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ELTWeekly

India's first weekly ELT eNewsletter

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Provoking Thought: Memory and Thinking in ELT

Authored by **Hall Houston**

This book, *Provoking Thought*, is a resource book of activities for the language classroom. The activities are designed for an ESL/EFL context, but they can also be adapted for teaching other languages.

The five chapters of this book cover five areas: thinking, memory, creativity, critical thinking, and expressing thought in writing. These areas can enhance language learning, impelling students to develop greater fluency. This book is ideal for teachers who want to help students improve their English as well as develop thinking skills that can be useful in everyday life.

Aims of this book

Hall says, “One aim of this book is to create a learner-centered atmosphere. These activities encourage students to share their thoughts, feelings, ideas, and opinions. This can make learning English more personalized and therefore more motivating than following a coursebook written for a mass audience which may not appeal to your students.

However, many activities in this book can be used in combination with a coursebook.

Another aim is to emphasize real topics and ideas, not grammatical structures and sentence patterns. The activities contained in this book will take students away from rote learning towards meaningful learning which can help increase the rate at which students improve.

Still another aim is to help develop academic skills. You can use some of the activities in this book to help students produce their own ideas, create sound arguments for a position, participate in debates and discussions, and write academic papers”.

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Here's a summary of what you will find in this book:

Chapter One, Thinking, covers the topic of thinking. It includes activities such as lateral thinking puzzles and riddles, which involve asking students to speculate and guess. Other activities focus on our everyday thinking patterns. Use activities from this chapter as a starting point for activities from other chapters in this book.

Chapter Two, Memory, is about how we learn and remember. While memory is not thought of as a skill in the way that creative thinking and critical thinking are, several memory techniques, such as the story method, can be extremely beneficial in helping students consolidate what they've learned. This chapter contains numerous practical suggestions for helping students remember new language and review vocabulary from previous lessons. Using the activities in this chapter, students also will learn some effective ways to remember names, talk about their own memories and discuss some common memory problems.

Chapter Three, Creativity, emphasizes motivating students to generate new and interesting thoughts. Creativity is a skill that writers, advertisers, artists, businesspeople and musicians strive to develop. In order to be creative, it's important to suspend judgment and be open to looking at things from new perspectives. With the activities in this chapter, students can develop their creativity through idea generation and problem solving. You might use these activities for fluency practice or as a way to help students come up with ideas for a project or writing assignment.

Chapter Four, Critical Thinking, is about getting students to judge their own ideas, as well as the ideas of others. Critical thinking courses teach valuable skills including how to structure an argument, how to find support for your arguments, and how to spot logical fallacies.

Using the activities in this chapter, students can learn how to develop their critical thinking skills as they read news articles and advertisements. In addition, they can learn to examine arguments skillfully.

Chapter Five, Organizing Ideas on Paper, contains a variety of ways for students to express their thoughts in writing. These include graphic organizers, which are useful in reading classes. The chapter also contains some creative projects and ways of getting feedback from students.

Another feature of this book is a series of interviews with experts on memory, creativity, and critical thinking. These interviews show how these three topics intersect with education and share expert information on these subjects for teachers who would like to learn more.

At the back of the book, you will find an index where you can see activities organized according to type. This can save time when looking for a particular type of activity to use in class.

READERS' VOICES

“This book is a very useful tool for esl teachers. It is full of fun and practical methods for engaging esl students. It’s obvious that the author is an actual teacher and knows what is needed when facing the classroom each day.” – JBiker

“Houston`s work is a valueble guide for teachers wishing to deepen their perspectives on cognitive processes in the classroom. Full of practical knowledge based on a life time`s experience in teaching. A must -read for any aspirant teacher embarking on an overseas career.” – David Bennette

“An original, practical and very useful collection of activities.” – Lindsay Clandfield

“A terrific addition to classroom life and language learning! This book will make us better teachers, and make learning more meaningful.” – Dr. Natalie Hess.

Buy ‘Provoking Thought: Memory and Thinking in ELT’ Book by visiting <http://eltweekly.com/more/2010/02/50-book-of-the-month-provoking-thought-memory-and-thinking-in-elt-by-hall-houston/>

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Video: How to Organize Yourself When You Start Teaching English

The present video contains a basic orientation chat for new English teachers about how to go about organizing your thinking when you get into teaching English.

