Readers theatre for critical/creative/cooperative English language learning

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READERS THEATRE FOR CRITICAL/CREATIVE/COOPERATIVE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education

by
Hsiang-ching Huang
June 2000
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Approved by:

Lynn Diaz-Rico, First Reader

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ABSTRACT

English teaching as a foreign language in Taiwan has been a great challenge because it demands teachers’ great efforts to overcome traditional test-oriented instruction in order to benefit students. It also requires teachers’ understanding of the real purpose of language teaching, their insistence upon their beliefs, and their courage to refuse to use unauthentic materials and mechanical, teacher-centered instructional methods.

Recently, a new policy—the removal of the high school entrance exam—allows more possibilities in English teaching at the junior high school level. The purpose of this project is to introduce an innovative approach to English teaching and learning which helps to foster students’ reading comprehension.

It is hoped that this project can serve as a stimulant to spur innovative ideas in EFL teaching and learning in Taiwan and to provide an example of meaningful and interesting English instruction in which language is given—a life.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project is dedicated to my family for their support, encouragement, and trust in my ability to complete the work. Moreover, I would like to thank many people who have given me the ideas, advice, and help.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

English Teaching in Taiwan

English, one of the most important trade languages in the world, plays a very important role in Taiwan not only because of its popularity but also because of its acceptance as the necessity by the majority of Taiwanese people.

Nowadays, the age of beginning to learn English is dropping and the number of people who learn English is increasing. Hence, effective English teaching has become an issue concerning more and more people. For those who learn English in Taiwan, the purposes of learning can be grouped into two basic types: voluntary and involuntary (or compulsory) learning. There are people learning English for their own benefit, such as personal fulfillment and the achievement of their goals in different aspects. Such people desire to improve their English abilities and are willing to learn. On the other hand, there are also people learning English only for the sake for completing school. They are forced to learn English and show little interest in learning at all. This makes English teaching in Taiwan more complex and challenging. Because the purposes of English learning vary, there are two main kinds of English
teaching in Taiwan that address these purposes. One is English teaching in formal school systems, and the other, informal school systems. Formal school systems include high schools, colleges and universities, where most students receive their English knowledge. English teaching in this scope tends to be more instructional and theoretical. The focus of English teaching and methods used differ according to the levels of these formal school systems.

The informal school systems refer to the bushiban, a Chinese word that denotes additional classes offered by non-educational systems to help people learning outside the formal school systems. There are multiple kinds of bushiban, but as for English learning, language institutes and cram schools are the most common. Generally speaking, the language institutes adopt teaching methods used in Western countries, especially in America. Usually, more than one-third of these school teachers are native speakers of English. They introduce many new and practical teaching techniques to the classroom that enable students to have enhanced training in both listening and speaking skills. The "cram schools" also offer classes and courses which prepare students for various kinds of examinations. In
other words, students attending these classes often seek improvement in reading and writing as well as listening and speaking skills.

The Challenge of English Teaching in Taiwan

Students' Lack of Opportunities to Use English Authentically

The greatest challenge to English proficiency, the most common in all Asian countries, is the lack of opportunities to practice English. That also explains the reason why most Asian people have difficulties in speaking English. In Taiwan, for example, although English written materials and textbooks can be easily bought by ordinary people, written English is still not a part of their daily life, not to mention spoken English. This is usually the main factor resulting in the failure of students' English learning. Even if students do their homework and study, they seldom engage in active practice; therefore, they forget what they have learned. This problem appears more serious in the language institutes. Students attend these classes twice or three times a week, spending two or three hours each time enjoying the fun of learning English in the classroom but at no time practicing it at home. Therefore, their English usually shows no signs of improvement.
The problems in cram schools seem worse than those in the language institutes. Students are well-trained to be an "answer machine"—one that gives the correct answers without thorough perception of the contents of the textbooks. Similar problems are also revealed in some formal schools which place emphasis only on students' academic performance. In these schools, few authentic materials and tasks are provided for students. Therefore, students have very few chances to use English for its real purpose—communication.

Teacher-centered, Textbook-based, and Test-oriented Instruction

In many middle schools, English teaching is teacher-centered. Teachers do not plan their program around the individual needs of their students. Their teaching, often presented in the form of oral instruction, is insipid and boring, lacking vitality. Seldom do they listen to students, nor do they make efforts to understand what students really need. They adopt a whole-class method, ignoring students' individual differences. Moreover, little variety is provided for students. Nor are they given the opportunity to take part in making decisions in the selection of materials, design of curriculum, or
English teaching is also textbook-based and test-oriented in most of the middle schools. Instead of their interests and needs, students' ability to pass the entrance examination is the only consideration when teachers design their curriculum. Teachers use only the standard textbooks as their teaching materials, preparing many sample tests for students to practice. All the activities provided for students have only one purpose, that is, to train them to answer sample questions in order to achieve high scores in the entrance examination. The goal of teaching is to develop students' grammar and usage instead of their thinking skills.

Independent thinking, such as critical thinking and creative thinking, is seen as less important compared to the skills that enable students to enter senior high schools and colleges. Most teachers and parents believe that entering senior high schools and colleges is a guarantee for a successful future. Therefore, all the instructions are extremely test-oriented. In the test-oriented instruction, students do not work cooperatively; in fact, they compete with each other in standardized tests as proof for their academic success.
Teachers' Overemphasis on the Product of Language Learning

As has been noted, many teachers focus on the development of students' skills to cope with tests instead of their problems in their lives. What matters to them is whether they have prepared students well enough to enter high-ranking high schools and colleges. This results in their neglect of students' learning process. They do not allow time for students to read for its own sake, and neither do they allow time for them to think. For students, learning is no fun. It means nothing but work they have to do repeatedly. Students thus become passive learners who lack a love for speaking, listening, reading, and writing English.

Target Level

Junior high school in Taiwan is the target level of this project. Formal English education in Taiwan starts with junior high school, in which students are required to attend six to eight hours of English class a week. In an English class, students use the standard textbooks which are assigned by the Secondary Education Bureau. After graduating from junior high school, students need to take an entrance examination to enter senior high school, using skills which they have obtained from the textbooks.
However, recently a new government policy—the removal of the entrance exam—has been put into practice. This is a significant change in English education in Taiwan, for it opens a door for breaking tradition and establishing a more sound English instruction. This may help students become active participants in a variety of activities and independent thinkers who take responsibilities for their own learning.

**Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of the project is to provide a better way of teaching English that can incorporate the following ideal principles of teaching into the classroom practice:

Teaching is an attitude—an attitude that tolerates all the possibilities. What should be considered the most valuable treasure is the individual differences that make each person unique. Teachers need to be aware of this and learn to make different responses to any possible individual reactions without disappointing him/her.

Teaching is not a process of input, but a process of sharing, directing, and inspiring. Teachers should regard students' performance as a whole. Besides, teaching cannot be an experiment because the education cannot be done twice. Teachers also should prepare themselves to meet all
the needs of their students so that students can gain the best treasure from their teachers.

It is the teachers’ beliefs about teaching that make a difference. Therefore, the project is to introduce an innovative teaching approach incorporating these ideal principles into instruction to enrich teachers’ teaching and students’ learning.

**Content of the Project**

This project will aim at a Readers Theatre approach which might help improve the junior high school English teaching in Taiwan. Besides this introduction, four chapters will be included in this project.

Chapter Two is a review of literature which examines the research studies associated with five important concepts in a theoretical framework: Readers Theatre, whole language, reading comprehension, cooperative learning, and critical/creative thinking.

Chapter Three suggests a theoretical framework based on the above concepts.

Chapter Four presents a curriculum unit in which the model introduced in Chapter Three is incorporated. The lesson plans of the unit are presented in Appendix.

Chapter Five discusses the forms and methods of
assessment which can best be applied for these lessons.

**Significance of the Project**

This project proposes to encourage students' love of reading through Readers Theatre, which helps develop students' language, including speaking, listening, reading, writing, and thinking skills and provides students with opportunities to immerse themselves in a world of imagination. In a learning environment where students' interests are teachers' greatest concern and students work cooperatively, learning no longer requires suffering. Instead, it can be fun!
Readers Theatre

What is Readers Theatre?

Readers Theatre is defined by Sloyer (1982) as "an integrated language event centering on an oral interpretation of literature" (p. 3). It is a reading activity in which readers read stories with their expressive voices and use gestures to help the audience to visualize the action and images of the stories (Sloyer, 1982). In other words, Readers Theatre is a sharing event in which two or more persons share the script with the audience by reading it through voice and bodily tension, inspiring the audience to imagine the scenes and characters (Laughlin, Black, & Loberg, 1991). Most educators and researchers agree with the definition of Readers Theatre that it is "a form of oral interpretation in which a group of readers perform works of literature" (Post, 1979) and "a dramatic reading of a script" (Danielson & Dauer, 1990, p. 141). Lee and Gura (1987) define it as a "performance by a group of interpreters seeking to explore, to embody, and in special ways, to feature a given literary text" (p. 436). However, the definition of Readers Theatre may be and restricted or vary in terms of the usage of costumes, sets,
gestures and the memorization of lines.

In his definition of Readers Theatre, Busching (1981) explains that Readers Theatre is simply "a formalized dramatic presentation of a script by a group of readers" and it should avoid "the burdens of an acted play" (p. 331). Shepard (1994) also states, "Readers Theatre is often defined by what it is not - no memorizing, no props, no costumes, no sets" (p. 184). A similar statement has also been found in an earlier study (Groff, 1978) that performers in Readers Theatre read from the scripts instead of memorizing the lines and enact only a little of the staging that appears in the conventional theaters. In addition, Hill (1990) expresses the view that careful memorization of lines is not included in Readers Theatre, and expanded costumes, props, music or lighting should not be involved in it.

According to Kleinau and McHughes (1980), Readers Theatre is originally defined as "the reading of plays, with participants seated or standing behind lecterns" (p. 2). However, during the past decade, it has become a more active and complicated form with elements of stage theatre, including more elaborate costumes, gestures, and sets (Wolf, 1993, Sloyer, 1982). Coger and White (1982) define
Readers Theatre in another way, as a happening, an experience, and an interpretive activity with a wide range of styles as follows:

...presentation with stools and stands and no movement, presentation without stools and stands and much purposeful action and interaction of the involved characters, with and without settings, with and without costuming, with and without a theatrical curtain, with and without memorization, with and without multiple casting, with or without onstage or offstage focus, with or without make-up, with or without music, dance, sound, and mechanical and vocal effects. (p. 3)

Coger and White (1982) state that in order to understand Readers Theatre, it is important to know about Interpreters Theatre, the umbrella term of Readers Theatre. According to them, the Interpreters Theatre involves "a continuum of performance techniques from the conventional, restricted or semirestricted Readers Theatre to free or unrestricted Readers Theatre" (p.7). In their study, the range of Interpreters Theatre, referring to different ways of oral interpretation of literature, is explained in Table 1, which helps to understand the differences of the
four approaches in using materials and scripts, movement, costuming, and staging.

Table 1. The Range of Interpreters Theatre (Coger & White, 1982, p. 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CONVENTIONAL READERS THEATRE Restricted or Semirestricted</th>
<th>FREE READERS THEATRE Unrestricted</th>
<th>CHAMBER THEATRE</th>
<th>CONVENTIONAL PLAYS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Material</strong></td>
<td>Plays, poems (dramatic and lyric), narrative fiction(epic), nondramatic literature</td>
<td>Poems, narrative fiction, nondramatic literature</td>
<td>Only narrative fiction</td>
<td>Plays only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
<td>Offstage (with occasional onstage for special effect)</td>
<td>Offstage or onstage</td>
<td>Onstage for scenes and interchange between narrator and characters. Narration offstage to audience</td>
<td>Onstage with a few exception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Scripts</strong></td>
<td>Scripts present whether memorized or not</td>
<td>With or without scripts</td>
<td>Usually memorized. Narrator(s) may or may not have script</td>
<td>Always memorized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement</strong></td>
<td>None or little movement. Performers stand or sit.</td>
<td>Much movement for psychological relationships and pictorial compositions.</td>
<td>Conventional stage movement. Narrator moves to reveal his role in the story</td>
<td>Complete movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costuming</strong></td>
<td>Regular clothing with attention to appropriateness in style and color</td>
<td>Regular clothing or either suggested or full costumes</td>
<td>Suggested or full costumes</td>
<td>Fully costumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staging</strong></td>
<td>Lecterns, stool, boxes, chairs, benches. May use levels: ladders, platforms step unit, etc.</td>
<td>Stools, boxes, chairs, benches. Levels: ladders, platforms, step units, etc.</td>
<td>Chairs, boxes, benches. Levels: platforms, step units. Occasionally period furniture and metaphorical staging devices</td>
<td>Usually complete staging</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Value and Advantages of Readers Theatre

Readers Theatre has its own value in classroom instruction. Not only students, including those who are slow or below-average readers, but also teachers can benefit from it.

According to Hill (1990), the value of Readers Theatre can be as follows: (1) engagement, enthusiasm, and experimentation; (2) knowledge of language; and (3) co-operative learning and testing of ideas together. Students will involve themselves with great enthusiasm in the experimentation of different ways of performing their texts. Through the process of creating and sharing the scripts their knowledge of language—language structure, language use, and metalinguistic awareness—can be improved. Furthermore, when students help each other in order to perform successfully, the goal of interdependence and co-operative learning can be achieved. Sloyer (1982) points out that Readers Theatre, an active approach to learning, can motivate students' reading and thinking, enhance literacy comprehension and enjoyment, help develop good listening habits and oral skills, encourage creative writing, reinforce listeners' language abilities, and help personal and social growth. Above all, it can help
teachers teach with variety and students learn with creativity.

Moreover, Shanklin and Rhodes (1989) indicate that in addition to the improvement of literary comprehension, Readers Theatre also contributes to students’ comprehension by offering them opportunities to negotiate meaning in the process of preparation for the script and performance. Another advantage stated by Coger and White (1982) is that Readers Theatre can “add to the cultural enrichment of the individual and the group in a wide variety of ways” (p. 15). According to them, Readers Theatre provides interpreters many opportunities to read a variety of literature and to learn about various cultures.

Also, Readers Theatre can serve as a key to reading fluency (Martinez, Roser, & Strecker, 1998). Students are provided with opportunities to reread the same texts until the reading is fluent. In other words, their oral reading fluency can be enhanced during the many rehearsals for the performance. Besides, it is in the rehearsing or the meaningful re-reading that Readers Theatre benefits weak readers the most (Busching, 1981).

Into the Classroom with Readers Theatre

Researchers with interests in Readers Theatre have
suggested many ways to organize and stage Readers Theatre. The following are the procedures for Readers Theatre carried out in the classroom.

Warm-ups. Teachers should incorporate theatre techniques and training, including pronunciation and vocal projection, diction, and responding on cue, and characterization into warm-up sessions when preparing students for Readers Theatre (Sloyer, 1982). In this procedure, students read a sample story provided by their teacher for practice. After that, however, it is more important that teachers provide a model of expressive reading for students to understand (Hoyt, 1992). Further, lessons of chants, rhymes and raps can also be incorporated with warm-up exercises (Hill, 1990).

Choosing the texts. When selecting the texts, some important issues should be taken into consideration: (1) the age of the audience; (2) the length of the text; and (3) the flexibility of the text — whether the text can be designed to be full of action to capture the audience (Kleinau & McHughes, 1980). Books of varying difficulty levels are especially needed to meet individuals' needs (Martinez, Roser, & Strecker, 1998). Additionally, Shanklin and Rhodes (1989) suggest that teachers use a
reading series which has interesting characters because the more familiar with those characters students become the more interested in Readers Theatre they will be.

**Transforming the texts into scripts.** Students can either adapt the ready-to-use scripts or compile the scripts. Young and Vardell (1993) provide guidelines for adapting scripts: (1) give students chances to read a book or excerpt briefly in advance or have them prepare a talk about the book they read to give others ideas about the story. Familiar material is a better choice for students to start the scripting process; (2) select a piece or part of the text that contains the element of humor and proper content for the students' needs; (3) recreate the selected part of the text; (4) cut out lines that are less relative to the topic (5) divide the part of each reader; (6) give an introduction of the script; (7) put the reader's name on the left-hand side of the script to enable readers to differentiate their parts; and (8) allow more time for readers to read their parts. McCaslin (1990) also adds that students have to negotiate socially to analyze their choices while transforming texts into scripts.

As Sloyer states, "the selections for a compiled script must be knit together to form an intelligible unit
with a clear beginning, middle, and ending" (p. 39), the determining element of a successfully finished script is a "wholeness". Therefore, introductions, transitions, and conclusions have to be included in the compiled scripts (Coger & White, 1982).

