

## HOW TO ENGAGE STUDENTS IN READING

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### Abstract

In this article, strategies of engaging students in reading are analyzed in learning new language. Also, this article shows that using interactive techniques more often can make a class more effective and give some useful recommendations and suggestions.

**Keywords:** engagement, strategy, reading, approach, students.

### Introduction

A good reader has both skill and motivation. In the will or motivation to read. This describes children's enjoyments, their wants, and their behaviors surrounding reading. A learner with skill may be capable, but without motivation, he cannot become a reader. Engagement is essential to the learning process because motivated learners actively seek to learn new things and are not only more interested in doing so. While reading is a necessary component of education, not all people find reading enjoyable. Because of this, a lot of educators find themselves asking how to draw in more kids. To do this, you might incorporate a variety of reading tactics into your classroom. Everyone gains when new tactics are used and reading comprehension increases. The imagination can be fed by reading. Reading takes your thoughts across time and space, allowing you to connect with the extraordinary. I locate a cozy, well-lit, and frequently remote area. I talk to other readers, and they recommend books for me to read next, and we frequently trade books. Reading is just something I do on a regular basis; it is nothing special. I adore reading because it gives me pleasure, an escape, and opportunities for intellectual and emotional development. I attempted to motivate and inspire my students to read more by sharing my passion for reading with them while I was a teacher. It is not always as simple as it seems. In order to expand my classroom library, I submitted grants for easily accessible and timely titles, allotted time for in-class reading, and gave my students chances to discuss, share, and preview books. Nevertheless, I continued to have trouble inspiring some of my pupils to read. I am also acutely aware of how challenging the assignment can be for kids who experience a variety of difficulties, including attention deficit disorder, distractibility, reading difficulties, and more.

### Literature Review

Reading can be the most crucial skill to develop when learning a foreign language and of paramount importance to teach in ESL/EFL courses. Paul & Elder (2008) point out that learners should read for pure pleasure, to gain specific technical information, to figure out a simple idea, or to enter, understand, and appreciate a new world view (p.1). O'Malley & Chamot (1990) on



their reading strategy framework of Metacognitive and Cognitive skills emphasize the need for teaching ESL/EFL students strategies such as previewing the main ideas, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, skimming, scanning, guessing, recognizing cognates and word families, reading for meaning, deducing, predicting, activating general knowledge, making inferences, following references, separating main ideas from supporting ones, note-taking, summarizing and so on (p.144). Additionally, reading selected by instructors (Intensive Reading) and reading for pleasure (Extensive Reading) are part of reading programs of several English curricula offered in different ESL/EFL courses. Feyen (2014), Ramírez (2013), Vanegas, in Meyer's report (2014), and Krashen (1985) recommend including the practices of intensive and extensive reading as well as writing practices in our English courses. Reading and writing are the two most crucial core language skills used by the English language program offered at UC's Psychology School. Reading is taken as the foundation for the development of the other language skills as mentioned by Richard & Smith (2002) who argue that developing the reading habits, encourages the knowledge of grammar structures and vocabulary, and nurtures the love of reading. Participants reported that writing summaries, making oral presentations, and discussing and making analyses of what they read during the semester gave them the possibility of developing their overall English language skills. <sup>1</sup>

### Research Methodology

Engaging students in reading is a must to develop their literacy. These suggestions can help you foster a love of reading, improve your students' comprehension and make them more engaged readers. If we want to engage students, there are a few things that we must always do—occasionally is not enough. We know choose texts that are easier to read, including more paperback supplements. Once you choose texts with the students in mind, you can rely on your readings to do more of your lesson. Another way to increase students' reading is giving them reasons to read. Even if you choose student-friendly readings, many students feel overwhelmed when they face them. Students need help breaking down their readings into what they are supposed to know. They need a focus. Consider providing study questions to show students what you expect them to know from the readings. A few specific, concrete questions about what they are to know when they finish a reading can be very effective.

**Student' interest** To engage students in reading, we need to understand our students' interest or lack of interest in reading, as well as their attitudes and difficulties when approaching reading tasks.

**Let the students choose.** Choosing the material that is read aloud in class might help increase student involvement. It's possible that the reading material you find enjoyable will bore your classmates to tears and sap their motivation.

Let each student choose the book they want to read the next time you decide to offer a book report in class. You will save time by not having to read multiple versions of the same report, and your pupils will write with greater fervor since they will have selected an alternative that piques their interest.