Watch the video at <http://eltweekly.com/more/2010/02/50-video-how-to-organize-yourself-when-you-start-teaching-english/>

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News: Ker-pow! Cambridge literature centre is to study comics and blogs

Comics, computer games and Disney films have long been the bane of parents trying to encourage their offspring to develop a love of reading classic children's books.

Now academics at the University of Cambridge have given comic strips and saccharine movies cachet by subjecting them to scrutiny of a sort previously reserved for classics such as Alice in Wonderland and Peter Pan.

The university opened a Centre for Children's Literature yesterday, which will give as much consideration to blogs, fan fiction and video games as to the works of established children's authors. Its founders say they deserve the same attention, as all can have a deep and lasting impact on children and teenagers.

Read the complete news item by visiting <http://eltweekly.com/more/2010/02/50-news-ker-pow-cambridge-literature-centre-is-to-study-comics-and-blogs/>

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ELT Resource: English-4U

English-4U Offers Printable ESL lesson plans for teaching adult learners

- designed for one-to-one and group classes
- focused on developing speaking skills
- based on current news stories and hit songs
- easily integrated with coursebook material
- available 24 hours a day, wherever you are
- developed by teachers for teachers

As a teacher who has a lot of one-to-one classes with adult students, you probably have noticed that additional materials are necessary, but, as we all know, finding materials to supplement your course is time consuming. ESL lesson plans you will find on english-4u.com are prepared with adults and teenagers in mind.

English-4U team says, “You want to discuss current issues with your students. You need stimulating resources to make the students talk about current news stories. Almost all our ESL lesson plans develop speaking skills. Unlike long-past-best-before-date ESL publications, English-4U offers up-to-date materials based on current news, hit songs and issues your students will be thrilled to discuss.”

Explore English-4U at <http://www.english-4u.com/>

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Opportunity: Do you want to be an ELT TV star?

IATEFL/British Council are looking for a Harrogate Online guest presenter for its live web coverage.

Harrogate Online guest presenter: the opportunity

The British Council / IATEFL Harrogate Online Project is looking to recruit someone to join the team of live online presenters for the live broadcast from the IATEFL Conference in Harrogate, April 2010.

This is a unique opportunity to be part of the Harrogate Online Team and play a role in our live online conference coverage.

What is Harrogate Online?

The Harrogate Online Project is a British Council / IATEFL partnership established to provide online conference coverage of the Annual IATEFL Conference.

Now in its fourth year, IATEFL Online returns in April 2010 to coincide with the 44th Annual IATEFL Conference in Harrogate, UK (7th to 11th April 2010).

Harrogate Online will showcase the best of the conference and provide live interactive web coverage for remote participants around the globe with video interviews with presenters, recorded sessions, moderated forums and much more.

About the role

This year the Harrogate Online Project will be streaming a live online video broadcast each day of the conference. A small team of presenters will work in front of camera throughout the conference to bring lively coverage from a studio at the conference venue.

The successful applicant will form part of this live online presenter team. The four-person team will head up the live online broadcast of the conference by interviewing presenters and conference delegates each day of the conference.

Experience/requirements

The successful applicant should possess a sound knowledge of current issues in ELT, excellent communication skills, an adventurous attitude and be able to demonstrate an ability to work well under pressure. It's not necessary to have TV or media experience.

About the package

The winner will have their conference fee, flights and connecting travel, hotel accommodation and subsistence paid for. In addition, the successful applicant will be paid £500. The winner will need to arrive in Harrogate on 5 April for a briefing; and will depart from the UK on 12 or 13 April.

How to enter: about the application process

To enter, create a 60 second video application in English explaining why you are the most suitable candidate for the job. You are encouraged to use your creativity and really stand out from the crowd to get noticed!

Upload your video entry to YouTube and send us the link by email to iatefl.britishcouncil@googlemail.com Remember to include your full name and contact details in the email. Please include your address, phone numbers.