Hill (1990) identifies the features of Readers Theatre scripts for beginning readers which ought to be considered when students adapt or compile the scripts. These features include characters' names on the left, characters' use of direct speech, narrators' retelling events not told in dialogue, use of short dialogue segments, use of sound effects, use of a combination of group voice and individual voice, and choices of fast-moving content (Hill, 1990, p. 13).

Practicing the scripts. Sloyer (1982) believes that students should be familiar with theatrical terms when practicing scripts. Table 2 shows these terms and their definitions.
Table 2. Theatrical Terms (Sloyer, 1982, p. 47)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Act</td>
<td>To read the role of a character in the script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation</td>
<td>A story rewritten into play form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad lib</td>
<td>Lines not appearing in the script invented by the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocking</td>
<td>Determining the positions of readers within a scene on stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Bits of action performed by the readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casting</td>
<td>Selecting readers for their parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center stage</td>
<td>The middle area of the stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characterization</td>
<td>The reader’s interpretation of a character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter</td>
<td>To shift position on stage for a balanced stage picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross</td>
<td>To go from one stage area to another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cue</td>
<td>A verbal or nonverbal signal to say or do something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>Conversation between characters on stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>The person who supervises the entire production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downstage</td>
<td>The area of the stage closest to the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance</td>
<td>An indication of a reader’s arrival on stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit</td>
<td>An indication of a reader’s leaving the stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeze</td>
<td>To remain in a fixed position without moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left stage focus</td>
<td>The position of the stage on the reader’s left as he or she faces the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offstage focus</td>
<td>To look up at a fixed spot out the audience when reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onstage focus</td>
<td>To look up at the other characters when reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pantomime</td>
<td>Suggesting a story or an idea through bodily movements only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plot</td>
<td>The story lines of a script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Properties</td>
<td>Objects or items needed in the performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
<td>Practice sessions to perfect the performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right stage focus</td>
<td>The portion of the stage on the reader’s right as he or she faces the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script</td>
<td>The book containing lines the players read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>A single situation or unit of the script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upstage</td>
<td>The area of the stage furthest from the audience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Performing the scripts. The role of a narrator, which makes Readers Theatre different from the conventional theatres, is important (Sloyer, 1982). At the beginning of the performance, Groff (1978) suggests the narrator introduce the play first in a clear and story-telling manner. Things about the title, author, story, and performance can also be included in the introduction (Sloyer, 1982). Hill (1990) recommends teachers relax students by means of some warm-up activities and remind them of their opening positions and things they should do as well.

Follow-up activities. According to Sloyer (1982), the follow-up activities after Readers Theatre can be divided into four sections, which are speaking, writing, listening and reading. Students can talk about their experience in their Readers Theatre performance, and this can be the source for another production. As for the writing activity, students may, for instance, write a review for the local newspaper. Students who do not take part in reading in the performance of Readers Theatre may be asked to listen carefully to what they hear and may share what they have heard with others. As one set of students perform, other students may start another Readers Theatre
project including looking for other sources, and in the process of finding the material or text, they are encouraged to read a variety of literature.

Production aids for Readers Theatre. As has been noted earlier, Readers Theatre is a “formalized dramatic presentation of a script” (Busching, 1981, p. 331). Thus, movement, focus, music, and sound effects often included in theatre plays can be used in Readers Theatre. An appropriate use of each of these production aids (see below) can help polish Readers Theatre into an excellent performance, and so does a good use of other production aids such as equipment and script handling.

Shepard (1994) explains that movement means “where readers will start and where they will go” (p. 185). He also indicates that drawing of a movement diagram will help students perform in Readers Theatre. MaClay (1971) believes that in Readers Theatre, the quality of the movements is far more important than the quantity. Thus, although there are different stage movements such as going onstage or offstage, freezing, and BTA (going back to the audience), in Sloyer’s point of view (1982), movements in Readers Theatre are limited compared to those in conventional theatres.
Coger and White (1982) mention three types of focus: onstage focus, offstage focus, and a combination of onstage and offstage focus. Onstage focus means that readers look at each other, knowing what other readers are doing when performing; while offstage focus means that the narrator establishes eye contact with the audience or the readers pretend to see an imaginary scene somewhere out in the audience.

Readers usually hold scripts in a Readers Theatre event. Students should be trained to hold their scripts in one hand, letting the other free to act or do some gestures. Materials such as oaktag and cardboard can be used to make students' own script bindings (Sloyer, 1983). Moreover, students should remember that when looking down to the scripts, it is better to keep their heads straight. Nevertheless, most readers of Readers Theatre are not required to memorize lines, so they should look up from their scripts as often as possible (Shepard, 1994).

Script binders, smocks, stools, and props can be used during Readers Theatre performance. As noted earlier, students can create their own bindings. Shepard (1994) suggests readers use sturdy ring binders because the pages turn easily. He also recommends readers wear smocks in
order to look like a team. Stools of chair height can best serve as useful props on stage if they are solid enough.

Vocal sound effects are preferred in Readers Theatre and are often demonstrated in chorus. Music added in the show should be soft and carefully rehearsed. It is important that music does not confuse the audience. The readers rather than the music itself should be the focus because Readers Theatre is not a concert (Sloyer, 1982). Music can also be used to build up an atmosphere for the opening. Background music that indicates transitions from one scene to another is often used (Coger & White, 1982).

Evaluation of Readers Theatre. Direct observational measurement such as checklists and rating scales are appropriate for evaluating performance (Sloyer, 1982). Table 3 is an example of a checklist for evaluating the Readers Theatre script, staging, and performance.
Table 3. Checklist for Evaluating the Readers Theatre Script, Staging, and Performance (Sloyer, 1982, p. 66)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of Readers Theatre</th>
<th>Questions Used for Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Script</strong></td>
<td>Does the material meet the criteria set down for a good Readers Theatre script? Are the transitions prepared so the program flows intelligibly? Does the program have a beginning, middle, and end, giving it the unity of a complete and finished production? Are the lines divided up meaningfully? Is there an understanding of who is saying what and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staging</strong></td>
<td>Are the readers arranged to create an interesting stage picture? Do pupils know how to enter and exit? Are these entrances and exits clear to the audience? If stools, ladders, etc. are used, can they be moved on and off with dispatch? Do pupils focus so that the audience understands where the described action is supposed to take place? Are movements clear? Do they illuminate the text? If sound effects are used, do they serve the purpose intended? Can they be performed and heard clearly? Are all hats that are used easy to put on and take off? Do they stay on and in place throughout the performance? Are the scripts in good shape? Are pages fastened in securely?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance</strong></td>
<td>Is the script smoothly performed without breakdowns and interruptions? Is speech clear and distinct? Do pupils show an understanding of what they are reading? Do they avoid word-by-word delivery? Are interpretive skills employed to their fullest? Do readers create believable characters and good mental images? Do the readers listen to each other and react meaningfully? Do readers handle scripts unobtrusively and efficiently? Does the performance come to a definite ending? Do all participants know how to bow and where to go at the close of the production?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In sum, using Readers Theatre as a teaching tool can help increase students’ reading fluency and comprehension. Readers Theatre can not only encourage creative thinking and cooperative learning but also broaden students’ knowledge of language. More importantly, it makes great contributions to individuals’ growth in thinking and feeling, communication, and social awareness. This is why Readers Theatre is called “an education for language and life” (Busching, 1981, p. 330).

Reading Comprehension

What is Reading Comprehension?

Over the years, researchers who have investigated the process of reading noted the importance of comprehension; however, rarely have they reached an agreement on the definition and the measurement of comprehension. Most of the problems of defining and measuring reading comprehension occur because many define it too simplistically or illogically. Because they could not define reading comprehension properly, they have difficulties in measuring it. Nevertheless, many teachers have devoted themselves to helping students comprehend text and in real classroom practice to foster means by which students can go beyond the text to apply the knowledge they
have gained (Devine, 1986).

Although defining and measuring reading comprehension may be difficult, many theories concerning reading comprehension still have their merits and are important to review in order to understand the concepts of reading comprehension.

Schema theory and the interactive model of reading. Goodman (1983) states that texts are guides that help readers construct meanings that are personal and unique because everyone's background knowledge is different. According to Cooper (1986), comprehension is the process of the reader interpreting the text by relating it to the knowledge the reader already has. This suggests one type of theoretical model of the comprehension process that Devine (1986) calls the interactive model of comprehension, which assumes that comprehension begins as readers interact with the text. In other words, readers read the printed text and use the information that they have before and during the time they are encoding the text to create their own meanings of the text. In addition to this model, the other two kinds of the theoretical models of the comprehension process are called the text-oriented and reader-oriented types. Text-oriented means that the text
itself influences readers’ comprehension more than any other factor; while reader-oriented refers to what the reader brings to a text. The text-oriented model of comprehension is based on the bottom-up point of view, assuming that readers decode words first and then go on to meaning. Conversely, the reader-oriented model is based on the top-down view, the belief that readers have meanings in their head and through those meanings they can understand words, sounds, and letters. The interactive model combines the theories of both bottom-up and top-down views.

As a matter of fact, the three approaches to comprehension theories—the bottom-up, the top-down, and the interactive view of reading comprehension—are all related to schema theory, an interactive view of the reading process. As stated by Rumelhart (1981), the bottom-up (conceptual-driven processing) and top-down (data-driven processing) are two modes of activation for schemata (the plural noun of schema). He states, “a schema theory is a theory about how knowledge is represented and about how that representation facilitates the use of the knowledge in particular ways” (p. 4). A schema, according to Rumelhart, is a structure representing the generic concepts in each person’s memory; furthermore, all
knowledge is packed in these units. Therefore, through these two mechanisms, top-down (the whole to part) and bottom-up (part to whole) approaches, schemata can be activated. Mason and the Staff of the Center for the Study Reading (1984) describe this in a clearer manner. They explain that knowledge is stored in schemata built into meaning-oriented clusters and in both a top-down and bottom-up process schemata compete with each other in order to clarify the meaning and build up a consistent view of the text.

Reading comprehension and background knowledge. Pearson, Hansen, and Gordon (1979) suggest that differences in background knowledge may account for individuals' variances in comprehension performance. According to Devine (1986), readers' background or prior knowledge plays an important role in the comprehension process. Readers need to have knowledge about the world, background knowledge, to understand simple printed language. As stated by Adams and Bertram (1980), the background knowledge of the reader and the reader's ability to comprehend text are closely related to each other. Cooper (1986) points out that due to the process of relating implied information to his/her prior knowledge, the
reader's background knowledge may affect comprehension of implied information more than directly stated information.

**Factors affecting reading comprehension.** Oral language, attitudes, purpose for reading, general physical and emotional condition, and text structures are all factors that influence reading comprehension. Among the above, the structure of text seems to affect reading comprehension most. Readers have to understand how texts are structured and the ideas are organized in order to comprehend and interact with the text (Cooper, 1986). Teaching readers to be aware of text structures and types of text, for example, narrative and expository, will enhance readers' ability of reading comprehension (Beach & Appleman, 1984; Taylor & Beach, 1984).

Similarly, Devine (1986) indicates that text structure affects comprehension. In addition, he mentions other factors that need to be considered: prior knowledge, word knowledge, memory, schema, readers' use of cognitive skills such as predicting, drawing conclusion, and identifying main ideas, their ability to reason logically and solve problems, and their social and cultural backgrounds. In his point of view, comprehension is influenced by the reader's personal knowledge that he/she has already
acquired through previous experiences. Thus, each individual's prior knowledge shapes a different interpretation of the text. Word knowledge and world knowledge, types of prior knowledge, are held in long-term memory. Therefore, all of the four—prior knowledge, word knowledge, world knowledge, memory—play a part in the process of reading comprehension and can affect reading comprehension, and so are schemata.

Teaching and Improving Comprehension Instruction

Mason, Roehler, and Duffy (1984) point out that there is a need for improved instruction in reading comprehension because little evidence has shown that comprehension is taught or taught well in classroom. Therefore, before starting to teach comprehension, teachers need to know what comprehension programs look like and how comprehension instruction could be improved.

Components of comprehensive reading programs. In his study, Samuels (1981) investigates many successful reading programs and summarizes the components identified in such programs. A strong administrative leader who helps plan and carry out the project is often found in these programs. Also, Samuels found that teacher aides are often used in direct instruction in these programs. They are trained to
work with students directly in the classroom. Many of the programs have specialists to help train staff or provide materials. Another component is teachers' dedication for the projects, combined with their belief that students can succeed. In these programs, teachers need to receive training to implement the project. Their instruction sometimes needs to be supervised. The successful reading projects have clear and specific objectives, skills centered curriculum, and relevant instruction and materials. Moreover, in most of the programs, teachers have good management skills so that time is used efficiently and they evaluate students' progress frequently.

Components of classroom instruction. Cooper (1986) states that three components should be included in the instructional program in reading comprehension: developing background and vocabulary, building processes and skills, and correlating writing with reading. Each of these plays its own distinct role in fostering comprehension.

Activities such as discussion, prior reading, field trips, and role playing, and techniques such as webbing and semantic mapping can be used for developing background. When selecting those types of activities and techniques,
teachers should first consider the background the students already have and then consider the type of text to be read. In addition to background development, vocabulary development is also crucial in a comprehensive reading program. In this part of the program, Cooper suggests teachers help students develop words that students can recognize, understand, and relate to their background and teach them to determine the meaning of words that they are not taught.

As stated by Cooper (1986), there are ways to teach and model comprehension skills and processes. First, three considerations have to be taken into account before teachers begin to teach skills or processes: students' backgrounds, students' reading levels, and teachers' teaching objectives. After teachers determine what their objectives are, they can start teaching. The teaching step includes the following: (1) letting students know what is to be learned; (2) modeling; (3) providing guided practice; and (4) summarizing. Moreover, students need to be taught to monitor their comprehension when they read. In the process of monitoring, teachers have to determine their comprehension problems and help them with those problems.

The third component of the instructional program is
correlating writing with reading. It is important that comprehension is correlated with various types of writing activities. There are three ways to correlate reading and writing: helping students see the relationships between reading and writing, teaching students the writing process, and using writing activities as a follow-up to reading. Students need to understand that reading and writing processes are similar because they heavily rely on their oral language and background knowledge. Both readers and writers go through a similar process. They have purposes for reading and writing. When they start to read or write, they construct and compose their own meanings in terms of their purposes and background experiences. In the process of constructing and composing meanings, they also clarify meanings. Finally, they develop final meanings for the reading text or writing draft. Having students to use student-written materials is another way to correlate reading and writing. This motivates students and shows them the relationships between reading and writing.

Direct instruction of comprehension. Cooper (1986) advocates a comprehensive program based on his model for direct instruction. Table 4 shows the steps of direct instruction, along with short descriptions about steps.
The process of the direct instruction is ongoing because teachers can stop at any time and reteach if students have any problems.

Table 4. Steps of Direct Instruction in Comprehension (Devine, 1986, p. 54)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps of Direct Instruction</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let students know what is to be learned and relate it to prior experience</td>
<td>Teachers help students begin to think about what is to be learned and develop a frame of reference or schema for it. This helps students develop metacognitive processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Model skill or process and verbalize thinking</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher modeling</td>
<td>Teacher shows students how to use the comprehension skill or process and explains the thinking that takes place in doing so. Sentences or paragraphs are used as examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student modeling</td>
<td>Students show teacher the same process and explain their thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provide guided practice</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students try out the comprehension skill or process under the teacher’s direction. Corrective feedback is provided. Teacher reteaches as needed. Direct-choice activities are used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summarize</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students explain in their own words how to use the comprehension skill or process; teacher prompts with questions. This helps students develop metacognitive abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practicing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students use the comprehension skill or process in an independent, directed choice activity. Teacher provides corrective feedback as needed after completion of the activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applying</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remind students of the skill they are going to apply</td>
<td>Teacher tells students what comprehension skill they should apply in reading natural text; an example of the skill can be given. This step further develops students’ metacognitive processes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. (Continued) Steps of Direct Instruction in Comprehension (Devine, 1986, p. 54)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps of Direct Instruction</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students read texts</td>
<td>Teacher provides purpose or guide questions to help students gain an understanding of the overall text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss text read</td>
<td>The discussion following reading is first focused on being certain that students understand the intent of the selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check understanding</td>
<td>Teachers asks questions to determine whether students applied the comprehension skill or process in question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check application</td>
<td>Students tell in their own words how and when to use the comprehension skill or process; teacher prompts with questions. Relates to metacognitive development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarize</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directing students' self-managed comprehension.** Mason et al. (1984) assume that comprehensive instruction ought to focus on direct or explicit teaching, the development of students' self-regulation, the awareness about how comprehension happens, and the growth of students' knowledge about what is being read. Teachers need to explain to students about what they will learn and how they will learn it. Students do not learn to comprehend by themselves. Thus, teachers have to provide students with appropriate guidance and assistance to enable them to monitor and evaluate comprehension on their own. First, teachers may guide the activities, then teachers and students share responsibilities, and finally the
responsibilities transfer to the students. This is a gradual process in which teachers need to know the roles they play. Furthermore, the instruction should provide students opportunities to learn strategies and skills and become aware of what strategies and skills they can use to construct meaning while reading. It is also important that the instruction help them develop their content knowledge.