**Summarize the story.** Summarizing the material is an excellent technique to ensure that your children comprehend it completely. This sharpens their sense of crucial moments. Every learner benefits from practicing putting concepts into their own words. You can tell that a youngster has a deeper understanding of a text when they are able to summarize it in their own words. Understanding the text gives a kid the tools they need to do well in class. Some educators think it beneficial to give their students a synopsis of the course. You can think about allocating one or two days to teaching the class the format you want them to use for their responses.

**Popcorn reading.** An engaging method to vary up reading time in the classroom is popcorn reading. It can be used with any text you have to show the class. The procedure is easy to follow: Ask a student to read aloud to the class at least one paragraph from the text. When they're done, ask them to yell "Popcorn!" This means the following student must begin where the preceding student left off with their reading.

**Ask questions.** One easy approach to find out how well your pupils are understanding what they are reading is to use comprehension questions. These are the kinds of questions you can put in an open forum during class, on a quiz, or on an exam. Make sure you record the answers you get so you can use the input in subsequent classes and assignments. Following the completion of a reading assignment, ask the following questions: What is the setting of this story?

Do you think this story could be true? Why or why not?

Why do you think the author wrote this story?

Who was your favorite character? Why?

When you ask these questions, it encourages students to think more critically about the text. The teacher knows they have a strong understanding when they can answer these questions with reasonable detail.

**Using variety genres** Organizing the classroom library by genre can motivate students to read. We can also ask them to choose to read a different genre each month for independent reading or recommend books we think they will enjoy.

**Determine predictions.** Comprehending a text by considering its context and projecting future events is a crucial ability that learners should hone. It helps your students to draw connections based on past knowledge about related subjects when you let them make predictions about a text they have been assigned. This is an excellent method for getting your pupils to carefully synthesize what they have read thus far and look closely at context cues in order to predict what will happen next in a story. This approach is particularly useful in a logic-based course or debate since it highlights the significance of gathering all the information before drawing any conclusions.<sup>ii</sup>



**Formulating questions** Students created questions and gave a one-minute summary of the most significant information they could find on the subject topic they had read. They wrote twenty questions about a topic while working in groups of three or in pairs. They were given these twenty questions to respond to. Students also exchanged their answers in order to use the data. Students' final tasks included writing a 300-word story and giving three- to five-minute presentations on the topic at hand.

**Analysis and results** As part of pre-reading exercises, students would look at the reading material's title, subtitles, graphs, images, tables, and other details. They would then take a break to reflect and draw from their previous understanding of the topic. It was encouraged for them to visualize it, draw conclusions, and talk about it with their friends. They discussed and wrote about what they already knew about the reading topic as oral and written exercises. During the lesson, the students were divided into 2 groups, and the students of the first group used the popcorn reading strategy. The students of the second group used the summarize the story strategy. During the reading process, students expressed their thoughts freely and fully. As a result, it was achieved to attract students to the lesson. Using useful reading strategies during the lesson made the lesson more effective. Because, even passive students actively participated. It is essential to take the following consideration while teaching English to individuals who speak of other languages:

- The population of students comes first. We will be able to choose appropriate methods in collaboration with students and teachers once we know of their interests, as well as the individuality and synergy that each student and the group we work with possess.
- Second, both teachers and students need to be motivated, interested, and have a positive outlook on the processes involved in teaching and learning the English language. These are crucial elements in achieving language learning.
- Thirdly, we have to think about how best to choose the reading materials that will make up the majority of the learning material for the lessons that we teach.

### **Conclusion/Recommendations**

Reading should play a crucial role in the process of teaching and learning English, and it need to be included more regularly in university-level regular language courses. It is recommended not to undervalue the abilities and linguistic transfer skills of students that contribute to this kind of teaching approach, in which comprehension of academic and scientific content relevant to majors is the primary focus. Similarly, language teachers should be more conscious of the fact that some students presently arrive at universities considerably more proficient in English. It is important for them to understand that reading comprehension in English is a highly assessed talent in nearly all entrance exams for universities

In conclusion, reading made it possible to provide a range of exercises that let pupils practice the four fundamental language abilities. Furthermore, we observed sudden changes in the motivation and confidence levels of the students' engagement and changes in their perspectives in the direction of learning English.



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