Deadline

Applications close at 0900 (UK) on 1 March 2010. The Harrogate Online Team will shortlist candidates – those shortlisted will be invited for a phone interview. The shortlisted candidates will be contacted during the first week in March.

Interested? The first step in securing this role is to send a 60-second video application explaining why you are the ideal Harrogate Online presenter.

You only have 60 seconds to impress!

Uploading your video to YouTube

Please follow this procedure:

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<http://eltweekly.com>

1. Enter the YouTube site at www.youtube.com
2. Enter your log-in details (you will need a YouTube account).

How to get an account

3. Click on 'Upload Video' and choose the file that you want to upload.
4. Give your video a title and a short description.
5. You will be asked if you want to tag your video – add in the tag “HO2010”. This will ensure we find your entry.
6. Choose a category and make the video public, if you don't make it public we won't be able to view your entry.

Competition Terms and Conditions

1. Entries will be a 1 minute video uploaded online via YouTube. Entries submitted via YouTube must be tagged with “HO2010” and made public to ensure they are valid.
2. The deadline for receipt of entries by email is 0900 (UK) 1 March 2010. Entries received after this deadline will not be considered.
3. Applications will be judged by a panel from British Council and IATEFL. The winner chosen to be 2010's Harrogate Online Guest Presenter will be notified by 10 March 2010.
4. The winner will be chosen by a panel of judges and selected on a range of criteria including originality, creativity, use of language, humour and topicality.
5. Video entries must be new and the original work of the person submitting the entry. By submitting an entry to the competition entry, entrants are attesting their entry to be original and wholly their own work. Entries will be evaluated in good faith, based on this assertion, however the Harrogate Online team reserves the right to disqualify any video felt to be copied or plagiarised from elsewhere.
6. The panels' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
7. The Harrogate Online team reserves the right to alter, amend or foreclose this Competition without prior notice in the event that unforeseen circumstances make this unavoidable.

8. The Harrogate Online team reserves the right not to select a winner if, in the opinion of the panel, there is no suitable winning entry.

Further information

email: iatefl.britishcouncil@googlemail.com

more information: <http://iatefl.britishcouncil.org>

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Download Webinar: The power of lists

Lindsay Clandfield says, “From grocery lists to to-do lists, top ten lists to worst ever lists, lists are everywhere. What is it about lists that draws our attention? In this webinar I will look at the power of lists. We will explore some popular lists in the language teaching profession and I will share with you six ideas on using lists with your students.”

Download this webinar now for your iPod / iPhone / iTunes by visiting

<http://eltweekly.com/more/2010/02/50-download-webinar-the-power-of-lists/>

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eBook: Research in the Language Classroom

This book, from 1990, looked at the practical benefits for teachers of classroom research. It consists of papers from practitioners from countries in Europe, North America and Australasia, but with detailed reference to a wider variety of global teaching contexts. Topics range from 'Investigating Learners' Language' to 'Researching Teachers: Behaviour and Belief'.

Download the 'Research in the Language Classroom' eBook by visiting

<http://eltweekly.com/more/2010/02/50-ebook-research-in-the-language-classroom/>

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Article: A framework for planning a listening skills lesson

“Listening is one of the most challenging skills for our students to develop and yet also one of the most important. By developing their ability to listen well we develop our students’ ability to become more independent learners, as by hearing accurately they are much more likely to be able to reproduce accurately, refine their understanding of grammar and develop their own vocabulary.

In this article I intend to outline a framework that can be used to design a listening lesson that will develop your students’ listening skills and look at some of the issues involved.

- The basic framework
- Pre-listening
- While listening
- Post-listening
- Applying the framework to a song
- Some conclusions”

Read the complete article by visiting: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk>

Research Paper: 'Language Based Approaches to Using Literature in Teaching English' by Dr.N.V.Bose, Institute of Language Teaching, Jamnagar

Introduction

Literature itself has been greatly enriched by recent developments in the field of critical theory. Structuralism, Deconstructionism, Reader-response theory, Feminist and Marxist criticism are just some of the branches of critical theory which have been challenging the ways in which we read and understand literature. The sole aim of this paper is a practical one; it is to find ways of using literature which will help learners to achieve their main purpose for being in the classroom, that is, to improve their English. For most teachers this is the compelling goal when selecting and designing materials, and there is not really sufficient time to think about critical theory as well.