Comprehension based on reading strategies. Pearson (1984) also indicates that comprehension instruction should be explicit to help students know how to use the strategies they learn in order to solve their comprehension problems.

Goodman, Burke, and Sherman (1980) point out that the predicting, confirming, and integrating strategies are necessary in solving comprehension problems. In the process of reading, readers use predicting strategies to make prediction about the meanings of the text, then use confirming strategies to confirm or disconfirm their prediction, and finally use integrating strategies to decide what information of the text should be remembered. These three strategies should focus on three important systems of language—the semantic, syntactic, and graphophonetic language systems. Table 5 lists the comprehending strategies in the semantic, syntactic, and
graphophonic systems, associated with predicting, confirming, and integrating.

**Table 5. Grid of Comprehending Strategies (Goodman et al., 1980, p. 35)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic</th>
<th>Syntactic</th>
<th>Graphophonics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Predicting</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content &amp; Organization</td>
<td>Grammatical Function</td>
<td>Uncommon Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on Meaning</td>
<td>Nouns as Names for</td>
<td>Patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction and Nonfiction</td>
<td>People</td>
<td>Eye Dialect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plot or Sequence of Events</td>
<td>Varieties of Grammatical Functions</td>
<td>Foreign-Language and Words and Phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns</td>
<td>Indicators of Direct Speech</td>
<td>Graphic Variations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational Words and Phrases</td>
<td>Dialogue Carriers</td>
<td>Print Variations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negatives and Meaning</td>
<td>Hard-to-Predict Grammatical Structures</td>
<td>Format Variations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Contractions</td>
<td>Hard-to-Predict Phrases and Clauses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying Hard-to-Predict Structures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Confirming</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rethink/Reread</td>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>Initial, Medial, and Final Graphic Cues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Meaning Through Context</td>
<td>Repeated Substitutions</td>
<td>Spelling Patterns through Language Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meaning without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Graphophonics Cues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integrating</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts</td>
<td>Information Material</td>
<td>Synonym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story Material</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characterization and Setting</td>
<td>Relating of Characterization and Setting to Action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting To Know the Time and Place</td>
<td>Identifying Hard-to-Predict Structures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining Who is Telling the Story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring Plot and Theme</td>
<td>Plot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Story Schema</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generalizations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Point of View</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Propaganda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pearson (1984) offers guidelines adapted from Brown, Campione, and Day (1981), which are summarized as follows. Teachers should select strategies which are useful and relate to the curriculum. Students should be taught explicitly about how and when to use the strategies they have learned. In the process of learning the strategies, students should start with the easy tasks and then to the more complicated ones. In addition, teachers need to provide feedback and allow students to self-monitor their comprehension.

Comprehension instruction as sharing and extending. Sharing personal interpretations of text through social interaction in the reading classroom can increase reading comprehension and facilitate learning. In sharing and extending comprehension instruction, students are encouraged to answer open-ended questions and perform tasks, with a variety of responses encouraged. If students do not interact with others well because they are not familiar with those open-ended questions or tasks, teachers need to demonstrate how to answer the questions or do the tasks. Viewing comprehension instruction as sharing and extending helps teachers to reconsider the value and importance of comprehension. Only in an environment where
various interpretations of the text are appreciated and the
development of problem solving strategies are needed to
apply everyday learning can students' comprehension be
fostered (Shanklin & Rhodes, 1989).

Reading process as an organizer for reading class.
Devine (1986) provides guidelines for reading comprehension
instruction. The guidelines involve three phases of the
reading process, which are pre-reading, while-reading, and
post-reading. He suggests that teachers provide pre-
reading activities to increase students' comprehension,
while-reading activities to motivate their involvement, and
post-reading activities to develop their schemata.

Moore, Readence, and Rickelman (1989) suggest teachers
plan to ask and answer questions as pre-reading activities.
They point out that the effective use of questions can
stimulate students to ask their own questions and thus
helps them learn individually.

Langer's PreP model. Langer (1981) has developed the
PreReading Plan (PREP) as a way to analyze students'
background knowledge. Knowing students' background
knowledge through the use of the pre-reading lessons helps
teachers to adjust their lessons to meet all the students'
needs. PREP consists of three steps: (1) initial
association with the concept; (2) reflection on initial associations; and (3) knowledge reformulation. First, teachers encourage students to expand their background knowledge on the topic. In the second step, students reflect or expand the ideas generated in Step 1. During the final step teachers allow students time to change or refine the ideas. According to Tierney, Readence, and Dishner (1990), PReP can not only be applied to almost any classroom activity which develops concepts but also can provide teachers ways to teach materials.

As stated by Turner (1979), after students read, reading teachers can ask questions, including critical reading questions which require a higher level of thinking. This activity can help students review concepts and ideas and store the knowledge in long-term memory.

To sum up, in order to implement reading comprehension instruction, teachers need to examine the concepts of reading comprehension and its theoretical bases in schema theory, the interactive model of reading, background knowledge, factors that influence reading comprehension, as well as fundamentals of classroom instruction, such as the components of comprehension instruction and programs, direct instruction, and the reading comprehension
strategies.

Whole Language

Concepts of Whole Language

Whole language is a child-centered and literature-based approach to language teaching that involves students in real communication situations as often as possible. All kinds of textual materials ranging from fiction to nonfiction can be used to foster language learning (Froese, 1994, p. 2). Whole language holds a view that reading and writing are learned through really reading and writing, rather than doing exercises (Eldelsky & Draper, 1989). Whole language teachers use real texts such as children's literature, songs, lyrics, and dictionaries for the purpose of enjoyment instead of the written materials for instruction. They believe that process, product, and content are all interrelated, implying that understanding a content-rich curricula should always be provided. Additionally, whole language teachers and learners are seen as problem-solvers and active social beings who are capable of interacting with others and directing their own educational lives (Edelsky, Altwerger, & Flores, 1991).

Whole language beliefs. Froese (1994) generalizes whole language beliefs illustrated in classroom practice,
which are summarized as follows. Language is seen as a naturally developing human activity used for communication; therefore, real-life language situations should be provided in the classroom. Instead of being separated from all the subjects, language should be involved in every subject to be taught, learned as a whole first, and then distinguished and clarified later. In whole language classrooms, teachers need to provide students with rich learning environments, have good quality literature of all types available for students, arrange the classroom flexibly, make instructional and curriculum decisions, and choose materials which have rich potential as learning instruments. They often use learning materials which are made instead of the ready-to-use materials which are bought. They are also responsible for assisting students in learning, as well as evaluating students' work, providing assessments which are valid and reflect the curriculum. Moreover, their teaching should be personalized and based on students' interests. In the whole language program, students need to be provided with opportunities to plan their own work and develop ownership through working with their own ideas and to take part in assessment, which develops responsibilities through self-
assessment. In addition, they are encouraged to work
collaboratively and think critically. They may also
consult people in the community as language resources.

Transmission versus transaction models. Two models of
education, the transmission and transaction model, are
suggested by Weaver (1994). The transmission model
stresses typical basal reader instruction while the
transaction model emphasizes whole language education. In
the transaction model of education, students, seen as empty
vessels to be filled with knowledge, are required to
practice skills, memorize facts, and store information. In
the transaction model, on the other hand, students are
viewed as active learners familiar with using their
schemata to relate prior knowledge to the construction of
their own knowledge. Tables 6-9 show the differences
between the two models of learning in four aspects:
learning and the learner, curriculum, teacher roles, and
assessment and evaluation.
Table 6. Learning and the Learner: Comparing Transmission and Transaction Models (Weaver, 1994, p. 342-343)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transmission Model of Learning</th>
<th>Transactional Model of Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learner passively and often be grudgingly practice skills, memorizes facts, accumulates the information</td>
<td>Learner actively and often enthusiastically engages in complex language and reasoning processes and construction of complex concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material practiced and learned is rarely perceived as functional or purposeful by the learner</td>
<td>Authentic experiences and projects are typically perceived as functional and purposeful by the learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniform instruction reflects assumption that all learners learn the same things at the same time</td>
<td>Learner-sensitive instruction based on explicit assumption that all learners learn and develop uniquely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of adult correctness generates negative feedback to what are considered to be errors in execution</td>
<td>Gradual approach to adult correctness is expected; learning is seen as best facilitated when learners are free to experiment and task risks without fear of negative feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning is seen as best facilitated by competition</td>
<td>Learning is seen as best facilitated by collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transmission Model of Learning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Transactional Model of Learning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum is characterized by an emphasis on minimal skills and factual information</td>
<td>Curriculum is characterized by the kinds of learning experiences that lifelong learners engage in outside of school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum is divided into skills and facts; language and literacy are taught as the mastery of isolated skills</td>
<td>Curriculum is integrated among topics and themes, with emphasis on developing language and literacy skills across the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum is determined by outside forces (curriculum guides and objectives, texts, and programs)</td>
<td>Curriculum is determined by, and negotiated among, the teacher and the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading materials are characterized, at the earliest levels, by unnaturally stilted language (&quot;basalese&quot; consisting of basic sight words and/or phonically regular words)</td>
<td>Reading materials include, at the earliest levels, a wide variety of materials in natural language patterns with emphasis on repetitive and predictable patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beyond the primary grades, many reading selections consist of literature that has been altered, abridged, or excerpted from literary works</td>
<td>Beyond the primary grades, the range and depth of reading of high literary quality as well as nonfiction prose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct teaching of skills occurs in isolation, according to predetermined teach/practice/test format or program, with attention to testing the parts of language</td>
<td>Direct teaching of skills occurs within the context of the whole learning experience and the learners' needs and interests (parts in context of the whole)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8. Teacher Roles: Comparing Transmission and Transaction Models (Weaver, 1994, p. 342-343)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transmission Model of Learning</th>
<th>Transactional Model of Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serves to dispense information, assign tasks and evaluate work</td>
<td>Serves as a master craftsperson, mentor, role model, demonstrating what it is to be a literate person and lifelong learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explains lessons and assignments; determines work to be done</td>
<td>Stimulates learning by demonstrating, inviting, discussing, affirming, facilitating, collaborating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creates a climate wherein competition and comparison are encouraged</td>
<td>Creates a supportive community of learners wherein collaboration and assistance are encouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treats students as incapable and deficient insofar as they have not measured up to preset objectives and norms</td>
<td>Treats students as capable and developing, honoring their unique patterns of development and offering invitations and challenges to growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejects and penalizes errors, thus discouraging risk taking and hypothesis information (thinking)</td>
<td>Responds positively to successive approximations, thus encouraging risk taking and hypothesis formation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fosters dependence on external authority to determine what to do and how to do things, as well as to decide what is and is not correct</td>
<td>Shares responsibility for curricular decision making with students, thus empowering them to take ownership of and responsibility for their own learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transmission Model of Learning</th>
<th>Transactional Model of Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only teacher assesses the student</td>
<td>Assessment is collaborative, involving not only teacher but the student and perhaps peers and/or parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment if often limited to tests, with standardized tests given the greatest weight in evaluation and decision making regarding instruction and placement</td>
<td>Assessment is complex and multi-dimensional, with attention given not only to produces (such as test scores and reading and writing samples), but also to processes and affective factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment is decontextualized; that is, appears little resemblance to normal reading, writing, and learning activities</td>
<td>Assessment is contextualized, based upon the day-to-day authentic learning experiences of the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment is infrequent</td>
<td>Assessment is ongoing and continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment is primarily norm-referenced and to some extent criterion-referenced</td>
<td>Assessment is learner-referenced (based on the individual learner's growth) as well as criterion-referenced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both students and teachers are evaluated by students' performance on standardized tests and/or by students' attainment of internally imposed curriculum goals</td>
<td>Students and teachers evaluate themselves, each other, and the curriculum - that is, their shared learning experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the same vein, Robb (1994) compares some of the basic premises of the traditional transmission learning model with the whole language model regarding to teacher and student roles and classroom practice (see Table 10).
Table 10. Transmission and Whole Language Models (Robb, 1994, p. 12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>Whole language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision making is autocratic.</td>
<td>Decision making is collaborative and democratic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are grouped by ability.</td>
<td>Students are grouped heterogeneously.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers transmits a body of knowledge to students who passively receive it.</td>
<td>Teachers is coach/co-learner who provides a variety of resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher talk dominates.</td>
<td>Students talk and think about reading and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language is divided into subskills; learning moves from parts to whole.</td>
<td>Language is kept whole: integration of reading, writing, listening and speaking across the curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning consists of mastering skills and memorizing facts.</td>
<td>Learning consists of developing strategies for independent problem solving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum is the same for all learners.</td>
<td>Curriculum meets the developmental needs of individual learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basal-and textbook-driven.</td>
<td>Literature-centered, print-rich, writing-rich, inquiry-rich.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product-driven.</td>
<td>Emphasizes process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning is competitive.</td>
<td>Learning is collaborative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective testing.</td>
<td>Evaluation of process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Whole Language in Practice

This section deals with the whole language classroom practice including the goals, approaches to whole language, and the organization for the whole language classroom.

The goal of the whole language classroom. According to Anderson (1984), whole language teachers have high expectations of students and have knowledge about language learning. Different from the “skills-oriented” teachers who bore and trouble students with difficult tasks in language learning, they are aware of students’ interests and needs. They are directed by the goal of whole language to provide students a whole language classroom. As to the goal of whole language, he states:

The ultimate goal of the whole language classroom is to provide learning experiences that make sense to children and that enable them to learn language and content that builds upon what they already know. Then children will develop independence, understand self and the world, increase in self-esteem and have a sense of purpose in their lives. (p. 485)

Whole language approaches. Anderson and Chapman (1994) recommend that to incorporate whole language
principles to whole language classroom practices, teachers can do the following: (1) recognize individual learning styles and figure out ways to involve all learners; (2) help learners realize why they are learning what they learn and relate it to their own lives, build on prior knowledge so that they can relate the new to the known, and become aware of their thinking and learning processes; (3) provide a comfortable but challenging learning environment where learners are not afraid and are willing to take risks in their learning; and (4) use language for communication, use a variety of social contexts, and incorporate a variety of oral and written forms of representation and genres.

Weaver (1994) suggests two different models to distinguish the differences between reading instruction and literacy development, the skills approach to teaching reading (see Figure 1) and the whole language approach to developing literacy (see Figure 2). Figure 1 illustrates the skills approach, typical of basal reading programs, which involves teaching phonics skills for decoding, word analysis skills, comprehension skills, and critical thinking skills. These basal reading skills are only part-to-whole approaches. While the whole language approach relates reading to writing, oral language to written
In Figure 2, everything is interrelated. Many kinds of literacy events such as Readers Theatre, drama, literature discussions, and so on can be held in the whole language classroom. As Figure 2 reveals, through the whole language approach, not only can many strategies such as constructing and composing meaning be learned but also metacognitive awareness be developed. Additionally, learners can learn from the process of collaborating, creating, evaluating, and self-evaluating/ regulating/ monitoring. Thus, literacy and learning can be fostered.
Figure 2. A Whole Language Approach to Developing Literacy and Facilitating Learning (Weaver, 1994, p. 102)

- Guided writing
- Shared book experience
- Paired reading
- Choral reading
- Guided reading
- Collaborating
- Creating
- Evaluating
- Language experience
- Modeled writing
- Independent reading
- Journals
- Self-evaluating
- Self-regulating
- Self-monitoring
- Developing metacognitive awareness
- Readers theatre
- Observation and experimentation
- Literature discussions
- Read aloud
- Research
- Storytelling
- Drama
- Independent writing
- Theme study
- Listening to literature
- Guided reading
- Collaborating
- Composing and meaning

Literacy and Learning
Comprehension is emphasized in a whole language program at any level of reading development. Teachers should provide a context that becomes meaningful when students naturally relate prior knowledge to new ideas. Thus meaningful and functional approaches which can present language in natural whole language, are necessary. Suggested whole language approaches to reading include activities such as reading aloud, sustained silent reading (SSR), and written conversation. Reading aloud to students can motivate students to read alone and help their language development, including the expansion of vocabulary and knowledge about the language. SSR, which means that teachers and students spend time reading every day, is to develop life-long readers. Written conversation, a type of assisted writing, is an activity in which teachers and students communicate in writing rather than speaking. Through this activity, students' reading and writing abilities can be improved (Anderson, 1984).

