

UNIT STRUCTURE

Teaching reading to seek information from noticeboard and newspapers

CLASS – VI

Unit Over-view	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	
Overview of the language skill. What the Gunotsav assessment shows us.		LO6.06: The learner reads to seek information from notice board and newspapers and comprehends them.	Sub area i) reads the noticeboards to seek information Sub area ii)reads newspapers and comprehends information	Unit 9– Desert Animals -What if Unit 10- -The Banyan Tree	In this unit you will know about ways of helping the learner to - * Read notice boards to seek information * Skim, scan and infer information from newspapers and comprehend them.	What this unit will teach you	Inferring information from newspaper headlines. Using newspaper clippings to develop comprehension and inference. Use of noticeboards in the classroom Using noticeboards to practise skimming and inferring What you learnt in this unit	List the qualities that the Cobra and the Mongoose have Why do the deserts animals have to find different ways of coping in desert	https://www.tess-india.edu.in skimming, inferencing, scaffolding, extrapolation		

Overview

Students of Class VI are expected to have developed the basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. They are supposed to have read English texts and stories and are able to comprehend them. But they also need to develop a taste for reading other text materials like noticeboards and newspapers and be able to comprehend them. The students should also develop abilities of skimming and scanning materials for necessary information.

Rationale

As stated in the earlier OERs, the data related to the recent Gunotsav and NAS assessments show that children have difficulty in reading English texts with comprehension. Statistics show that the prescribed texts are read and comprehended by at least 36% of the students. But they are not confident about reading other text materials like newspapers, noticeboards, tables, graphs, etc. in English. Reading such materials is more important in our daily lives. In order to help our learners attain the expected level of reading in not only prescribed texts, but in any material in English, we need to devise ways and means to enable learners to practise reading materials such as newspapers and noticeboards.

Introduction:

"I find in my class that my students are not interested in reading texts other than their prescribed ones.

As a result, certain skills like inferring, skimming and scanning are not developed. What can I do to help them develop their interest in reading other than prescribed texts?"



A common problem that is faced in the English classroom is making students confident in comprehending the text. However, it is not sufficient that they read and comprehend only their prescribed texts. They should also be able to read other text materials like newspapers and notice boards and also infer information from them. But as is evident, the students are not able to read such texts. Do you face the same situation with your students?

It has already been discussed why reading is an important skill to develop. Reading texts other than the prescribed ones is necessary because these will lead them to develop the basic study skills and techniques that we require in our daily lives. The newspaper is an educational resource also as it helps teachers bring the real world into the classroom. They also help students to remain updated on what is happening in the world outside. However, both teachers and students hardly realize this and do not give due importance to reading such resources in English.

In the previous phases, i.e. Phase I and Phase II, we came across a few case studies and activities that were designed to help students improve their reading skills. Were they useful in your situations? Let us again read about a few case studies and activities that will help and guide us to improve the reading abilities of students.

Case Study 1 : Mrs. Jharna Puzari practises strategies related to inferring information from newspaper headlines

Mrs. Jharna Puzari has been teaching English in Class VI in a vernacular medium school in Lakhimpur for the last six years. She tries hard to make the students develop their reading abilities. But since English is the students' second or third language, she does not have much opportunity to make them practice reading materials apart from the English textbook. However, she tries in different ways to encourage her students to read newspapers, noticeboards, etc. and look for information.

Here she narrates one such experience of hers. Let's hear what she has to say:

From my experience of teaching English for the last six years, I can say that my students do not like to read texts or any other material. And if it is reading in English, it is dreaded even more. But I wanted to do something to make them change this attitude. So one day I decided to do the following: I brought a few copies of the 'Assam Tribune' newspaper to the class. I divided the class into groups of six and distributed the copies of the newspaper. I asked them at first to look at the different sections in a newspaper and find out what kind of information is available under each section. The information had to be shared in their small groups and then someone from their group had to present it to the entire class. I was there to help them whenever necessary.

All the groups got down to work. They were so occupied with the task that none of them glanced at the other groups even once. After a stipulated time, I asked the groups if they could tell me the kind

of sections they found to my delight, they were able to tell me the sports section, advertisements, letters to the editor, weather forecast, horoscope, etc. Through this activity they practised their scanning skills. then I asked them to share whatever information they were able to find under each section. first I asked them to discuss in their respective groups. After a stipulated time, I asked the group leaders to present it to the class.

