

analysis of the problems investigated in these case studies shows how teachers can unwittingly constrain classroom discourses to superficial, linguistic exchanges. Another major concern of the book—what role literature could play in the development of second language literacy—is addressed in Chapter 5, which apart from summarizing various communicative practices to teach literary text, gives various examples of literary forms that language teachers may find useful for teaching the importance of cultural context. The problems of expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning from one language to another are also addressed in detail by Kramersch, who concludes “literature and culture are inseparable” (p. 175). In giving due recognition to cross-cultural exchanges in the teaching of languages, Kramersch anticipates much of the dilemmas and anxieties of the people who “live with two or more languages”

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Language is at the centre of human life. We use it to express our love or our hatred, to achieve our goals and further our careers, to gain artistic satisfaction or simple pleasure, to pray or to blaspheme. Through language we plan our lives and remember our past; we exchange ideas and experiences; we form our social and individual identities. Language is the most unique thing about human beings.

(From *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching* by Vivian Cook, 2008, Hodder Education, London, p. 1)

## Classroom Activities

### Activity 1

#### Drawing Pictures

##### Objectives:

Drawing attention to immediate surroundings. Early literacy; vocabulary review. Drawing attention to the written form of language

**Level:** Classes 1 and 2

**Time:** 40 minutes

##### Procedure:

Ask the class to draw pictures of the things they see in the classroom, outside the classroom, in the school, at home or in the field. For example a fan, chair, tree etc. After 15-20 minutes, ask a few children to say aloud the name of the picture and show it to everybody. The teacher should write the names of all the things on the board, while the child is making the presentation. After the presentations of 2-3 children, the teacher should tell the children that she has written the names of the things that their friends have drawn. She should spell out each word and point out the word either with the help of a pointer or a stick.

##### Discussion:

The main point here is to draw the attention of children to writing. The picture, along with its name underneath, work as a flash card. Children can see the written name associated with the picture that they have drawn. At this stage, it does not matter which language a child uses. The words she speaks must be respected. If need be, their equivalent in the target language may also be given. Children may also, in some cases, be encouraged to say a few lines about each object. If possible, the teacher may tell a story woven around a set of objects.

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## Activity 2

### Board Game

**Objectives:** To enhance the questioning skills of students; to make revision an engaging activity; to enable students to learn while revising.

**Level:** Can be used in any class (we used it for classes 3, 4 and 5). The game has 3 levels: Basic Level; Intermediate Level and Advanced Level.

#### Materials for the Board Game:

The board game consists of the following:

(a) A Snakes-&-Ladders type of board; (b) 3 sets of cards (question cards, answer cards and key-word cards); (c) A single dice; (d) 8 counters.

#### Basic Level:

**Objectives:** (a) To improve the reading abilities of children by making them read the questions aloud; (b) To get children to answer the questions given at the end of the text book.

#### Procedure:

Four to eight children can play. The question cards are kept face down near the board. The answer cards are used only if no student in the group is able to answer the question. All students have their text book with them. A player throws the dice, takes the top most question card and reads it aloud.

The player tries to answer the question and moves the counter according to the number on the dice. If the player is not able to read out the question, another player in the group reads out the question and the first player repeats the question. If the player is not able to answer the question, he/she has to search and locate the answer in the text book.

If the player is still unable to locate the answer, other players help by providing hints. If the player is still unable to answer the question, other players provide the answer and the first player repeats it. The counter in such a case is moved for only half the paces that are indicated by the dice. In case no player is able to answer, or the answer is disputed, one student in the group refers to the corresponding answer card

and reads aloud the answer. The group then repeats it. The counter is not moved in such a case.

**Intermediate Level:** This level is played with key-word and question cards.

**Objective:** To develop questioning skills in children through the use of key words

#### Procedure:

First, each student is given at random, either a key-word card or a question-word card. Students play a game called, "finding your partner". Each student having a key-word card goes round the class and searches for a partner who has the appropriate question-word card.

The objective is to make children see the link between the key words and the questions. Next, the board game is started. The key-word cards are kept face down near the board. The dice is thrown. The first key-word card is picked up and the words written on it are read aloud; the player has to ask a question using all the key words.

Other players have to judge whether the question using the key words is appropriate. If they have no disagreement, the player moves the counter according to the number on the dice. In case of a dispute, they appeal to the teacher. There is no right or wrong question and the question asked need not be from the text book.

**Advanced Level:** This level is an extension of level 1. The process of playing this game is the same as level 1. But the question and the answer cards for this level are prepared by the teachers

**Objective:** To enable the students to answer questions that require critical thinking (e.g. inference, predictions, take perspective, and distinguish between fact and opinion, etc.)

After the students have played all the levels, the cards are shuffled and "finding the partner" game is played again.

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