Organizing whole language classrooms. The use of time and space in whole language classrooms is flexible. It is the teachers' job to organize the classrooms in a meaningful way. According to Anderson (1984), a thematic unit approach integrating knowledge from different areas in
the study of a selected theme or topic can be incorporated with the curriculum to develop students' various learning abilities. Another important approach is to provide specialized settings for students to work on their own or with group members called learning centers. Whole language classrooms provide different types of centers, helping students increase their independent learning experiences. According to Lukasevich (1994), the most common learning centers are library or reading centers, writing, speaking, listening, and theme centers. Teachers have to decide what types of learning centers best suit students' needs.

Goodman (1991) recommends that time should be used productively and suggests teachers make short-term, medium-term, and long-term plans, depending on the level of the class and the activities they try to do. According to Avery (1991), teachers should organize the classroom to allow time for students to think as well as time for themselves to listen to what the students say. Thus, from students' responses, teachers learn and know how to reach their students.

In summary, whole language is a child-centered, literature-based, and content-rich approach to teaching. The beliefs of whole language, the goal of the whole
language classroom, and whole language practices all make whole language significant and different from the traditional approach to language teaching.

Cooperative Learning

What is Cooperative Learning?

Cooperative learning refers to a set of instructional practices in which teachers direct groups of students to work together (Murray, 1994). As stated by Kagan (1992), cooperative learning is a family of instructional strategies in which students interact with each other over subject matter cooperatively as an essential part of learning process. Cooperative learning practices can be simple as having students engage in a short discussion, and complex as such activities as teambuilding, classbuilding, assigning and training roles for students within teams, as well as corresponding curriculum designs.

Cooperation does not occur by accident. It happens only through much practice dependent upon the learning of strategies and skills in cooperation (Jaques, 1984).

Key concepts of cooperative learning. According to Kagan (1992), cooperative learning may include six key concepts: teams, cooperative management, the will to cooperate, the skill to cooperate, structures, and basic
principles. Teachers' competence in these concepts may play a decisive role in the successful implementation of cooperative learning. Teams refer to the size of a group. Teachers have to decide what size a group should be, how the groups should be formed, and for how long the groups should last. Besides, teachers have to consider the issue of cooperative management, that is, the management of a classroom of teams. Students' will to cooperate is also important. Teambuilding, classbuilding, and the use of cooperative task and reward structures can keep to maintain students' will to cooperate. With an understanding of task and reward structures, teachers can design cooperative learning activities which enhance students' motivation to learn cooperatively. Basically, teachers should create cooperative task structures which ensure that no one can finish the task alone; this involves a determination of the ways that rewards will be distributed among the students. For example, they may require students to prepare a project in a group and make the grades of students depend on each other. As well as creating and maintaining students' will to cooperate, adopting useful and appropriate strategies to help develop students' skills to cooperate carries much weight in the ultimate success of a cooperative learning
Principles of cooperative learning. In the light of basic principles, Kagan (1992) mentions three. First, simultaneous interaction is involved in cooperative learning. Second, positive interdependence results from the positive correlation of the gains of individuals or teams. In other words, the more common gains shared by students in a group, the more positively interdependent they become. Third, cooperative learning activities emphasizing individual accountability adds to academic gains.

Besides the three principles mentioned by Kagan, Shapon-Shevin, Ayres, and Duncan (1994) explore two principles which should be taken into account when teachers implement cooperative learning: (1) cooperative learning, which promotes teaching meaningful contexts and provides students chances for ongoing evaluation, means to establish a cooperative classroom ethic; (2) cooperative learning relies on supportive heterogeneous groups and structures that involve all students' active participation.

Characteristics of cooperative learning. Murray (1994) recognizes four characteristics of cooperative learning based on different theories, which are teamwork
(social learning theory), conflict resolution (Piagetian theory), community collaboration (Vygotskian theory), and tutoring (cognitive psychology theory). Practices based on the social learning theory emphasize the importance of teamwork, motivating students to work hard by offering or exerting some kind of reward and punishment. Conflict resolution, based upon Piagetian theory, means that teachers use cooperative learning lessons to foster students' intellectual development by having them confront people who hold opposite views to do tasks together. As stressed by Vygotsky, community collaboration is important in social relationships because mental functioning is the "internalized and transformed version of the accomplishments of a group" (Murray, 1994, p. 9). Thus, a group’s agreement and final solutions to problems reached through activities such as debates, discussion, and negotiation become rather significant. The final characteristic of cooperative learning comes from cognitive psychology. Reciprocal teaching, letting students take turns as tutors to teach, is commonly applied as one of the cooperative learning procedures.

**Elements of cooperative learning.** Effective cooperative groups include two major elements: first, an
active learning process fostered by students’ conversation within groups; second, teachers’ guidance and professionalism provided through task structures. These assumptions are based on the perception that meanings are partly constructed by learners. Therefore, teachers should focus on students’ active involvement in learning. In addition, because learning occurs through conversation, communicating well is an essential task (Bouton & Garth, 1983).

Correspondingly, Cooper and Body (1995) add that positive interdependence, heterogeneous grouping, individual accountability, social and academic skills processed, and face to face interaction are the elements of cooperative learning. In addition to positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive (face-to-face) interaction, and interpersonal and small-group skills, Johnson and Johnson (1994) indicate one other basic element that all healthy cooperative relationships should have--group processing. In their definition, positive interdependence means that students are responsible for learning the assigned material and ensuring that everyone in the group learn the assigned material and that they understand they can succeed only when all group
members help each other. Face-to-face promotive interaction refers to the action that individuals take to encourage and facilitate group members to achieve the group’s goal. Considering the element—individual accountability, they state the following:

The third essential element of cooperative learning is individual accountability, which exists when the performance of individual students is assessed, the results are given back to the individual and the group, and the student is held responsible by group mates for contributing his or her fair share to the group’s success. (p. 35)

Group processing, the fifth component of cooperative learning, means that group reflect how they are functioning. All of the five elements are crucial for making cooperative efforts more productive than competitive and individual efforts.

The Need for Cooperative Learning

Why is cooperative learning important? Cooperative learning is believed to be good for all students including those who are labeled as “gifted,” “disabled,” and “bilingual” students. It requires teachers to cooperate with each other to incorporate lessons to make students
successful (Sapon-Shevin et al., 1994). Kagan (1992) states, "learning is best motivated by being motivated to learn in a situation which allows learning to occur" (p. 1:2). Cooperative learning provides situations such as tutoring, which can both increase motivation and provide opportunity to learn.

Why do we need cooperative learning? In order to prepare students for living in an interdependent economy and information-centered society with high technology, teachers have to help make students capable of learning the higher-level thinking, communication, and social skills. Therefore, cooperative learning experiences must be included in the classroom. Cooperative learning has many positive outcomes which include the academic gains, improving race-relations and social and affective development among all students (Kagan, 1992).

Positive outcomes. Cooperative learning has a strong potential for producing a great deal of achievement (Cohen, Lotan, & Catanzarite, 1990). Many researchers have found that compared to the traditional whole-class approach to instruction, cooperative learning approach can enhance students' motivation (Johnson & Johnson, 1985; Slavin, Sharan, Kagan, Hertz-Lazarowitz, Webb, & Schmuck, 1985;
Moreover, many studies conducted on the relationship between cooperative learning and academic achievement show that cooperative learning promotes academic achievement (Sharan & Shachar, 1988; Johnson & Johnson, 1989a; Sharan & Shaulov, 1990, Lazarowitz & Karsenty, 1990).

Also, cooperative learning helps build up positive relationships with others (Johnson & Johnson, 1989b). Moreover, it improves ethnic relations among students (Sharan et al. 1985; Slavin, 1983). In addition to interpersonal relationships and acceptance of differences, cooperative learning also promotes creative thinking, self-esteem, and understanding the nature of cooperation (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Kagan (1992) states that cooperative learning also increases students' liking for class and their cognitive and affective role-taking abilities.

**Cooperative Learning Approaches and Methods**

According to Davidson (1994), there are many diverse cooperative/collaborative approaches. Among those approaches Davidson explains and analyzes, some common and varying attributes are found. Table 11 shows five
attributes common to all the cooperative approaches and nine varying attributes.

Table 11. Common and Varying Attributes among Cooperative and Collaborative Learning Approaches (Davidson, 1994, p. 14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes common to all approaches</th>
<th>Attributes that vary among approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common task or learning activity suitable for group work</td>
<td>Grouping procedure (e.g., heterogeneous, random, student-selected, common interest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative behavior</td>
<td>Structuring positive interdependence (e.g., goals, tasks, resources, roles, division of labor, rewards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdependence (a.k.a. positive interdependence)</td>
<td>Explicit teaching of interpersonal, cooperative skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual accountability and responsibility</td>
<td>Reflection on social skills, academic skills, or group dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Climate setting through class-building, team-building, or cooperative norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attention to student status by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher’s role</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The cooperative and collaborative approaches Davidson mentions include Student Team Learning (STL), Learning Together, Group Investigation, Structural Approach, Complex Instruction and Collaborative Approach. The following are these approaches and some other methods described by other researchers.

**Student Team Learning (STL).** Student Team Learning (STL) refers studying and practicing in teams, receiving direct instruction from the teacher, taking individual quizzes, and receiving team recognition (Davidson, 1994).

**Learning Together.** The Learning Together approach differs from STL especially in its structuring positive interdependence and teacher’s role. For example, Learning Together requires teachers to assign students’ roles for the group’s functioning while STL does not (Davidson, 1994). According to Knight and Bohlmeyer (1990), in the Learning Together approach, students receive rewards when they achieve a specified group goal which requires students to share ideas and materials and to work part of the tasks if necessary. Kagan (1992) presents five main types of steps that teachers should follow: (1) specifying objectives; (2) making decisions; (3) communicating the task, goal structure, and learning activity; (4) monitoring
and intervening; and (5) evaluating and processing. First, teachers specify the academic and cooperative skill objectives. Then, they may decide on group size, assign students to groups, arrange the room, plan materials, and assign roles. Next, they have to explain the task, structure positive goal interdependence and intergroup cooperation, explain criteria for success, and specify desired behavior. When groups begin their work, teachers should monitor students' behaviors, provide help, teach collaborative skills, and provide closure. Finally, they ought to evaluate students' learning and assess how well the group is operating.

**Group Investigation.** As explained by Davidson (1994), the Group Investigation approach is that students, divided into research groups, study subtopics of a complex topic. There are six stages in the Group Investigation model, which are as follows: (1) students form research groups; (2) students plan investigation; (3) students carry out investigation; (4) students prepare for presentations; (5) students make presentations; and (6) students evaluate the group investigation individually, in groups and as a class. In this model, investigation, interaction, interpretation, and motivation are crucial components. Knight and
Bohlmeyer (1990) also state that a Group Investigation project can help students learn collaborative skills and use them well.

**Structural Approach.** "A structure is a content-free way of organizing the interaction of individuals in a classroom" (Kagan, 1992, p. 5:1). The Structural Approach refers to teachers' use of structures such as structures for information sharing and structures for practice and mastery. For teachers, there are many simple group structures they can use, e.g., Pairs Check, Think-Pair-Share, Roundtable, Jigsaw, Three-Step Interview, and Numbered Heads Together. Thus, their job is to choose the most proper structures and use them meaningfully (Davidson, 1994).

**Complex Approach.** Similar to the Group Investigation approach, Complex Instruction refers to group investigations where group members are assigned different roles to do tasks together; however, it is operated together by the teacher and group members instead of breaking up into individual investigations (Davidson, 1994).

**Collaborative Approach.** The Collaborative Approach emphasizes "the creation of personal meaning and internally
persuasive understandings through dialogue and discussion" (p. 23). In this approach, instruction can be divided into five phases: engagement, exploration, transformation, presentation, and reflection (Davidson, 1994).

**Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD).** Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) is one of the examples of STL methods (Davidson, 1994). In this method, group members help each other to prepare for competition. Winning the competition provides chances for them to receive rewards such as recognition in a class newsletter. Because of the competition, it is important that teachers divide groups evenly according to students' abilities (Knight & Bohlmeyer, 1990).

**Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT).** As stated by Davidson (1994), Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT) is also an example of STL methods. Knight and Bohlmeyer (1990) note that competition is an essential element in TGT. Unlike STAD, students of comparable ability from each team compete in tournaments. Also, students take tests and quizzes for their individual grades.

**Jigsaw Methods.** In the original Jigsaw, students are divided into learning groups; each student has access to part of a lesson and is responsible for teaching their
In Jigsaw II, the process is similar except that there is a competition among groups labeled learning teams. Jigsaw III is especially designed for bilingual students. Each Jigsaw group has students who speak only English, who do not speak any English, and who speak both English and their native languages.

Finding Out/Descubriéndolo (FO/D). This method, using team-assisted instruction (TAI), can be applied to students in grades 2 through 8 and even to high school and community college students for remedial instruction. TAI can be applied to students of comparable ability (Kagan & Bohmeyer, 1990). As suggested by Kagan (1992), TAI can be applied to students of varying ability. Each student works on an individual unit of instruction, and then helps another to practice for the tests. The teacher plays a role as a resource person and gives instruction to group members of comparable ability (Knight & Bohmeyer, 1990).
and providing help.

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC). In CIRC, the skills of reading, writing, spelling, and English language mechanics are all integrated. Metacognitive strategies for comprehension, retention, and thinking skills are stressed (Kagan, 1992).

In sum, because of the positive outcomes that cooperative learning may bring, students benefit greatly by learning collaboratively. Many methods such as CIRC, TAI, and Jigsaw can be applied to encourage cooperative learning. Teachers have to choose appropriate methods and use them in an effective way.

Critical and Creative Thinking

What It Means to Think Critically and Creatively?

What is thinking? Ruggiero (1991) attempts a formal definition of thinking as follows:

Thinking is any mental activity that helps formulate or solve a problem, make a decision, or fulfill a desire to understand. It is a searching for answers, a reaching for meaning. (p. 2)

Also, according to Barell (1991), thinking involving problem solving, confronting uncertainty, self-talk, and self-regulation, is seen as a search for meaning.
Various qualities of desirable thinking have been identified by scholars; however, among them, critical and creative thinking are often referred to as essential for good thinking (Marzano, Pickering, & Brandt, 1990).

Critical thinking. Kurfiss (1988) defines critical thinking as in the following way:

...an investigation whose purpose is to explore a situation, phenomenon, question, or problem to arrive at a hypothesis or conclusion about it that integrates all available information and that can therefore be convincingly justified. (p. 2)

Besides, according to Barell (1991), critical thinking is a habit of mind, including healthy skepticism, honesty, and an open-minded attitude, which enables people to take another side of an argument objectively and reasonably.

Basically, critical thinking involves dispositions, including open-mindedness and reason seeking, and abilities such as engagement in argument analysis and question identification (Commeyras, 1993). It is a two-dimensional process of interpreting new information from various sources (e.g., friends, news reporters) and presenting logical arguments to persuade others (Sacco, 1987). Knox (1988) posits critical thinking, emotive as well as
rational, as a productive and positive activity and a process instead of an outcome. Critical thinkers are emotive, rational, skeptical, and open-minded people who are aware and appreciate diversity of values, behaviors, social structures, and artistic forms in the world. They may think critically in various actions, that is, wholly internally or externally. Both positive and negative events can be the causes of critical thinking.

Also, according to Knox (1988), there are four components of critical thinking: (1) identifying and challenging assumptions; (2) challenging the importance of context; (3) trying to imagine and explore alternatives; and (4) exhibiting reflective skepticism. Identifying and challenging assumptions develops people's contextual awareness. Imagining alternatives develops reflective skepticism so that people do not take the "universal truth" for granted.

Creative thinking. Creative thinking is briefly defined as "the process of forming ideas or hypotheses, testing hypotheses, and communicating the results" (Parnes & Harding, 1962, p. 32). Another simple definition of creative thinking, provided by Weaver and Prince (1990), is stated as the following:
...it is everyday thinking that results in something new, either to the person doing the thinking or to the world. Whether the discoverer or inventor is the first or the hundredth matters little. The process is the same. It is the act of connecting something observed or apprehended with the understanding of it that is stored in our mind. (p. 379)

Creativity is a complex topic that contains characteristics such as fluency (creating ideas), flexibility (creating different ideas), originality (creating extraordinary ideas), and elaboration (attaching details to the ideas) (Young, 1992). Imagination, with which creative thinking is often associated, is closely related to creative thinking. In fact, creativity itself is a form of imagination (Egan & Nadaner, 1988).