Literary text as resource

Literary texts are seen as resource-one among many different types of texts-which provide stimulating language activities. The advantage of using literary texts for language activities are that they offer a wide range of styles and registers; they are open to multiple interpretations and hence provide excellent opportunities for classroom discussion; and they focus on genuinely interesting and motivating topics to explore in the classroom (Duff and Maley, 1990). Studying the language of the literary text will help to integrate the language and literature syllabuses more closely. Detailed analysis of the language of the literary text will help students to make meaningful interpretations or informed evaluation of it. At the same time, students will increase their general awareness and understanding of English. Students are encouraged to draw on their knowledge of familiar grammatical, lexical, or discourse categories to make aesthetic judgements of the text.

Literary Texts: Valuable Authentic Materials

Literature is 'authentic' material. By authentic we mean that most works of literature are not fashioned for the specific purpose of teaching language. In reading literary texts, students have also to cope with language intended for native speakers and thus they gain

additional familiarity with many different linguistic uses, forms and conventions of the written mode: with irony, exposition, argument, narration, and so on. Literature is perhaps best seen as a complement to other materials used to increase the foreign learner's insight into the country whose language is being learnt.

Another positive aspect of literature is that it provides a rich context in which individual lexical or syntactical items are made more memorable. Reading a substantial and contextualised body of text, students gain familiarity with many features of the written language-the formation and function of sentences, the variety of possible structures, the different way of connecting ideas-which broaden and enrich their own writing skills. The extensive reading required in tackling a novel or long play develops the students' ability to make inferences from linguistic clues, and to deduce meaning from context, both useful tools in reading other sorts of materials as well (Collie and Slater 1987).

Traditional Approaches to Teaching Literature

In recent years the approaches to teaching language mainly aim at promoting the learner's communicative competence. However when it comes to teaching literature, this communicative ideal often vanishes. The way literature is presented often has a number of typical features. Sometimes the teacher falls back upon more traditional classroom role in which he or she sees him or herself as imparting information about the author, the background of the work, the particular literary conventions that inform the text and so on. Learners are somehow expected to have the ability to take all this in and make it their own. Besides, the sheer difficulties of detailed comprehension posed by the intricacy or linguistic subtlety of the language turn the teaching of literature into a massive process of explanation by the teacher or even of translation, with greater proportion of available classroom time devoted to a step by step exegetical exercise led by the teacher.

At more advanced levels of work with literature, the teacher may resort to the metalanguage of criticism and this may both distance learners from their own response and cause them to undervalue it, whatever the gain in analytical terms (Collie and Slater 1987). The time-honoured technique of question-and-answer can provide some help. But unless questions are genuinely open-ended, there is often a feeling on the part of the students that the teacher is slowly but surely edging them to particular answers that he or she has in mind. There is little room for either their own responses or their involvement during such sessions. In short, personal investment is minimal.

Language based Approach

A language-based approach is quite a broad approach which covers a range of different goals and procedures. Generally speaking, this approach focuses on a closer integration of language and literature in the classroom, since this will help the students in achieving their main aim which is to improve their knowledge of, and proficiency in, English.

Techniques and procedures

A language based approach to using literature includes techniques and procedures which are concerned more directly with the study of the literary text itself. The aim is to provide the students with the tools they need to interpret a text and to make competent critical judgements of it. Stylistics analysis is one of them. Stylistics involves the close study of the linguistic features of a text in order to arrive at an understanding of how the meanings of the text are transmitted.

Stylistics in the classroom

Stylistics has two main objectives: firstly, to enable students to make meaningful interpretation of the text itself; secondly, to expand students' knowledge and awareness of the language in general. Thus, although the aim of using stylistics is to help students to read and study literature more competently, it also provides them with excellent language practice.

For the language learner, stylistics has the advantage of illustrating how particular linguistic forms function to convey specific messages. Stylistic analysis can also provide a way of comparing different types of texts (literary or non-literary) in order to ascertain how they fulfil different social functions. For example, students may be asked to compare the description of a character in a novel with information about someone given in a letter of reference or a medical form (Widdowson, 1975).

