

UNIT STRUCTURE
Teaching how to read efficiently
CLASS – VII

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.		LO 7.09 : The learner identifies details, characters, main idea and sequence of ideas and events in a textual/ non textual material	-Identify main ideas	Unit-1. Three Questions The Squirrel Unit-2 A gift of chappals The Rebel Unit-3 Gopal and the Hilsa Fish The Shad	In this unit you will know about ways of helping learners to- (a) design activities to help the learners to identify details, characters, main ideas and sequence of ideas and events in textual/non textual material and details in a paragraph of their text. (b) help the learners to find out the topic sentence.	What this unit will teach you	Identifying the main idea of a text through key words and sentences	Helping children to identify supporting details in a longer text	—	—	What you learnt in this	Sample Question : 1. Match the following items 2. Read the following paragraphs and find out the topic sentence	www.tess-india.edu.in

Overview

Language learning improves naturally with exposure and use of the language. The English language is generally learnt as a second language in India. The curricular expectation of English language learning is the attainment of a basic proficiency for meaningful communication. NCF-2005 also emphasizes competency in reading, writing and knowledge of grammatical elements as means of learning a language efficiently. Also, they are expected to develop interpersonal communication skills. Children in Class VII are expected to be able to do various things in English, including listening to and understanding English spoken not only inside the classroom but outside the school as well. In most places, however, children do not have adequate exposure to English outside the classroom. In reality, most children are not able to acquire these skills and abilities as expected.

Rationale

The results of Gunotsav 2017 have shown that learners of Class VII have not acquired the expected level of English. Most learners are not able to meet the learning outcomes. The gaps in achievement have been termed 'grey areas' that require more focused attention in the classroom. For this, we should involve the children in language practice activities in the class so that they can achieve the learning outcomes as stated in the curriculum.

Introduction:

By the time they reach Class VII, our learners are expected to read different types of texts such as novels, short stories, short plays, poems and essays etc. They are expected to read with understanding both textual and non-textual material. An individual's ability to comprehend a text is influenced by their skills and their ability to process information. This ability enables them to identify the main idea(s) of the text, details, characters, main idea and sequence of ideas and events in textual/ non-textual material. To help students acquire these abilities, students should be given practice in using different types of reading strategies. This can be done only through regular practice.

Unit Objectives:

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

1. identify the main idea(s) in a text
2. comprehend and identify supporting details in a text

Case Study 1 : Identifying the main idea of a text through key words and sentences

Mr. Ranjan Bora teaches English in Class VII. While teaching the lesson Three Questions, he found the students were not able to comprehend the text. They found it difficult to locate the main idea and other details of the paragraphs. They were also unable to write comprehension check answers properly, as they did not have a clear understanding of the main idea or the supporting details of the text.

Ranjan thought of a way to help the students to understand the main idea in a paragraph. He asked the students to read the first three paragraphs of this lesson silently:

The thought came to a certain king that he would never fail if he knew three things. These three things were: What is the right time to begin something? Which people should he listen to? What is the most important thing for him to do?
The king, therefore, sent messengers throughout his kingdom, promising a large sum of money to anyone who would answer these three questions.
Many wise men came to the king, but they all answered his questions differently.

Then he asked them which was the most important sentence in these three paragraphs.

Most students were able to answer correctly: they said it was the first sentence. Ranjan then had a discussion with the class, asking them to give reasons why they felt the first sentence was the most important sentence. The students gave various reasons, and then Ranjan helped them to understand that the first sentence was the most important one (also called the 'topic' sentence) because

- ★ It gave a clear idea of what the lesson was about
- ★ it mentioned important words like 'a certain king', 'never fail' and 'three things'

Ranjan was able to help them see that the first sentence of a paragraph was usually the topic sentence, and if readers can identify the topic sentence, it helps them understand the main idea of a text more easily.

To help them practise identifying the main idea of a text, Ranjan gave them another task.

First he made the whole class mark the paragraphs with a numeral (Para 1, 2, 3 etc.). Then he divided the class into groups of five and six students (each desk became one group), and assigned paragraphs to each group until the whole lesson was distributed. Each group was given 10 minutes to read their assigned paragraphs and identify the main idea. Ranjan informed them that the first sentence may not always be the topic sentence; they had to look for important words to find out which was the topic (or most important) sentence.