Critical thinking versus creative thinking. Being critical and skeptical, one of the essential elements of critical thinking, are among the actions and thoughts that discourage creativity (Adams, 1986). Walters (1992) argues that critical thinking minimizes or ignores imagination.

However, critical and creative thinking are complementary and need to be stressed in comprehensive instruction (Young, 1992). Weaver and Prince (1990) state,
There need not be a tradeoff between critical thinking and creative thinking" (p. 380) because both of them need to be functioned when people solve problems and learn. Leff's model (1984) offers twelve awareness plans for imagining improvement, one of which is thinking alternative ideas. Thinking alternative ideas as an activity is like exploring and imagining alternatives, one of the components of critical thinking (Knox, 1988). Therefore, from a philosophical point of view, critical thinking and creative thinking are "hand-in-glove" (Brandt, 1986, p. 15). What is called really good critical thinking is simply the creative thinking (Brandt, 1986).

The Need for Critical and Creative Thinking in Education

Recently, many studies and reports call for the development of critical thinking in American education (NAEP, 1981; Nordberg, 1981). Also, according to Rogers (1962), "there is a social need for creative behavior of creative individuals" (p. 64). Why are critical thinking and creative thinking so important that they should be emphasized in education? The following are the reasons given by various researchers.

Critical thinking contributes to developing more active and independent thinkers, more effective problem
solvers, and more knowledgeable users of language and of the second language (Sacco, 1987). Siegel (1988) proposes regarding critical thinking as an educational ideal. He believes that teaching students in a critical manner is in some way respecting them, and encouraging students to think critically helps them become self-sufficient and prepares them for adult lives. Moreover, critical thinking helps foster in students respect for traditions of rationality and freedom of thought.

In addition, why is the development of creative thinking important? Torrance (1962) gives one answer. Creative thinking, essential in application of knowledge when confronting problems, is important because developing creative thinking helps individuals’ mental health and can contribute to individuals’ acquisition of information, which, in turn, enriches society.

**Developing Critical and Creative Thinking**

Knowing how to think critically and creatively is important. However, knowing how and when to develop them is more important. The following suggests the role some techniques used for students’ development of critical and creative thinking, and the role teacher should play.

**Techniques for critical and creative thinking.**
Affirming critical thinkers' self-worth, listening attentively to them, showing support, reflecting and mirroring their ideas and actions, motivating people to think critically, regularly evaluating progress, helping them create networks, and being critical are effective strategies for facilitating critical thinking. Other techniques for imagining alternatives are brainstorming (an activity for stimulating ideas), envisioning personal and collective futures, creating preferred scenarios, imagining a desired future (future invention), and engaging in esthetic and artistic experiences (Knox, 1988).

Torrance (1962) outlines ideas/principles for developing creative thinking such as valuing creative thinking, developing a creative classroom atmosphere, tolerating new ideas, criticizing constructively and encouraging self-initiated learning and using of objects and ideas.

The teacher's role in facilitating critical and creative thinking. When encouraging critical thinking, it is important that teachers make sure that the probing of students' critical thinking will not threaten the teachers' own self-esteem. Moreover, teachers must be competent, humble and courageous enough to take risks, which is
essential in creative and exciting teaching (Knox, 1988).

In conclusion, both critical and creative thinking need to be emphasized in educational programs. Teachers who know how to develop students' critical and creative thinking help students become more active and independent learners. When students' abilities in these areas are enhanced, they can deal with their problems and find solutions on their own.
CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A Model of Using Readers Theatre as a Tool for EFL Teaching

Readers Theatre is a useful instructional approach to language teaching. In a Readers Theatre event, students are provided with opportunities to listen and read, as well as to write and speak. As oral interpreters, students actively explore meanings of the texts in order to read them expressively, which is the goal of most language instruction.

The model presented here is an attempt to introduce an effective way of using Readers Theatre as a tool to help foster students' comprehension. Based on the concepts reviewed in Chapter Two, the model includes five major components: Readers Theatre; reading comprehension; whole language; cooperative learning; and critical/creative thinking. As can be seen in this model (Figure 3), with whole language as its philosophical context, Readers Theatre is carried out based on the pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities in which students work cooperatively and think critically and creatively. In conjunction with the Readers Theatre performance, students' reading comprehension can be achieved.
Figure 3. A Model of Using Readers Theatre as a Tool for EFL Teaching

- Reading Comprehension: Goal of Instruction
- Readers Theatre
  - Pre-reading Activities
  - While-reading Activities
  - Post-reading Activities

- Critical/Creative Thinking
- Activities Done Cooperatively

Whole Language: Philosophical Context
Readers Theatre

As has been noted in the previous chapter, Readers Theatre, a form of drama without complicated thematic techniques, has great merit in language teaching and learning. It fosters students' active involvement in a vivid experience of life by encouraging them to bring life to the characters they play. It helps students' self-esteem and self-confidence grow within a nonthreatening and joyful atmosphere. Students' language abilities including reading fluency and knowledge of language can be enhanced, as well as their life skills, such as thinking and social skills.

Apart from its merits in these respects, what contributes the most for using Readers Theatre in an EFL classroom may be its authenticity. Readers Theatre can provide students a chance to use language for a real audience. According to Whitmore and Crowell (1994), a real audience is one element of authentic speech, which is especially important for EFL students. A Readers Theatre performance can be presented before many audiences. When readers are ready, students from other classes, parents, school faculty, and people in the community can all be invited to join a Readers Theatre event. Therefore, a
Readers Theatre seems a suitable and beneficial approach for EFL students.

Whole Language

According to Verriour (1994), drama is a whole-language approach to language learning. Robb (1994) states that dramatizations and Readers Theatre are interactive experiences in whole language classrooms. In fact, Readers Theatre is an activity grounded on whole language philosophy. Research in whole language has shown that whole language is a language approach which recognizes students' interests and uniqueness and encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning. Readers Theatre transfers the whole language principles to a meaningful classroom practice. It is considered an effective whole-language activity.

First, the materials used in Readers Theatre have great flexibility, which can meet students' interests and needs. Students' level of ability is considered when teachers or students select those materials. Individual differences in reading rates are also a teacher's major concern when grouping or assigning students parts of reading. Second, in Readers Theatre, students learn with fun and are motivated to look for various materials for
Readers Theatre scripts, in which they interpret and explore text meanings on their own. Thus, the responsibility of learning shifts from the teacher to the students.

Critical and Creative Thinking

Previous studies researched in Chapter Two suggest a need for the development of critical and creative thinking in education. It was also found that both contribute to second language learners. In Taiwan, owing to the test-oriented teaching method, students lack critical and creative thinking abilities and teachers seldom adopt appropriate strategies for fostering critical and creative thinking. Therefore, it is necessary to place an emphasis on the development of these skills in this model. As a matter of fact, critical and creative thinking should be included in any form of teaching. After all, what students need are not only content knowledge but also the “life skills” which they can apply for coping with the problems in their future.

Cooperative Learning

In a test-oriented environment where a whole class instructional method is used, competition among students is serious. Serious competition often causes students’ loss
of self-confidence as well as their motivation for
learning. Therefore, in order to motivate students and
build up their self-confidence, cooperative learning should
be incorporated into instruction.

As can be seen in this model, the pre-reading, while-
reading, and post-reading activities can be done
cooperatively. Students can either work in pairs or in a
group to share ideas, solve problems, or complete task
assignments together. This develops their communication
skills such as negotiating and resolving conflicts and
helps establish positive relationships among students.
Moreover, learning cooperatively encourages students to
become willing helpers and enables them to be contributors
in their groups. It is the teacher's responsibility to
free students from isolation and provide them a cooperative
learning environment.

Reading Comprehension

In this suggested model, reading comprehension is the
outcome and the goal of instruction. As indicated in
Chapter One, most students in Taiwan read texts just for
the sake of tests. Most of them receive language
instruction which trains them to answer questions on tests
designed to examine their memories instead of
understanding. They may perform well on tests without constructing the meaning of the reading text, that is, comprehending the text. This is a serious problem because the reading process is not dynamic but static, in which students memorize all the details in the reading texts and copy the exact information on the tests without profound thinking and understanding. To solve the problem, teachers need to reconsider the importance of reading comprehension and reset the goal of instruction.

In summary, research offers great support for the positive influences of Readers Theatre on reading comprehension. The model provided here suggests that Readers Theatre, serving to motivate students' initial reading, can be applied to promote their comprehension. Along with whole language principles, teachers can incorporate critical/creative thinking and cooperative learning into curricula to provide students with comprehensive instruction. To serve the concepts of this model being emphasized, teachers should incorporate a congruent curriculum for students' maximum benefit.
CHAPTER FOUR: CURRICULUM DESIGN

Curriculum Organization

This unit contains six lessons designed to introduce Readers Theatre to beginners. Lesson One presents the ideas of Readers Theatre. Lesson Two, Three, and Four introduce three stories upon which Readers Theatre scripts are based. Lesson Five introduces techniques applied for Readers Theatre. Lesson Six is the performance of Readers Theatre.

Each lesson focuses on the content as well as the language. Lesson One starts with a Readers Theatre model presented in class to provide students general information about Readers Theatre. Then students learn about the basic terms related to Readers Theatre. In Lesson Two, Lesson Three, and Lesson Four, students not only familiarize themselves with read-aloud skills for performing Readers Theatre, but also gain knowledge of language. Lesson Five offers students opportunities to practice skills such as articulation and expressive use of voice. At the same time, students are also required to read and understand the meaning of the texts. In Lesson Six, students perform Readers Theatre which puts a demand on skills as well as language.
Each lesson contains focus sheets and work sheets. Homework sheets are provided in some of the lessons. Focus sheets offer materials for students to learn and work sheets provide students with tasks that verify or apply the information they have learned. Homework sheets are designed to ensure students' understanding of the factual and explicit information presented in the lessons. In some of the lessons, posters are displayed to serve as visual aids. Tasks on focus sheets, work sheets, and homework sheets are tied together to make the unit a whole.

**Incorporating a Model of Using Readers Theatre as a Tool for EFL Teaching into the Curriculum**

The design of the curriculum unit is based on the model presented in Chapter Three (see Table 12). The objectives and activities of the lessons correspond with the concepts of the model. Pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities are included in these lessons but not explicitly distinguished in the lesson plans. The following are the five components with their connection to this curriculum.

**Readers Theatre**

Readers Theatre is the theme of the unit. For students who never experience Readers Theatre, this unit
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of the Model</th>
<th>Lessons</th>
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| **Readers Theatre**     | Lesson One: Listen to a piece of Readers Theatre modeled by the teacher and staff  
Objective 2: Learn about the basic terms associated with Readers Theatre  
Objective 3: Compare/contrast Readers Theatre with traditional plays  
Lesson Two: Listen to and read a story which the week's script is based on  
Objective 2: Read the story the week's script is based on  
Lesson Four: Listen to and read a story which this week's script is based on  
Objective 1: Learn about the adjectives that describe feelings and use voices to express those feelings  
Objective 2: Articulate words carefully  
Objective 3: Read the parts students are assigned independently  
Lesson Six: Perform reading Readers Theatre pieces  |
<p>| <strong>Whole Language</strong>      | Philosophical context  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of the Model</th>
<th>Lessons</th>
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</table>
| **Critical/Creative Thinking** | Lesson One: Compare/contrast Readers Theatre with traditional plays  
Objective 3: Discuss the story and use English to answer hypothetical questions related to the story  
Lesson Three: Predict a story which the week's Readers Theatre script is based on  
Lesson Four: Respond to the story by singing a song of which group students create lyrics  
Lesson One to Lesson Six: Most activities are done cooperatively |
| **Cooperative Learning** | Lesson Three: Retell the story  
Lesson Four: Identify the elements of the story |
| **Reading Comprehension** | Lesson Six: Perform Readers Theatre  
Objective 1: Retell the three stories that students present in their groups  
Objective 2: Use English to share feelings/experiences of the performance |
|  | Outcome: Measured by assessment |
serves as an introductory lesson for Readers Theatre. As has been stated earlier in this project, Readers Theatre is a strategy used to facilitate EFL learning. Students need to know how to perform Readers Theatre. In order to enable students to present Readers Theatre, the most effective approach is to understand Readers Theatre by seeing and experiencing it in person. Thus, a model needs to be demonstrated in class. Many explanations about Readers Theatre are further provided for students. Additional practice of the use of certain techniques for Readers Theatre and rehearsals are necessary for the final performance of Readers Theatre.

According to Sierra (1996), a simple Readers Theatre activity only requires students to read a script aloud. As has been mentioned, this curriculum is designed for Readers Theatre beginners; therefore, reading scripts aloud through expressive voice is what is desired in the unit. Because of their easy application, three ready-to-use scripts are used as materials in the unit. Whole Language

Tierney, Readence, and Dishner (1990) note that a whole language program includes elements such as reading individually, reading to students, and providing students
chances for sharing. In fact, these are the elements embodied in Readers Theatre. As has been suggested, Readers Theatre is regarded as a whole language approach based on whole language concepts. In the whole language classroom, language is viewed as a whole where speaking, listening, reading, writing, and thinking should not be separated. Therefore, the activities implemented in this unit are based on this whole language philosophy.

Critical and Creative Thinking

This unit emphasizes students' development of critical and creative thinking skills. In these lessons, students can engage in activities that help enhance their abilities to think critically and creatively. Some pre-reading activities such as prediction and discussion are useful to encourage students to think critically and creatively. For example, in Lesson Three, students are required to predict the content of a story by reading the title. This not only activates students' prior knowledge but also allows students to think creatively. After having made their predictions, students are offered opportunities to discuss their predictions. This encourages their critical thinking.

Discussions are also used as post-reading activities.
In Lesson Two, for instance, students need to discuss the story and answer some hypothetical questions related to the story. Some of the lessons contain discussion activities in which students identify the problems and involve themselves to think of ways to solve the problems. All of these activities inspire students to think beyond the text materials. Moreover, Readers Theatre itself, a classroom activity which allows students to read with imagination, can encourage students' creativity. Other activities such as the students' creation of comic books and songs and their design of assessment sheets help awaken students' creative potential.

Cooperative Learning

Most of the activities in these lessons require students to complete tasks cooperatively. The major activity in this unit is Readers Theatre performance, which greatly demands students' cooperation. In addition to group performance in Readers Theatre, other tasks are set to provide students cooperative learning experiences. For example, in Lesson Three, the Jigsaw method is applied for students to work in a group, sharing the knowledge or information they have gained from their own texts. In order to facilitate cooperative learning, teachers need to
provide a cooperative learning environment as often as possible. In fact, the more cooperative learning experience students have, the more skillfully they will become at fitting in society.

Reading Comprehension

As has been said, reading comprehension is the desired outcome of this unit. Thus, all the activities designed in the unit are intended to explore students' comprehension of the reading texts. Activities involving Readers Theatre, cooperative learning, critical thinking, and creative thinking all contribute to the enhancement of reading comprehension. For students, in order to perform Readers Theatre successfully, they need to understand their Readers Theatre scripts thoroughly; in order to think critically and creatively, they need to clarify meanings of the texts first; in order to make contributions to the groups they need to carefully read their texts. On the other hand, by providing students a relaxed and non-threatening environment where students work cooperatively, Readers Theatre fosters students' freedom of thinking. When students' critical and creative thinking are encouraged, they gain more insights to the reading texts. In this way, the goal of the instruction, students' reading
comprehension, can be achieved.
CHAPTER FIVE: ASSESSMENT

Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of assessment, according to Froese (1994), is for teachers to provide feedback for students, monitor students' progress, and most importantly, analyze their own teaching so that they can provide diagnostic teaching in order to meet students' needs. In Froese's view, the assessment is seen as a beginning point rather than an end in an ongoing process in which teachers observe, reflect, and adjust their teaching. In other words, assessing what has been taught after a certain period of time can reveal information about students' weaknesses and strengths in certain areas. Therefore, when designing the curriculum, teachers can aim to build up students' strengths and teach meaningfully.

In Taiwan, very often, teachers put much emphasis on implementing various teaching methods yet neglect the importance of assessment. They neither use appropriate forms of assessment and nor do they assess students' progress over time. In fact, some teachers regard assessment as a tool to measure students' academic achievement and hold a view that the only purpose of assessment is to provide students' parents and school
authority with results of students' abilities. From their perspectives, assessment is an end of instruction; therefore, it is separated from the teachers' teaching and the students' learning process.

In truth, assessment should become part of the teachers' teaching and the students' learning process. Students should be offered opportunities to assess themselves, and teachers need to assist students in accurate self-assessment. As a result, students can understand what they have learned and what and how they are going to learn. Teachers' appropriate use of assessment can help students learn to learn independently, and this should be the real purpose of assessment.