What delighted me was the fact that the students were so deeply engrossed in the task that they hardly noticed the ringing of the bell. They wanted to carry on with the activity. None of them were happy when I told them that the class was over. Thus my objective of making them interested in reading newspapers was fulfilled. It made me believe that such activities indeed help in creating interest in reading without the participants actually realizing it.

Let's stop and think

- ★ Did Jharna spend too much time and effort in preparing for this activity?
- ★ Would you be able to do something similar with your students in your class?
- ★ Do you think that such a technique will motivate students to read the newspaper regularly?
- ★ Can you think of any other activity with newspapers to teach reading skills in English?

Activity 1 : Using newspaper clippings to develop comprehension and inference

Newspapers are an important educational resource. Reading them will not only enable students to remain updated on information, but it will also help to develop skills like inferring, predicting, quick reading, etc. Here's one such activity.

Make cutouts of a few important sections of the newspapers; photocopy them if necessary. Divide the students into small groups. Then write down the on the blackboard headlines of each section that you have. Ask each group to choose a headline for themselves. More than one group may have the same headline. First ask them to discuss in their groups, guess and write down what they think the news under their respective headlines is about. Then distribute the different matching newspaper clippings to the respective groups and ask them to check whether their guesses match with the actual news. Make them compare and see whether their prediction was correct.

After they have completed the activity, a class discussion can be undertaken to make them understand the different techniques they had used to guess the news under the appropriate headlines, such as particular keywords in the headline, their previous experience of having read such news items, etc. Tthe students can also be given certain questions like -

- " Were you able to guess the news correctly?
- " Was there any difference between what you guessed and the actual news?
- " Was there anything else in the news that could not be guessed from the headlines?

Such questions will lead the students to experience how to predict a news item and what to look for in the headlines. By doing this, students will also be able to realise that they all used different approaches while reading. Such techniques can always help us read faster and with more comprehension.

This activity will make students develop reading skills like prediction and inferring and will also help them connect their reading to their actual lives. It will motivate them to use English in their day to day reading also.

Case Study 2 : Mr. Ranjit Borah practises strategies related to the use of noticeboards in the classroom

A noticeboard or a bulletin board is a surface used for the posting of public messages, such as to advertise items, to announce events, or to provide any other information. It can also be a wonderful resource to develop reading strategies in the children. Mr. Ranjit Bora, an English teacher of Class VI, always likes to experiment with new strategies of improving his students' reading skills. Let's hear what he says in this matter.

It is very well known that students need not only to read their texts, but also other materials like newspapers, magazines, notices, etc. But the habit has to be inculcated right at this level, or else their reading habits will not develop. Moreover, students should know the techniques of such reading. Otherwise their reading will be confined to only their school texts which, in the long run, will get monotonous. Hence, I decided to try out an activity with my students by using noticeboards. Of course, it is not normally undertaken, but I thought that if I tried something unusual my students would take interest.

I told my students that everyday before I start my class I would put up something on the class notice board. I would write down a few things on a chart and put them on the notice board. The students would have to read it and after the class got over, they would have to tell me whether they could relate what I had written to anything in the text that we had discussed. As I was about to teach the chapter 'Desert Animals', I wrote on a chart the following -

- ★ A desert is a large area of dry land, usually in a hot region, where there is almost no water, rain, trees, or plants.
- ★ All animals cannot live in a desert.
- ★ There are different types of deserts in the world.

I then started the chapter and after discussing the first paragraph, I asked my students to read the sentences on the noticeboard. Then I asked them if they could relate these sentences to what they had read and understood from the first paragraph of the chapter. The students were able to say that the first sentence explained the meaning of a desert; the second sentence told them that only desert animals could live there; the third gave them the information that not all deserts were similar. Of course, the information was already in the text but in a slightly different way. But what satisfied me was that they could relate to it. Once this was done, I moved on to providing information on different animals discussed in the chapter; information that included more details than in the text. I wrote about such animals and put them on the noticeboard along with pictures. The students were required to read it and discuss in groups about what they had understood. Every day I undertook such an activity. Gradually the students got used to it and they enjoyed inferring such information and relating it to their texts. They even were able to correct others if they committed any mistakes.

Let's stop and think

- ★ How did Ranjit Borah prepare his students for this activity?
- ★ Would you be able to do something similar with your students in your class?
- ★ Do you think that such a technique will work under all situations?
- ★ Will such an activity motivate students to read noticeboards?
- ★ Can you think of any other activity with noticeboards to teach reading skills in English?

