



EFFECTIVE WAYS OF APPLYING STORIES TO YOUNG LEARNERS IN EFL CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

The article describes the features of utilizing stories and its techniques in the classrooms. And the role of stories as effective teaching tools for young learners is investigated deeply.

Stories are effective educational tools because they are believable, memorable and entertaining. Children usually enjoy listening to, reading and telling stories so the use of storytelling creates a good learning environment. Stories are motivating and fun; they create a deep interest and a desire to continue learning. Listening to stories is a shared social experience; it provokes a shared response of laughter, sadness, excitement, and anticipation. As more young learner teachers adopt classroom practices that focus on teaching the whole child, stories have become a key resource for providing a natural, engaging context for learning language.¹ Using stories for educational purposes is an effective teaching strategy especially for teaching young learners. Most young learners enjoy listening to the stories. Stories have power which can bring the young learners into a world of imagination and draw a colorful picture with many interesting characters in the story. The believability stems from the fact that stories deal with human-like experience that we tend to perceive as an authentic and credible source of knowledge. Stories make information more rememberable because they involve us in actions of the characters. In so doing, stories invite active meaning making. Language learners can benefit from storytelling because stories help them to develop the ability to understand spoken language and engage in thinking skills.² Storytelling is one of the most useful techniques to attract young learners in learning process effectively. Being aware of what kind of story that suits young learners is important. A teacher should understand the purpose of telling a story in the class. It is to make the students get the genuine form of language usage not to make them sleep during the session. I agree with the idea that choosing appropriate material to utilize in the lesson can increase the learners' productivity and

¹ onestopenglish.com

² scielo.org.co

enhances their knowledge. In order to make an enjoyable and interesting story time, the teacher should master some crucial storytelling skills. They have to be able to use and vary the intonation and the voice tempo. Body gestures, mimicry and keeping the eye contact with the listeners are also things that need to cover in delivering the story.

Stories are motivating and fun; they create a deep interest and a desire to continue learning. Moreover, there are lots of research proven benefits of using stories as teaching tools. First of all, learners acquire better vocabulary through stories such as everyday idioms, common phrases. Stories are able to increase the students' exposure to the new language and help them build their English vocabulary in a meaningful way. Actually, reading and watching stories and acting a role play according to the story help young students to improve their language skills. Grammar learning through stories is also one of the significant benefits of utilizing stories in the classroom. After reading the story, the students can be engaged in placing story strips in the right sequence in order to recreate the story and practice verb tenses in a fun, engaging way. Nowadays, most EFL teachers are widely using stories as teaching tools. If stories are carefully selected by teachers, the right strategies are applied and effective story-based activities are done by the children, the stories will be of special pedagogical value for foreign language learning, and the learning objectives will be achieved with ease and comfort. Moreover, young learners will enjoy learning the language. Actually, using stories as a powerful tool in the classroom for young learners is the hard work of teachers. By telling stories in the ESL classroom, we're not only working on language skills — like vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation — we're developing imagination, creativity, and socioemotional and cognitive skills as well. We can also positively affect students' behavior and manners using this powerful tool.³

All in all, storytelling for young learners is an interactive approach to teach the language in the most authentic and natural way. Reading stories to young students can be a powerful, appealing English teaching method. Therefore, when using stories in the classrooms the level of proficiency will be high and the productivity of the lesson will be as expected. Stories constitute a great resource for effective language learning, and English language teachers should use stories as a powerful tool in their teaching repertoire.

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