Design of Assessment

The design of assessment in this curriculum includes both formal and informal assessment. Unlike the traditional standardized measures that most teachers use in Taiwan, the assessment used in the curriculum is based on teacher observation, assessment, and student evaluation. As to formal assessment, each lesson contains at least one assessment sheet which requires either the teacher or student to evaluate the students' tasks. In this curriculum, students are provided with chances not only to
set criteria with the teacher in class, deciding how they are going to be graded, but also to design their assessment sheets creatively. This empowers students to take control over their learning and encourages them to become more independent and responsible individuals.

Various types of assessment are provided in the curriculum. For example, story retelling is used in one of the lessons to check students' understanding of both the content and language. Students are provided with a list of story elements as a hint to retell their stories. Self-assessment of how students work in a group, emphasizing the learning process, are also included. Informal assessment also takes multiple forms. Activities such as group report and story predicting are assessed through teacher observation. Teachers may bring index cards to take notes of each individual's performance in those activities and put them in each student's files. In addition, by completing the work sheets and homework sheets relevant to the content they have learned, students have access to assessing their own learning.

As has been noted earlier, the design of assessment is different from the traditional testing teachers apply for students in Taiwan. In order to overcome students' fears
and anxiety about examinations, this curriculum does not focus too much on teacher assessment; instead, it stresses more on student-centered assessment such as peers evaluation and self-evaluation, which enables students to probe their awareness of learning in an enjoyable and comfortable environment.

Assessment Implementation

The assessment in this curriculum, which contains teacher assessment, group assessment, and student assessment, can be carried out individually or in a group. After a period of time for the lesson, formal or informal assessment is made to monitor students’ progress. Teachers can evaluate each student’s work or group work. Students in pairs or in a group may work together to evaluate their learning by completing the tasks on work sheets or using assessment sheets. They can also do work sheets or assessment sheets by themselves to self-evaluate to what degree a strategy or an ability has been mastered. Teachers’ explicit explanation of how students will be evaluated is essential to successful assessment implementation.

When receiving instruction, students are either informed about the criteria of tasks before undertaking the
tasks or they understand the criteria by participating in selecting the criteria with the teacher in class. In either way, teachers can teach purposefully and students learn intentionally. Mainly, by understanding what specific skills or abilities are being measured in advance, assessment can become meaningful.
APPENDIX

UNIT OVERVIEW

Readers Theatre

Lesson One:

Getting to Know about Readers Theatre

Lesson Two:

A Story for Readers Theatre (1): The New Year's Animals

Lesson Three:

A Story for Readers Theatre (2): The Rabbit Who Wanted Red Wings

Lesson Four:

A Story for Readers Theatre (3): The Bad Bear

Lesson Five:

Practicing for Readers Theatre Performance

Lesson Six:

Performing Readers Theatre
Lesson One: Getting to Know about Readers Theatre

Objectives
Students will...
1. listen to a piece of Readers Theatre modeled by the teacher and staff
2. learn about the basic terms associated with Readers Theatre
3. compare/contrast Readers Theatre with traditional plays

Vocabulary: Readers Theatre, radio play, drama, script, dialog, character, narrator, cue, voice, mood, movement, gesture.

Materials
Lesson Materials: Poster 1, Focus Sheet 1-1, Focus Sheet 1-2, Focus Sheet 1-3, Work Sheet 1-1, Work Sheet 1-2, Work Sheet 1-3, Assessment Sheet 1-1, Assessment Sheet 1-2

Additional Materials: Blank cards

Involving students' background, interests, and prior knowledge
1. Students find a partner.
2. Students are provided with blank cards and asked to write any words or ideas about a radio play.
3. With partner, students read their lists aloud.
4. Volunteers share their recent experience of listening to a radio play.

Teaching with variety
Teachers will...

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<th>Objective 1.</th>
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<td>Task 1.1</td>
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<td>Ask students to take out the sample story distributed last</td>
<td>Divide students into groups of twelve and use Poster 1 to play a</td>
<td>Divide students into groups of six and tell them to prepare for a</td>
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<td>time (Focus Sheet 1-1) and read it silently.</td>
<td>guessing game. (Each person given the Chinese translation of the word is to act out its meaning for group members to guess and write down their answers)</td>
<td>short report about the similarities and differences between Readers Theatre and the traditional play.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task 1.2 With the staff, demonstrate a piece of Readers Theatre based on the story, and have students listen to it with their eyes closed.</td>
<td>Task 2.2 Use Focus Sheet 1-2 (sample script based on the story they read), 1-3 to teach the pronunciation of the new words and explain their meanings.</td>
<td>Task 3.2 Decide the criteria for the report with students (make Assessment Sheet 1-1).</td>
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<td>Task 1.3 Ask students to notice the characteristics of the demonstration and listen to it again by taking some notes in a blank sheet of paper.</td>
<td>Task 2.3 Have students to find a partner to practice saying the words.</td>
<td>Task 3.3 Have grouped students discuss the questions on Work Sheet 1-3 and complete it.</td>
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<td>Task 1.4 Have students in groups discuss the characteristics of the demonstration and complete Work Sheet 1-1.</td>
<td>Task 2.4 Divide students in groups of four and have them make sentences for each word (Work Sheet 1-2).</td>
<td>Task 3.4 Have grouped students practice the report and encourage them to think of creative ways to make the report.</td>
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<td>Task 1.5 Ask volunteers from each group to share their findings with the class.</td>
<td>Task 2.5 Ask grouped students to read their sentences aloud and write the sentences on the chalkboard.</td>
<td>Task 3.5 Have each group report their findings.</td>
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<td>Task 3.6 Give feedback and summarize students' findings.</td>
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**Follow-up Activities**

Students pair up and check each other’s spelling and pronunciation of the new words after class. Students complete Assessment Sheet 1-2 to record progress.

**Assessment**

1. Students use student-made Assessment Sheet 1-1 to evaluate each group report.
2. After class, paired students use Assessment Sheet 1-2 to check each other’s progress.
Lesson Two: A Story for Readers Theatre (1)

The New Year’s Animals

Objectives
Students will...
1. identify adjectives that describe a person’s quality or personality
2. listen to and read a story which the week’s script is based on
3. discuss the story and use English to answer hypothetical questions related to the story

Vocabulary: zodiac, dragon, creature, meadow, Jade Emperor, represent, high-spirited, graceful, magnificent, intelligence, friendliness, patient, honest, energetic, cleverness.

Materials
Lesson Materials: Focus Sheet 2-1, Focus Sheet 2-2, Work Sheet 2-1, Work Sheet 2-2, Work Sheet 2-3, Work Sheet 2-4, Assessment Sheet 2, Homework Sheet 2

Additional Materials: Blank cards, a blank transparency

Involving students’ background, interests, and prior knowledge
1. Students are asked to think of as many adjectives as they can; the teacher writes those adjectives on the chalkboard.
2. One of these adjectives becomes an example to explain a word that describes people. Volunteers come to the chalkboard to circle the words that describe people.

Resources
A bilingual dictionary (English/Chinese)
# Teaching with variety

Teachers will...

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<th>Objective 1.</th>
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<td><strong>Task 1.1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask students in pairs to find the words that describe a person's quality from the list on the chalkboard and have volunteers tell their answers.</td>
<td>Ask students to take out Focus Sheet 2-2 and tell the teacher the words they can't understand or pronounce.</td>
<td>Ask each student to think of one question about the story and in English write the sentence on Work Sheet 2-3.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Task 1.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 2.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 2.3</strong></td>
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<td>Distribute Focus Sheet 2-1 and explain the new words.</td>
<td>Write down the words on a transparency and use an overhead projector for students to see the list of the words.</td>
<td>Divide students into groups of five, mixing levels of reading ability; have each group work on Work Sheet 2-1.</td>
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<td><strong>Task 1.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 2.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 2.4</strong></td>
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<td>Divide students into groups of six, and have them circle the adjectives that describe a person’s quality or personality (Focus Sheet 2-2). Tell students that the characters in the story are all personalized.</td>
<td>Divide students into groups of five, mixing levels of reading ability; have each group work on Work Sheet 2-1.</td>
<td>Ask each group member to help another understand the story and complete Work Sheet 2-2. Circulate and provide help.</td>
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<td><strong>Task 1.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 2.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 3.4</strong></td>
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<td>Have each group share answers with the class and give correct answers.</td>
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<td>Divide students into groups of four and give each group Assessment Sheet 2-2 to let students know the grading criteria. Have each group complete Work Sheet 2-4.</td>
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| **Task 1.5**  
Give each student a blank card to write one sentence to someone in the class by choosing an appropriate word from the adjectives on Focus Sheet 2-2. (e.g. ____ , you are ____ . From _____) | **Task 2.5**  
Explain the story sentence by sentence in Chinese. |  |
| **Task 2.6**  
Have students listen to the teacher read the story on Focus Sheet 2-2 and then read it aloud with the teacher. |  |  |

**Follow-up Activities**

1. Students take Homework Sheet 2 home and turn it in next time in class.
2. Students make a comic book of "The New Year’s Animals."

**Assessment**

Assessment Sheet 2
Lesson Three: A Story for Readers Theatre (2)

The Rabbit Who Wanted Red Wings

Objectives
Students will...
1. predict a story which the week’s Readers Theatre script is based on
2. read the story and read it aloud
3. retell the story

Vocabulary: squirrel, waddle, groundhog, bushy, tail, hop, hollow, stump, scratchy, den, twig, suggest, plain, hug, tight, perfect.

Materials
Lesson Materials: Poster 3, Focus Sheet 3-1, Focus Sheet 3-2, Focus Sheet 3-3, Focus Sheet 3-4, Focus Sheet 3-5, Focus Sheet 3-6, Work Sheet 3-1, Work Sheet 3-2, Assessment Sheet 3, Homework Sheet 3

Involving students’ background, interests, and prior knowledge
Using Poster 3, students are asked the following question:
1. What animal is it?
2. Why do you think it is a ______?
3. What food does it eat?
4. Do you like a _____? Why?

Resources
An English/Chinese dictionary

Teaching with variety
Teachers will...

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<th>Objective 1.</th>
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<td>Task 1.1</td>
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<td>Divide students</td>
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<td>into groups of five. Write down the title of the story on the chalkboard and ask students to predict the story from the title. Direct them by asking questions such as &quot;Why did the rabbit want red wings? What happened when the rabbit had red wings?&quot;</td>
<td>into five groups and give Focus Sheets 3-1 to 3-5 to group 1 to 5. Have students read The same part of text together and help group members understand its meaning. (A bilingual dictionary can be used to look up words)</td>
<td>the story retelling with students and write them on the chalkboard. Pair up students and have paired students design their own Assessment Sheet 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1.2 Ask students to write down their predictions about the story on Work Sheet 3-1.</td>
<td>Task 2.2 Ask students to form a new group of seven. Each group must include at least one student from the original group 1-5. Have grouped students explain their parts of the text to other members.</td>
<td>Task 3.2 Have paired students work on Work Sheet 3-2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1.3 Encourage each group to share their predictions with the class.</td>
<td>Task 2.3 Review students' predictions on the chalkboard and compare the story with their predictions.</td>
<td>Task 3.3 Ask pair students to use Work Sheet 3-2 as a hint and to use English to retell the story.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task 1.4 Among the predictions, ask students to choose three most possible ones and write them down on the chalkboard.</td>
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<td>Task 3.4 Use Assessment Sheet 3 to evaluate peer's retelling of the story.</td>
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<td>Task 2.4</td>
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<td>Distribute Focus Sheet 3-6.</td>
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<td>Briefly explain the story and ask if students have any questions about the story.</td>
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<td>Ask students to find a partner to read the story aloud.</td>
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**Follow-up Activities**

Students complete Homework Sheet 3.

**Assessment**

Student-designed Assessment Sheet 3
Lesson Four: A Story for Readers Theatre (3)

The Bad Bear

Objectives
Students will...
1. listen to/read a story which this week’s Readers Theatre script is based on
2. identify the elements of the story such as the setting, characters, problem, action, resolution, and theme.
3. respond to the story by singing a song of which group students create lyrics

Vocabulary: log, cabin, hollow, chunk, grab, greasy, grimy, swallow, mighty, concern, wonder, rotten, branch, bust, manner

Materials
Lesson Materials: Completed Homework Sheet 3, Focus Sheet 4-1, Focus Sheet 4-2, Work Sheet 4-1, Work Sheet 4-2, Work Sheet 4-3, Self-Assessment Sheet 4

Additional Materials: A blank transparency

Involving students’ background, interests, and prior knowledge
1. Students exchange their reaction papers (Homework Sheet 3) with other group members.
2. The topic of the story they read last time was about a rabbit; today they’re going to read about a bear. The word “bear” is written on the chalkboard and students brainstorm ideas about bears.

Resources
A Chinese-English dictionary
### Teaching with variety

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<tr>
<th>Objective 1</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Task 1.1</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Task 3.1</strong></td>
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<td>Review the story “The New Year’s Animals” and ask students why Jade Emperor didn’t choose the bear as one of the twelve animals. Relate their answers to the title of today’s story “The Bad Bear.”</td>
<td>Distribute Focus Sheet 4-2 and explain the elements of a story.</td>
<td>Divide students into groups of five and have them write a song based on the story (Work Sheet 4-3). Encourage them to use their sense of humor.</td>
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<td><strong>Task 1.2</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Task 3.2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribute Focus Sheet 4-1 and divide students into groups of five. Have each group list words they don’t understand (Work Sheet 4-1).</td>
<td>Divide students into groups of three and do Work Sheet 4-2.</td>
<td>Have each group rehearse singing. Circulate among the whole class and provide help.</td>
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<td><strong>Task 1.3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have each group look up the new words in the dictionary and complete Work Sheet 4-1.</td>
<td>Write down the answers from each group and provide feedback.</td>
<td>Have each group go up to the front of the classroom and sing the song they have created.</td>
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<td><strong>Task 1.4</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Task 3.4</strong></td>
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<td>Collect Work Sheet 4-1, and copy what each group wrote on a transparency.</td>
<td>Ask grouped students to create a graphic response to each element of the story beside the element box on Work Sheet 4-2.</td>
<td>Distribute Self-Assessment Sheet 4-2 to each student and have him/her complete it.</td>
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**Follow-up Activities**

1. Students in a group revise their lyrics and bring them to the class next time because the lyrics of the songs will be published in the class newsletter.
2. Students go to local libraries to find a short story about bears and translate the story from Chinese into English.

**Assessment**

Self-Assessment Sheet 4-1
Self-Assessment 4-2
Lesson Five: Practicing for Readers
Theatre Performance

Objectives
Students will...
1. learn about the adjectives that describe feelings and use voices to express those feelings
2. articulate words carefully
3. read the parts they are assigned independently and in a group

Vocabulary: boisterous, depressed, excited, grumpy, jolly, mischievous, obnoxious, petrified, queer, vicious, yucky, zinging

Materials

Lesson Materials: Focus Sheet 5-1, Focus Sheet 5-2, Focus Sheet 5-3, Focus Sheet 5-4, Work Sheet 5-1, Self-Assessment Sheet 5

Additional Materials: Blank yellow cards, blank blue cards

Involving students' background, interests, and prior knowledge

1. Each student thinks of one adjective that describes feelings and writes it down on a blank yellow card.
2. Each student writes his/her own name on a blank blue card.
3. Two volunteers come to the front. One student draws a card from the yellow cards and the other draws from the blue cards. The person whose name is called stands up to use the word to make a sentence and says it expressively (e.g. I am very angry).
## Teaching with variety

Teachers will...

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<tr>
<th>Objective 1.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Task 1.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 2.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 3.1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask students to form groups and have grouped students complete Work Sheet 5-1.</td>
<td>Distribute Focus Sheet 5-1 and ask students to read the lines together.</td>
<td>Divide students into three groups, mixing levels of reading ability. Give each group student a copy of the script (Focus Sheet 5-2, Focus Sheet 5-3, Focus Sheet 5-4). Ask students to skim their copies.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Task 1.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 2.2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have group volunteers tell the class their answers. Give correct answers and explain the words.</td>
<td>Pair up students and have one play the role of person A and the other, person B to speak the lines.</td>
<td>Have grouped students negotiate their roles.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Task 1.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 2.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Task 3.2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask each group member to choose one of the faces from A-Z on Work Sheet 5-1 and say a sentence to express his/her feelings (angry: &quot;I hate you&quot;).</td>
<td>Have students exchange the roles and practice speaking the lines clearly.</td>
<td>Ask each student to read his/her part silently and reread it if time is allowed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Task 1.4</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Task 3.3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Repeat Task 1.3 until each student is confident in speaking appropriately for the face he/she chooses.</td>
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<td>Ask each student to read his/her part silently and reread it if time is allowed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Task 1.5</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Task 3.4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have students complete Self-Assessment Sheet 5. Give feedback.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Have each group practice reading the script. Circulate around the classroom, coach, and provide feedback.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Follow-up Activities

1. Students bring home their copies of the scripts, highlight their parts, and practice at home.
2. Students receive Assessment Sheet 6 in advance and so they can understand how they are going to be graded at Readers Theatre Performance.
Lesson Six: Performing Readers Theatre

Objectives
Students will...
1. perform reading Readers Theatre pieces
2. retell the three stories that students present in their groups
3. use English to share their feelings and experiences of the performance

Materials
Lesson Materials: Focus Sheet 5-2, Focus Sheet 5-3, Focus Sheet 5-4, Work Sheet 6-1, Work Sheet 6-2, Assessment Sheet 6
Additional Materials: CD, CD player

Involving students' background, interests, and prior knowledge
1. Students sit in groups and close their eyes to listen to the music and pretend they are in the forest.
2. They think of the roles they play and pretend they are the characters. Students who play the narrators imagine the scenes.

