of the liver caused by alcoholism, malnutrition, etc. The fresh juice of raw papaya mixed with honey can be applied over inflamed tonsils, for diphtheria and other disorders. It dissolves the membrane and prevents infection from spreading.

1. Choose the correct option to complete the sentence.
Papaya is a -----.

 - (a) Vegetable
 - (b) Fruit
 - (c) Sweat
 - (d) Animal

2. Choose the correct spelling:

 - (a) PAPYAA
 - (b) PAPAYA
 - (c) PAAPYA
 - (d) PAAPAYAA

3. Complete the following sentence:
Papaya helps in -----.

 - (a) Invention
 - (b) Digestion
 - (c) Creation
 - (d) Injection.

4. What are the other names of papaya?
5. Fill in the blanks with correct words from the passage.
Papaya is now found in every ----- and ----- country.
6. Diseases cured by papaya are -----
-----.
7. How does papaya helps in curing throat disorder?
8. Complete the table below:

Portion/extract	Treatment for	Caused by
1. Juices	-----	Exposure to sunlight
2.-----	Skin diseases	-----
Black seeds	-----	alcoholism

9. Find the words in the passage which are similar to:
 - (a) to chew
 - (b) supports
10. Fill in the following blanks with one word.
Papaya is the healthiest ----- with lots of properties. It belongs to the -----
----- fruit family. It supports and cures ----- related disorders. We can eat
papaya as -----, prepare dishes by boiling or cooking and drink it as milkshake.
----- papaya cures intestinal related diseases.