Activity 2 : Using noticeboards to practise skimming and inferring

Noticeboards are a good way to practise reading strategies like skimming and inferring. Reading

noticeboards enhances students' abilities to use English for everyday reading. Here's one such activity that can be practiced with students at the schools.

Divide the class into small groups. Ask each group to put up something on the noticeboard every day related to their texts. The other groups of students would be required to read the information on the noticeboard and compare the information with that they are provided in their text. Rewards may be announced to the best group.

These kinds of activities would enable the students to not only read the notice but also connect to the ideas and information provided.

Remember to demonstrate the activity the first time by doing it yourself. If any group has difficulty in understanding the sentences on the noticeboard, then help them to comprehend them.

As your students proceed with the activity, you can :

- ★ Check whether all the groups are working.
- ★ Encourage all the groups to read the noticeboard.
- ★ Ask them to read the text carefully to be able to compare the information.
- ★ Ensure that all the members are participating and are being involved.
- ★ Provide corrections or suggestions and guidance wherever necessary.
- ★ Do not impose your ideas on them.
- ★ Help them in preparing the notice with simple instructions or information.

Unit Summary :

Like in the previous phases, in this phase also we have discussed some ideas about improving the reading skills of students; the skills that are needed in everyday reading of texts other than the prescribed ones. The two case studies and activities that are presented here are expected to guide us towards thinking of devising various ways and means to help our students to improve the reading skills. Good reading habits can go a long way in offering us opportunities to connect to events and people.

Reading needs to be developed as a daily habit. It opens the gates of knowledge. Besides, it is a perennial source of joy and amusement. That is why students should also be encouraged to read magazines, newspapers, noticeboards, etc. and become familiar with the different ways in which information is provided to the readers.

Additional Reading :

Reading is an essential tool of learning. But it is a complex process and involves many physical, intellectual and emotional reactions. It is also a good way of self education. Where there is little reading, there is little language learning. Reading different genres will make us aware of the different styles and uses of a language. As a matter of fact, the education of a child is not perfect unless she is equipped with the ability to read, to decipher, to interpret and to understand properly the contents of the material that she reads. Besides, all the important study skills require quick, efficient and imaginative reading.

Reading includes the development of the mechanics of good reading along with the development of speed and fluency of silent reading. Most of adult reading is silent reading. No one reads a newspaper or a noticeboard loudly. Besides, various other types of reading like skimming, scanning, extensive and intensive reading, which have been mentioned in the earlier OERs, are quite significant in our daily lives. Such skills need to be developed.

Inferring implies the ability to understand the meaning of a text without all the information spelled out. Readers use the clues in the text along with their own experiences to help them find out what is not said directly. **Scaffolding** refers to supporting reading through various techniques to move students' independent learning process. **Extrapolation** implies thinking or guessing what might happen using

information that is already known. That is, we use a known situation to make a prediction about what might eventually happen.

Such types of reading activities are to be developed and used to lead the students to develop competence in reading different forms of materials in their later lives. The above mentioned skills will go a long way in improving the reading abilities of your students.

Suggested Questions :

Sub Area i) Reads to seek information:

- ★ Which are the driest places on the earth?
- ★ How many kinds of snakes are found around the world?
- ★ When does a rattle snake usually bite?
- ★ How long can a camel survive without water?
- ★ How many kinds of camels are there?
- ★ What does Silverstein tell us through the poem, “Whatif”?
- ★ What are the things that the poet worries about in “Whatif”?
- ★ List the qualities that the cobra and the mongoose have.
- ★ Did the cobra succeed in mesmerizing the mongoose into making a false move?
- ★ What made the crow lie still?

Sub Area ii) Reads to comprehend information:

- ★ Why do the desert animals have to find different ways of coping in desert?
- ★ Which animals can survive for a year without eating?
- ★ What are mongooses famous for?
- ★ How are the kittens of the mongoose raised?
- ★ How does the fat of a camel help it?
- ★ What would happen if ‘green hair grows on my chest’?
- ★ If my teeth do not grow straight, how would this affect me?
- ★ Why is the banyan tree the ‘noisiest place’ during the fig season?
- ★ Why did the writer build a crude platform up in the banyan tree?
- ★ How was the mongoose able to overpower the cobra?