At the end of 10 minutes, Ranjan made each group read out the sentence they had identified. He made the class discuss the information in the sentences and underline the key words. In this way, together, the class managed to 'skim' the lesson quickly and identify the main idea.

Ranjan ended his class by asking the students to read the lesson by themselves at home by focusing on the key sentences and words. He knew this would help them understand the lesson better, and also develop their reading skills.

Let's stop and think

- ★ Why is it important for the teacher to teach the students to identify the main idea of the paragraph?
- ★ The teacher believes that reading with a purpose helps his students to find out the main idea. Is it really an effective strategy?

Activity 1 : Helping children to identify supporting details in a longer text

Students of CLASS VII not only need to be able to identify the main idea in a text, they need to learn how to identify and comprehend the links between the main idea and the supporting details. To give them practice in doing this, here is an activity:

When you have to teach a new lesson, start the first class with an activity on identifying the topic sentence of the paragraphs of a lesson as described in the Case Study above.. However, rather than making students find out topic sentences from each paragraph, club two or three paragraphs together as one section and make students find out the important sentence(s) in that section.

In the next class, make each group draw a table like this:

Paragraph Nos.	Topic sentence	Key words/phrases	Supporting ideas/details

Help them to fill in the first three columns by transferring the information they had identified in the first class, on to this table. Once they have done this, make them read the paragraphs again and underline the words and phrases that give them more information on the main idea/topic sentence. They should then note down these key phrases in the fourth column of the table.

Here is an example from the lesson Three Questions discussed in the Case Study:

Paragraph Nos.	Topic sentence	Key words/phrases	Supporting ideas/details
1,2,3	<i>The thought came to a certain king that he would never fail if he knew three things.</i>	<i>a certain king, never fail, three things</i>	<p>(a) <i>three things: right time to begin something, people to listen to, the most important thing to do</i></p> <p>(b) <i>sent messengers throughout his kingdom</i></p> <p>(c) <i>a large sum of money to anyone who would answer</i></p> <p>(d) <i>many wise men came</i></p> <p>(e) <i>they all answered his questions differently.</i></p>

Since your students will be doing all the reading and identifying by themselves, this activity will help them learn the skills of focused reading. We all know students will take a long time to read their sections and do the task, but you can go around helping them while they are engaged with the task. Once the activity is done, have a class discussion on the lesson. By taking this inductive teaching strategy, you will be developing their reading skills, and also complete the lesson earlier. By making them struggle, read, identify and understand the information in the lesson themselves, you will be giving them training in reading efficiently.

You can continue to use this strategy with every lesson. At first students will struggle more and may not enjoy it too much. But once they realise they have to read by themselves, they will become motivated, and end up being able to read lessons independently, and also answer comprehension questions on the lessons.

Let's stop and think

- ★ Do you think that this activity is sufficient for the learners to comprehend the text?
- ★ Besides topic sentence, what other strategies could be adopted?

Unit Summary :

This unit discussed one activity and one case study based on the learning gaps identified by Gunotsav 2017 results. In this unit you read about strategies and ways of helping your learners to identify the main idea of a text, and also the supporting details. By doing these activities, your students will also be able to identify characters and follow the sequence of events and ideas in various types of texts. These skills will help your learners to read beyond the textbook.

Suggested Questions :

Q.No.1) Match items in list "A" with their meanings in list "B".

A	B
a) Fainted	Pardon
b) Awoke	Feel sorry for
c) Forgive	Got up from sleep
d) Pity	Lost consciousness

Q.No.2) Read the following paragraph and find out the topic sentence. Also underline the key words:

“In human life, success is ever followed by failure, joy by suffering. Life can never be plain sailing always.

In the wheel of progress, failure and success are correlated. One can hardly go without the other.”

Q.No.3) Read the following sentences and circle the word/words that contain the main idea and other details.

- a) Self help is preferable to help from outside. The former energizes and activates a man, while the latter takes away his initiative and inspiration.
- b) Have you ever read a comic book? A comic book contains stories told mainly through pictures