Teaching with variety
Teachers will...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1.</th>
<th>Objective 2.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Task 1.1 Ask students in groups to rehearse their parts.</td>
<td>Task 2.1 Have each group play a game to retell the stories they do not present. (One student starts retelling the story by saying one sentence, and the other members,</td>
<td>Task 3.1 Have students stand up and stretch.</td>
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<td>Task 1.2 Have each group practice two or three times.</td>
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<td>Task 1.3  Have each group present their stories in turn (Students use Focus Sheet 5-2, 5-3, 5-4).</td>
<td>except the recorder, take turns at continuing the story and finish the story before time is up. The recorder writes down what his/her group members say on Work Sheet 6-1, 6-2.</td>
<td>Task 3.2  Divide students into groups of four and ask them to talk in English about their experiences and feelings of today’s performance.</td>
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<td>Follow-up Activities</td>
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<td>Students write a short essay about today’s performance.</td>
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<td>Assessment</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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Focus Sheet 1-1

Rapunzel

Once upon a time, long ago in a land far away there lived a really ugly princess. Her face was covered in freckles, warts and pimples. She was so ugly that her stepfather couldn’t bear to watch her. He didn’t like her. He asked his wife to do something about her. Rapunzel’s mother didn’t know what to do. Finally, she decided to go to the market to look for some medicine. She bought a tube of Topex. After she got home, she gave it to Rapunzel. She hoped it would make her pretty. But five days later, Rapunzel was still ugly. Her mother thought it was just a stage she was going through, but her stepfather didn’t think so. He wanted to lock her away.

So the ugly princess was locked away in a tall tower at the top of the castle. Her stepfather confiscated all chocolates, soft drink, biscuits and lolly-pops. He called upon the terrible witch from Wart Watchers Anonymous to be her guardian. When Rapunzel was in the tower, her hair grew fast and became very long. When the wicked witch came, she always asked Rapunzel to let down her hair for her to climb up to the tower. Rapunzel didn’t want to do so because the witch was fat and heavy.

One day, the witch came up with an idea. She asked Rapunzel to make hats for her. For many years, the witch had run a black market business for discount witches hats. But Rapunzel was being exploited. She was fed up. She wished that a prince would rescue her. When she said that, a prince passed by the castle and heard Rapunzel. He asked
to rescue her. Rapunzel said to the prince that she didn’t want him to see her ugly face. But the prince said he was small and skinny. He didn’t care how she looked and he wanted her to marry him. He told Rapunzel to cut off her hair, secure it to the window sill, and climb down. Rapunzel did what he said. She climbed down the tower and ran away with her prince. Finally, they got married and lived happily ever after.

(Hill, 1990, pp. 72-74)
Focus Sheet 1-2
Rapunzel

by Danni Laurence & Susan Hill

Characters: Narrator 1
Narrator 2
Wicked Witch
Rapunzel
Puny Prince
Mother
Stepfather

Narrator 1: Once upon a time, long, long ago in a land far away there lived a really ugly princess called Rapunzel.

Rapunzel: Oh, I’m so ugly. My face is covered in freckles, warts and pimples. Oh, woe is me.

Stepfather: Mother, we’ve got to do something about that daughter of yours. She’s so ugly. I can’t bear to look at her.

Mother: It’s just a stage she’s going through, dear.

Stepfather: I don’t care. I don’t like it. I’m going to lock her away.

Mother: That’s a bit harsh, isn’t it, dear?

Rapunzel: Just let me try one more tube of Topex, please?

Stepfather: Never! You’ve had five days and it hasn’t worked. I want my money back. Be off with you!

Narrator 2: And so the ugly princess was locked away in a tall, tall tower at the top of the castle.

Narrator 1: Her stepfather confiscated all chocolates, soft drink, biscuits and lollies. He called upon the terrible witch from Wart Watchers.
Anonymous to be her guardian.

Wicked Witch: Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!
Rapunzel: Oh no, not again!
Wicked Witch: Don’t answer back, brat. Lift me up or you will starve.
Rapunzel: But you’re so fat and heavy!

Narrator 1: Now for many years the witch had run a black market business for discount designer hats. Rapunzel was being exploited.

Wicked Witch: Hurry up. I need supplies. I’ve got a hundred witches waiting for your discount designer hats.

Narrator 2: Rapunzel was fed up.
Rapunzel: I’m fed up. I wish a prince would rescue me.

Narrator 1: Little did she know that a prince was listening.

Puny Prince: Hark! I hear a damsel in distress. Psst! Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair.

Rapunzel: I don’t believe it: he really likes me. Pray tell, who are you and how do you know me?

Puny Prince: Alas, I am the Puny Prince, a name given to me by my brothers. They have taunted and teased me all my life because I am so small and skinny. I have heard the wicked witch calling your name and have come to rescue you --that is, if you wish to be rescued by me.

Rapunzel: Oh I do, I do!

Puny Prince: Then jump, and I shall catch you.

Rapunzel: No offense, Puny Prince, but I don’t think you could catch me.
Puny Prince: Aaah, you may be right. Well at least I tried.

Rapunzel: Oh, don’t give up yet. Surely you can think of another way.

Puny Prince: I’ve got it!

Rapunzel: What? What is it?

Puny Prince: Cut off your hair and secure it to the window sill. Then you can climb down and run away with me. We can get married, that is, if you’ll have me.

Rapunzel: Oh, of course, but let’s fall in love first. And thank you for your kindness.

Narrator 1: So the princess was rescued and ran away with her prince to be married and to live happily ever after.

Narrator 2: But that didn’t happen of course. They had their disagreements and disappointments from time to time. But I guess they worked those out in the end because as far as I know they’re still together.

(Hill, 1990, pp. 72-74)
Focus Sheet 1-3

New Vocabulary

- mood
- script
- character
- gesture
- radio play
- Readers Theatre
- dialog
- cue
- movement
- narrator
- voice
Work Sheet 1-1

Characteristics of Readers Theatre

Group

Student

♦ In Chinese, write down the things you found about the Readers Theatre and circle each of them.
Work Sheet 1-2

Our Sentence Profile

Group

Student

1. Readers Theatre
2. radio play
3. drama
4. script
5. dialog
6. character
7. narrator
8. cue
9. voice
10. mood
11. movement
12. gesture
**Assessment Sheet 1-2**

**Student Record**

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Student: ___________________ checked by ___________________
Focus Sheet 2-1

Adjectives That Describe A Person's Personality

high-spirited: full of fun; adventure-loving

graceful: attractive or pleasant. It is used especially to describe bodily movements or form and also used of people's manners.

clever: quick at learning and understanding; have a quick, skillful, and able mind or body.

patient: having or showing the ability to bear long Waiting without complaining.

intelligent: having or showing powers of reasoning or understanding.

friendly: acting or ready to act as a friend

honest: trustworthy; not likely to lie or to cheat

(Summer, 1990)
The New Year's Animals

It was long ago that the animals of the Chinese zodiac were chosen. In olden days, the creatures of forest and meadow had the power of speech. Great dragons could be seen rising from the mists of rivers. The Jade Emperor chose twelve animals, one to represent each year of the new calendar he had created.

He chose the rabbit because it was shy and graceful and the boar because it was brave and strong.

The high-spirited horse was one of the twelve, of course, and the shy, loveable sheep, too.

The dog—honest, fair, and faithful—could hardly be forgotten.

The dragon came next, in a blaze of color. Such a magnificent creature could never have been left out.

The emperor chose the monkey for its intelligence and friendliness.

The ox came too, naturally, because it was a hard worker, patient and loyal.

The clever, scurrying rat followed the ox.

The tiger was one of the twelve because of its power and courage.

Last, but not least, came the colorful and energetic rooster.

"Now, let the cycle of years begin," proclaimed the Jade Emperor. "But which creature shall be first?" He looked at the twelve animals. "Which of you would be the beast of the first year?" he asked.
Now, most of the animals were content just to be one of the chosen twelve. Only the rat and the ox stepped forward.

"I deserve to be the first," said the ox. "I have earned that right by being hardworking and faithful."

"I think I should be first," said the rat. "I am just as good in every way as the ox. And I am cleverer than he is."

The Jade Emperor found that he couldn't choose between the two. "Why don't we let the people decide which animal they like better," he said.

Hearing these words, the rat began to cry. "That isn't fair," he said. "I am so small that no one will see me. Of course they will choose the ox."

The Jade Emperor had magical powers, and he used them to make the rat bigger—three times bigger, in fact. "Now walk around a bit, and we'll see which one of you the people choose."

So the rat and the ox walked up and down the streets. Everywhere they went people said, "Just look at that rat!" and "I've never seen such a rat." No one even mentioned the ox. Why should they? They were used to seeing oxen exactly like him every day.

The Jade Emperor declared the rat to be the animal of the first year, recognizing that, once again, the rat had demonstrated his superior cleverness.

(Sierra, 1996, pp. 13-14)
Work Sheet 2-1

Looking for the Meanings

Group: ___________ Student: ________________________________________

♦ Copy the list of words on the transparency in the left column. Look up the words in the dictionary and in the right second column, write their definitions in Chinese.
Work Sheet 2-2

A Summary for "The New Year's Animals"

Group: ___________ Student: __________________________

♦ Write a short paragraph in Chinese to summarize the story.
Work Sheet 2-3
Asking a Question

Name: ____________________________

♦ My question about the story is:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

♦ Answers from Classmate 1:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

♦ Answers from Classmate 2:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

♦ Answers from Classmate 3:
Work Sheet 2-4

Developing Thinking

Group: _______________________
Student: _______________________

* Answer each question in two or three sentences.

1. What have you learned from the story?

2. If you were Jade Emperor, what twelve animals would you choose? Why?

3. What do you think about the ending of the story?

4. What animal's personality do you like best? Why?
## Assessment Sheet 2

**Describe Yourself**

- **Student**

  - Write a short paragraph about yourself, using the adjectives you've learned to describe your personality.

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Homework Sheet 2

My Family/My Friends

Student

*** Think of five people you are familiar with and tell us about them. First, use the adjectives you've learned to describe their personalities. Then, use the thesaurus to find another adjective to replace the word.

For example, my mother is kind (tenderhearted).

1. __________ is ______________ ( ).

2. __________ is ______________ ( ).

3. __________ is ______________ ( ).

4. __________ is ______________ ( ).

5. __________ is ______________ ( ).
Once there was a little rabbit who had two beautiful long pink ears and two bright red eyes and four soft little feet. But that little rabbit was not happy at all. He wanted to be like somebody else instead of the nice little rabbit that he was.

When the grey squirrel rushed by, the little rabbit would say to his mother, “I wish I had a big, bushy tail like the squirrel. And when the yellow duck waddled by, the little rabbit would say to his mother, “I wish I had pretty webbed feet like the yellow duck.” The little rabbit went on wishing until his mother was tired of listening to him.

(Sierra, 1996, p. 146)
One day, the old groundhog heard him and said, "Why don't you go down to the wishing pond? Look at yourself in the water, turn around three times, and you'll get your wish." So the little rabbit hopped along, all alone, through the woods until he came to a pool of green water lying in the hollow of a tree stump. That was the wishing pond. Sitting there, just on the edge of the wishing pond, was a red bird getting ready to take a drink. When the little rabbit saw the bird, he made his wish. "I wish I had a pair of wings like that red bird." The rabbit hopped up onto the tree stump.

(Sierra, 1996, pp. 146-147)
He looked at himself in the water, he turned around three times, and then his back began to feel scratchy. Out of his soft fur grew a pair of red wings.

Then the little rabbit flapped his wings and tried and tried to fly. "It must take lots of practice," he said, "or else wings don't work very well on a rabbit." He tried and tried to fly until he was very tired. He decided to go home and rest.

The little rabbit hopped home to his rabbit hole. "Mama! Look at me," he cried.

(Sierra, 1996, p. 147)
"Who are you?" his mother asked.

"I’m your little rabbit!"

"No, my little rabbit does not have red wings." And his mother would not let him come inside.

The little rabbit went to the grey squirrel’s home and asked, "May I sleep here tonight?"

"I’ve never seen a rabbit with red wings before," said the grey squirrel. "You cannot sleep here."

The little rabbit hopped down to the duck’s nest and asked if he could spend the night there.

"I have never seen you before," said the little yellow duck. "You can’t sleep here."

So, finally, the little rabbit came to the old groundhog’s den, and the old groundhog knew he was the little rabbit and let him sleep there.

(Sierra, 1996, p. 147)
But the groundhog's den was full of broken twigs and stones, and the little rabbit did not sleep very well.

The next morning the little rabbit told the old groundhog that he didn't want the red wings after all, because now no one knew who he was.

"Why don't you go to the wishing pond again and wish the wings off," suggested the groundhog. So the little rabbit went back to the wishing pond. He looked at himself in the water and said, "I want to be just my plain old self again." He turned around three times, and the wings were gone.

(Sierra, 1996, p. 147)
Once there was a little rabbit who had two beautiful long pink ears and two bright red eyes and four soft little feet. But that little rabbit was not happy at all. He wanted to be like somebody else instead of the nice little rabbit that he was.

When the grey squirrel rushed by, the little rabbit would say to his mother, "I wish I had a big, bushy tail like the squirrel. And when the yellow duck waddled by, the little rabbit would say to his mother, "I wish I had pretty webbed feet like the yellow duck."

The little rabbit went on wishing until his mother was tired of listening to him. One day, the old groundhog heard him and said, "Why don't you go down to the wishing pond? Look at yourself in the water, turn around three times, and you'll get your wish." So the little rabbit hopped along, all alone, through the woods until he came to a pool of green water lying in the hollow of a tree stump. That was the wishing pond. Sitting there, just on the edge of the wishing pond, was a red bird getting ready to take a drink. When the little rabbit saw the bird, he made his wish. "I wish I had a pair of wings like that red bird." The rabbit hopped up onto the tree stump. He looked at himself in the water, he turned around three times, and then his back began to feel scratchy. Out of his soft fur grew a pair of red wings.

Then the little rabbit flapped his wings and tried and tried to fly. "It must take lots of practice," he said,
or else wings don’t work very well on a rabbit.” He tried and tried to fly until he was very tired. He decided to go home and rest.

The little rabbit hopped home to his rabbit hole. “Mama! Look at me,” he cried.

“Who are you?” his mother asked.

“I’m your little rabbit!”

“No, my little rabbit does not have red wings.” And his mother would not let him come inside.

The little rabbit went to the grey squirrel’s home and asked, “May I sleep here tonight?”

“I’ve never seen a rabbit with red wings before,” said the grey squirrel. “You cannot sleep here.”

The little rabbit hopped down to the duck’s nest and asked if he could spend the night there.

“I have never seen you before,” said the little yellow duck. “You can’t sleep here.”

So, finally, the little rabbit came to the old groundhog’s den, and the old groundhog knew he was the little rabbit and let him sleep there. But the groundhog’s den was full of broken twigs and stones, and the little rabbit did not sleep very well.

The next morning the little rabbit told the old groundhog that he didn’t want the red wings after all, because no one knew who he was.

“Why don’t you go to the wishing pond again and wish the wings off,” suggested the groundhog. So the little rabbit went back to the wishing pond. He looked at himself in the water and said, “I want to be just my plain old self
again." He turned around three times, and the wings were gone.

He went back home and knocked at the door of the rabbit hole, and his mother hugged him tight. "There you are, my beautiful little rabbit," she said. "Come in and sit with me. I love you. You are perfect just the way you are."

(Sierra, 1996, pp. 146-147)
Write the story you predict.
Work Sheet 3-2

Story Frame

Student __________ & __________

♦ Fill in the slots in the frame.

This story is about ____________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

is an important character.