The students will then be able to examine how these texts differ and the reasons for this difference. The teaching of literature can thus be integrated more fully into the classroom, since literary texts can be studied alongside other kinds of texts.

Activities

A number of language-based activities for exploiting literature with the language learner can be conducted in the classroom. A few examples could be:

Activity 1.

Different sections of a dialogue from a play are given to groups of students, and each group has to rewrite the dialogue in reported speech using a range of verbs (e.g. suggest, mumble, wonder etc.) when they are finished, they give their reported versions to members of another group to transform into dialogues, which are then compared with the originals from the play.

Activity 2.

After they have read it, students are given three different summaries of a short story. They have to decide which summary is the most accurate.

Activity 3.

Students are given three different critical opinions of a play or novel they have read. They have to decide which they find the most convincing or accurate.

Literature and self-access

A literature self-access centre could be a small collection of texts for students to read on their own with minimal supervision. The self-access centre could consist of: literary texts such as novels, plays, short stories, anthologies of poetry and a collection of video recordings of plays or films based on novels, and audio recordings of literary texts which students are encouraged to work through on their own perhaps after reading the original literary text.

A self-access centre would provide students with a choice of literary texts to listen to or to read, foster the students' enjoyment of literature, promote language acquisition, develop reading and listening skills and to enable students to become more self-confident and independent as learners. A sample self-access worksheet could be:

Self-access Worksheet

PLAYS

Facts about the play

Title:

Author (playwright):

When published

Type of the play/genre

CONTENT

1. Setting (where the action takes place)
2. When is it set
3. The plot: The play is about.....
4. Characters: Write down the names of the main characters, the role of each one on the story, and 2 or 3 adjectives to describe them.
5. Message : Has the play got a message?

If so what do you think it is?

LANGUAGE

Write down 3 or 4 words, phrases or expressions you have learnt from this play.

OPINION

1. Choose from the following adjectives to describe the play:

Hilarious gripping moving powerful tedious tragic amusing

What other adjectives could you use to describe the play?

2. The play is going to be performed and you are the director. Describe the costumes, scenery, lighting, etc. you want for each act.
3. Would you recommend this play to anyone else? Why?

Does this play remind you of any plays in your own language? If so, what?

Conclusion

The overall aim of language-based approach to using literature is to let the students derive the benefits of communicative and other activities for language improvement within the context of suitable works of literature. All that the teacher needs to do is to keep a balance

between literature and language and select the activities and tasks and presents them with confidence.

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

1. **Papers / Articles:** All articles should be computerized using double-spacing, including tables, references and footnotes. Submission of manuscripts should be done in electronic form only. Electronic version of the article/research paper should be e-mailed to the Editor, ELTWeekly at info@eltweekly.com.
2. **Abstracts:** An abstract in approximately 200 words should assist the article.
3. **Abbreviations:** No stops are needed between capitals e.g. ELT, IELTS.
4. **Figures and Tables:** Tables should be numbered sequentially with Arabic numerals.
5. **Notes:** Notes should be consecutively numbered and presented at the foot of the page.
6. **References:** References in the text should follow the author-date system. The complete reference list should be given at the end of the article. They should be in alphabetical order.
7. **Book Reviews:** Book reviews must contain the name of the author and title / subtitle of the book reviewed, place of publication and publisher and date of publication.
8. **For Event Submissions:** Please submit your event details at least 30 days prior to the event.
9. For a **more detailed stylesheet**, please write to The Editor, ELTWeekly at info@eltweekly.com.

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This is what our readers say:

Hello, Mr. Tarun patel, I have received ur recent work which is praiseworthy and utilitarian .Thanks a lot !All issues r very much interesting for language learners and teachers .God bless U and ur team ! – **neeharika rawat**

Its really a wonderful vision. Its very useful to the teachers' community. Thnkn you very much. – **G. NAGESWARARAO**

Dear Tarun and the team

thank you for being so prompt in sending us the new issues. It is great to learn about teachit & english Next.

regards - **Dr. Ravi Bhushan**

YES, We Want To Hear From YOU!

- * We want to know how you like it.
- * We want to know what you want to know about.
- * We want to know the topics you want.

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