_____________________________________________________

tried to ______________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

The story ends when __________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

(Devine, 1986, p. 337)
Assessment Sheet 3

Peer Evaluation: Retelling the Story
Homework Sheet 3

A Reaction Paper

Student

- Write down what you think about the story.
In an old log cabin in the mountains, there once lived a man and a woman and little girl named Susie, a little boy named Billy, and a pet monkey named Rags. Down the road a ways, in a hollow tree, lived a bad old, mean old bear.

One morning, the man and the woman sent Billy to the store to buy a chunk of meat. But earlier that day, the bear had gone to the store, grabbed that chunk of meat, and said, "I'm going to eat you, you fat chunk of meat." And he did! He swallowed it whole and never chewed it or anything. Then the big bear went back to the hollow tree by the side of the road.

Along came Billy on his way to the store to get a chunk of meat, and the bear jumped out from the hollow tree. "Who are you?" asked Billy. "I'm the bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair. I ate a fat chunk of meat, and I'm a-gonna eat you, too!" And he did! He swallowed that little boy whole.

Well, when Billy didn't come home, the others became worried. The woman said to the little girl, "Why don't you go on down to the store and see what's keeping your brother so long?"

Susie went out, and when she came to the hollow tree, out jumped that bad bear. "Who are you?" asked Susie. "I'm the bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair. I ate a fat chunk of meat and a little boy, and I'm a-gonna eat you, too!" And he did! He swallowed that little girl in one gulp. The man and the woman were mighty concerned when
Susie didn’t come back, so the woman set out down the road to find out what had happened to them. When she came to the hollow tree, out jumped that bad bear. “Who are you?” asked the woman. “I’m the bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair. I ate a fat chunk of meat and a little boy and a little girl, and I’m a-gonna eat you, too!” And he did! He swallowed that woman down without chewing once.

Back home, the man and the monkey were scratching their heads, wondering what happened to the woman and Susie and Billy, so the man set out to find them. When he came to the hollow tree, out jumped that bad bear. “Who are you?” asked the man. “I’m the bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair. I ate a fat chunk of meat and a little boy and a little girl and a woman, and I’m a-gonna eat you, too!” And he did! He swallowed that man right there.

Well that monkey, Rags, went running all over the house, wondering why no one had come back. Finally, he set off down the road and came to the place where the bear was standing (he couldn’t fit inside the hollow tree any more). And the monkey asked, “Who are you and why are you SO fat?” And the bear answered, “I’m the bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair. I ate a fat chunk of meat and a little boy and a little girl and a woman and a man, and I’m a-gonna eat you, too!”

Quick as anything, Rags climbed the tree, and the bear followed after him. But the bear stepped on a rotten branch and fell down to the ground and busted open.

The man said, “I’m out!”

The woman said, “I’m out!”

Susie said, “I’m out!”
Billy said, "I'm out!"
The fat chunk of meat said, "I'm out!"
And the monkey said, "I'm out, 'cause I was never in!"
Sure was a good thing that bear had such bad manners
and swallowed them all whole, wasn't it?

(Sierra, 1996, pp. 130-131)
## Focus Sheet 4-2

Elements of a Story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Element</strong></th>
<th><strong>Meaning</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Setting** | Where did this story take place?  
When did the story occur? |
| **Characters** | Who was the story about?  
Who were the characters in the story?  
Who was the most important character in the story or the star of the story? |
| **Problem** | Did the characters (people/animals) in the story have a problem?  
What was the big problem that the whole story was about?  
As you listened to this story, what did you think the characters were trying to do? |
| **Action** | What were the important things that happened in the story? |
| **Resolution** | How did the story end?  
How did the characters in this story finally solve their problem? |
| **Theme** | What was this story really trying to tell us?  
What lesson could be learned from this story? |

(Devine, 1986, pp. 283-284)
**Work Sheet 4-1**

A List of the New Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word that is new to us</th>
<th>Its meaning in Chinese</th>
<th>A sentence example with the word underlined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work Sheet 4-2

The Elements of the Story

Setting:

Characters:

Problem:

Action:

Resolution:

Theme:
Work Sheet 4-3

Our Song

>Title of the Song

Group

Student
Self-Assessment Sheet 4-1

Working in a Group

♦ Circle the answer

1. Did I stay on task?
   Yes      No

2. Did I participate?
   Yes      No

3. Did I listen when others spoke?
   Yes      No

4. Did I respect other’s views?
   Yes      No

5. Did I contribute to the group?
   Yes      No
Self-Assessment Sheet 4-2

Self-Evaluation for "Writing a Song"

Name: ___________________  Group Name: ___________________

What did I do when preparing for the performance?

Do I contribute to the group performance? In what ways?

Did my group perform well? In which part?

In which part should my group improve?
Focus Sheet 5-1

Articulation

A: I live in an ice house.
B: I live in a nice house.

A: I go to summer school.
B: I think the summer's cool.

A: I see your two eyes.
B: I see you're too wise.

A: It is five minutes to eight.
B: You have five minutes to wait.

A: Give me some ice.
B: Give me some mice.

A: His acts are fun.
B: His axe is sharp.

A: I eat Red's pies.
B: Look out for red spies.

(Hill, 1990, p. 62)
### Focus Sheet 5-2

**Script 1: The New Year’s Animals**

Thirteen characters plus townspeople and one narrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jade Emperor</th>
<th>Rabbit</th>
<th>Boar</th>
<th>Horse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>Dog</td>
<td>Dragon</td>
<td>Monkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snake</td>
<td>Ox</td>
<td>Rat</td>
<td>Tiger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Narrator:** It was long ago that the animals of the Chinese zodiac were chosen. The Jade Emperor had created a new calendar, a cycle of twelve years. He decided to choose twelve animals, one for each of the years.

**Jade Emperor:** There. My list is finished. Will the twelve zodiac animals please step forward?

**Rabbit:** I am the rabbit, swift and graceful. I am pleased to be one of the twelve animals of the zodiac.

**Boar:** I am the Boar. I was chosen because I am so brave and strong. Of course I deserve to be one of the twelve animals.

**Horse:** I am the horse, swift and high-spirited.

**Sheep:** I am the sheep. I am not as strong or as beautiful as the horse, but I am shy and lovable.

**Dog:** It’s me, the dog. I am honest, fair, and faithful. No group of animals would be complete without me.

**Dragon:** I am the dragon. A magnificent creature like me could never have been left out.
Monkey: It's me, the monkey. I am friendly and intelligent.

Snake: I am the snake. I was chosen for my great wisdom as well as my lightning speed.

Ox: I am the ox. I am hard-working, patient, and loyal.

Tiger: I am the tiger. I was chosen for my power and courage.

Rat: I am the rat. What I lack in size, I make up for in cleverness.

Rooster: Without me, the rooster, how will the other animals know when New Year's Day begins?

Jade Emperor: Let the cycle of years begin!

Rat: But which creature shall be first?

Jade Emperor: Which one of you wants to be the beast of the first year?

Narrator: Now, most of the animals were content just to be one of the chosen twelve. Only the rat and the ox stepped forward.

Ox: I deserve to be first. I have earned that right by being hard-working and faithful.

Rat: I think I should be first. Rats are survivors. We are tricky and clever. I am just as good as the ox in every way.

Jade Emperor: I cannot choose between you. Why don't we let the people decide.

Rat: (Crying) That's not fair! I am so small that no one will see me. Of course they will choose the ox.

Narrator: The Jade Emperor had magic powers in those days, and he used his magic to make the rat
bigger, three times bigger, in fact.

Jade Emperor: Now walk around a bit, and we’ll see which one of you the people like best.

Townspeople: Just look at that rat! What a huge rat! Who has ever seen such a big rat?

Jade Emperor: And what do you think of the ox?

Townspeople: What ox? Oh, him. He is just...well... ordinary.

Ox: I think the rat tricked me.

Jade Emperor: The rat shall be the animal of the first year, for once again, he has demonstrated his superior cleverness.

(Sierra, 1996, pp. 22-23)
Five characters and one narrator

Little Rabbit  Grey Squirrel  Groundhog  Mother Rabbit

Yellow Duck

Narrator: Once there was a little rabbit who had two beautiful long pink ears, two bright red eyes, and four soft little feet. But that rabbit was not happy. He wanted to be like somebody else instead of the nice little rabbit that he was.

Mother Rabbit: Good morning, my beautiful little rabbit.

Little Rabbit: Good morning, mother. Good morning, grey squirrel.

Grey Squirrel: Good morning, little rabbit.

Little Rabbit: You have a nice bushy tail.

Grey Squirrel: Thank you, little rabbit.

Little Rabbit: Mama, I wish I had a bushy tail.

Mother Rabbit: You have a nice white fluffy tail.

Little Rabbit: Good morning, yellow duck.

Yellow Duck: Good morning, little rabbit.

Little Rabbit: You have pretty webbed feet.

Yellow Duck: Thank you, little rabbit.

Little Rabbit: Mama, I wish I had webbed feet.

Mother Rabbit: You have four nice soft little feet.

Little Rabbit: I wish I had...
Mother Rabbit: (Interrupting) Your wishing makes me tired. Please go outside and play.

Little Rabbit: I wish I had bushy tail. I wish I had webbed feet. I wish I had...

Groundhog: (Interrupting) Hello, little rabbit.

Little Rabbit: Hello, groundhog.

Groundhog: Rabbit, are you wishing to be different?

Little Rabbit: Yes.

Groundhog: Why don't you go down to the wishing pond?

Little Rabbit: What should I do there?

Groundhog: Look at yourself in the water.

Little Rabbit: Then what?

Groundhog: Turn around three times.

Little Rabbit: Then what?

Groundhog: Make a wish and it will come true.

Little Rabbit: I'll go there right now.

Narrator: The rabbit went to the wishing pond, and there he saw a little bird with red wings. The rabbit looked into the pond and turned around three times.

Little Rabbit: I wish, I wish, I wish I had red wings. I do! I do have red wings! Now I can fly.

Narrator: The little rabbit flapped his wings over and over, but he could not fly.

Little Rabbit: Maybe wings don't work on a rabbit. Oh well, I'm tired. I want to go to sleep.

Narrator: The little rabbit hopped back home and
knocked on the door.

Little Rabbit: Mama, can I come in and go to sleep?

Mother Rabbit: Who are you?

Little Rabbit: I'm your little rabbit.

Mother Rabbit: No, my little rabbit doesn't have red wings.

Narrator: And the little rabbit's mother closed the door. So the little rabbit went to the grey squirrel's house and knocked on the door.

Little Rabbit: May I sleep in your house?

Grey Squirrel: Who are you? I've never seen a rabbit with red wings before.

Narrator: And the grey squirrel wouldn't let him in. So the little rabbit went to the yellow duck's house and knocked at the door.

Little Rabbit: May I sleep in your house?

Yellow Duck: Who are you? I've never seen a rabbit with red wings before.

Narrator: And the yellow duck wouldn't let him sleep there, either. So the little rabbit went to the groundhog's house and knocked on the door.

Little Rabbit: May I sleep in your house?

Groundhog: Yes, little rabbit with red wings. You may sleep on the floor in my house.

Narrator: The little rabbit lay down on the floor, but he couldn't sleep because the groundhog's den was full of sticks and rocks.

Little Rabbit: Ouch! Ouch! I can't sleep. The sticks and rocks hurt me.
Narrator: The next morning, the little rabbit was sad.
Little Rabbit: I don't want these red wings. These wings are terrible!

Groundhog: Why don't you go to the wishing pond and wish yourself back to the way you were.

Little Rabbit: I will! I will! Goodbye.

Narrator: The wings disappeared. The little rabbit hopped home again and knocked on the door.

Little Rabbit: Mama, may I come in and rest?

Mother Rabbit: There you are my beautiful little rabbit with a nice white tail and four soft little feet. Come in and sit with me. I love you. You are perfect just the way you are.

(Sierra, 1996, pp. 151-153)
Focus Sheet 5-4

Script 3: The Bad Bear

Seven characters and two narrators

Big Bad Bear    Mother    Father    Billy
Fat Chunk of Meat    Susie    Rag

Narrator 1: In an old log cabin in the mountains, there once lived a father, a mother, their daughter Susie, and their son Billy. They had a pet monkey named Rags.

Narrator 2: Down the road a piece, in a hollow tree, lived a bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair.

Bear: Grrrrr!

Narrator 1: One morning, the mother said—

Mother: Billy, won’t you go on down to the store and buy us a chunk of meat?

Billy: Sure, Mamma.

Narrator 2: About that same time, the bear was thinking the same thing.

Bear: I feel like going to the store and getting’ me a chunk of meat.

Narrator 1: So the bear went to the store, and he grabbed a chunk of meat without even paying for it.

Bear: I’m a-gonna eat you, you fat chunk of meat!

Narrator 1: And he did! He swallowed it whole and never chewed it or anything. Then the bear went back to the hollow tree by the side
Along came Billy on his way to the store to get a chunk of meat. When he passed by the hollow tree, the bear jumped out.

Grrr!

Who are you?

I'm the bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair. I ate a fat chunk of meat, and I'm a-gonna eat you, too!

And he did! He swallowed Billy whole.

Well, when Billy didn't come home, the others became worried.

I wonder what happened to Billy.

Susie, why don't you go on down to the store and see what's keeping your brother so long?

Susie went out, and when she came to the hollow tree, out jumped that bear.

Grrrr!

Who are you?

I'm the bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair. I ate a fat chunk of meat and a little boy, and I'm a-gonna eat you, too!

And he did! He swallowed little Susie in one gulp.

The father and mother were mighty concerned when Susie didn't come back, so the mother set out down the road to find out what had happened to them.
Narrator 1: When she came to the hollow tree, out jumped that bad bear.

Bear: Grrr!

Mother: Who are you?

Bear: I'm the bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair. I ate a fat chunk of meat and a little boy and a little girl, and I'm a-gonna eat you, too!

Narrator 2: And he did! He swallowed that woman down without chewing once.

Narrator 1: Back home, the father and the monkey were worrying something fierce about the mother, and Billy, and Susie, and so the father set out to find them.

Narrator 2: When he came to the hollow tree, out jumped that bad bear.

Bear: Grrr!

Father: Who are you?

Bear: I'm the bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair. I ate a fat chunk of meat and a little boy and a little girl and a woman, and I'm a-gonna eat you, too!

Narrator 1: And he did! He swallowed that man right there.

Narrator 2: Well, Rags, the monkey, was running all over the house, wondering why no one had come back. Finally, he set off down the road, and came to the bear.

Narrator 1: The bear was SO fat he couldn't fit inside the hollow tree.

Bear: Grrr!
Rags: Who are you, and why are you SO fat?

Bear: I’m the bad old bear with greasy, grimy hair. I ate a fat chunk of meat and a little boy and a little girl and a woman and a man, and I’m a-gonna eat you, too!

Narrator 2: Quick as anything, Rags climbed the tree, and the bear followed after him.

Narrator 1: But the bear stepped on a rotten branch and fell down to the ground and busted open.

Bear: Blam!

Father: Whew! I’m out!

Mother: I’m out!

Susie: I’m out!

Billy: I’m out!

Fat Chunk of Meat: I’m out!

Rags: And I’m out, ‘cause I was never in!

Narrator 2: It sure was a good thing that bear had such bad manners and swallowed them all whole, wasn’t it?

(Sierra, 1996, pp. 135-137)
Work Sheet 5-1

Adjectives That Describe Feelings

Group ____________________________

Student ____________________________

The following are words that describe a person's feelings. Guess the meaning of the words by looking at those faces and write down your answers in Chinese.

A angry B boisterous C caring D depressed
A _______ B _______ C _______ D _______

E excited F frustrated G grumpy H happy
E _______ F _______ G _______ H _______

I interested J jolly K kind L lonely
I _______ J _______ K _______ L _______
M mischievous
N nasty
O obnoxious
P petrified

Q queer
R relaxed
S shy
T tense

U understanding
V vicious
W worried
X excited

Y yucky
Z zinging
Self-Assessment Sheet 5

Adjectives That Describe Feelings

- Circle the adjectives that describe a person’s feelings.

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>clever</td>
</tr>
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<td>angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shy</td>
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<tr>
<td>magnificent</td>
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Work Sheet 6-1

Story Retelling

Story

Group Recorder

Student
Story Retelling

Story

Group         Recorder

Student
### Assessment Sheet 6

Readers Theatre Evaluation

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<thead>
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<th>Piece Performed</th>
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<tr>
<th>Readers</th>
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**Key:**
- ! Great!
- + Good.
- +/- Could Improve
- - Detrimental

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Script Use</th>
<th>Cue Pick-up</th>
<th>Flow</th>
<th>Pacing</th>
<th>Handling</th>
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[http://www.humboldt.edu/~jmf2/floss/rt-eval.html](http://www.humboldt.edu/~jmf2/floss/rt-eval.html)
REFERENCES


