
Unit 4: Comprehension

Lesson 4-1: Clarify Understanding

Topic(s):

(Optional - A historical fiction, *By the Shores of Silver Lake*, by Laura Ingalls Wilder, a Newbery Award winner, or another related story.)

Objective(s):

Students will use a variety of strategies to monitor reading in fourth-grade or higher texts (for example, questioning techniques, noting details, vocabulary development, critical thinking, and group discussions) to clarify understanding.

Skills attained:

The student clarifies understanding by rereading, self-correction, summarizing, checking other sources, and class or group discussion. The student understands development of plot and how conflicts are resolved. The student knows that the attitudes and values that exist in a time period affect the works that are written during that time period. (LA.A. 124 –[LA.E 122 – LA.E 124)

Motivation:

Ask students to name books that are most read by children their age that were later turned into movies (i.e. *Harry Potter series*, *Charlotte’s Web*, *Alice in Wonderland*, etc.) Choose one movie title to discuss. Ask students to orally list main characters, explain the basic plot, retell the saddest part, the happiest part, the funniest part, and the outcome. Allow them to give their opinions about what may or may not have been fair behavior in the story. Tell them that this was an exercise in clarity of understanding and to see how many students saw and heard the same things in the same story/movie.

Materials list: *By the Shores of Silver Lake* or related story; class notes 4:1; student activity sheet 4:1; technology resources: www.educplace.com

Vocabulary: satchels, conductor, platform, homestead, engine, depot, engineer

Homilies:

Tell students that they can monitor their reading for comprehension by using questioning techniques, noting details, developing their vocabulary, using critical thinking skills, checking other sources, and group discussions.

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**Explain that they will begin with simple questioning techniques. Tell them to write down these two simple questions to ask themselves as they read:

1. "What is happening?"
2. "Why is it happening?"

**Explain that they can self-correct on anything they don't understand by re-reading or continue to read ahead. If they are a 'struggling' reader, this technique is very helpful because the words/vocabulary will make more sense the second or third time read.

Tell them that you will introduce key vocabulary words before they begin the selection.

Ask who has been on a train ride. Allow brief discussion about their experiences. Display transparency 4:1 with the key vocabulary words on it: *satchels, conductor, platform, homestead, engine, depot, engineer, your choice*. Use prior knowledge to see how many have heard of these words or know what they mean. Write student answers on the transparency. Tell them that they will have to write the words in ABC order and use them in a sentence on a separate sheet of paper.

Procedure:

1. Students will learn to monitor and clarify their reading for comprehension
2. Students will write questions to help them look for details
3. Students will self-correct as they read

Suggested Teaching Strategies: None

Application:

Students will copy the clarifying techniques in their writing journals. They will begin work on student activity page 4:1 on key vocabulary.

Content Background:

Along with her sisters, Laura and her mother take their first train trip. Laura and sister Carrie are fearful at first of this iron 'monster', but eventually they settle down to an exciting adventure.

Homework: R&Rh

Write spell list 3x's each.

Assessment: None

Wrap-Up Assignment: None

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Lesson 4-2: Clarifying Understanding/Story Selection

Topic(s): a historical fiction

Objective(s):

Students will use monitoring/clarifying and self-correcting for understanding

Skills attained:

The student clarifies understand by rereading, self-correction, summarizing, checking other sources, and class or group discussion. (L.A.A. 124)

Motivation:

Have a brief discussion about riding trains. Allow a few students to share some of their experiences on the train. (Optional) Show a short video with cartoon characters' antics on the train and/or put vintage trains on computers as screensavers until this unit is completed: www.janim.net

Materials list: Basal text, class notes 4:2, student activity page 4:3

Vocabulary: (review words from story)

Homilies:

Have students turn to the story to look at the title, author, and illustrations. Remind students that this selection tells about riding a train in the 1870's. Tell them as they read, think if questions about the time period and think about how riding a train was different then from riding a train today. Discuss with them the story background briefly.

Have them ask questions about the story before reading it. For example, Where is the Ingalls family going? How did Mary become blind? Write these and other questions on the board. [Note: After reading the story, the class should revisit these questions and write the appropriate answers. Be sure to discuss the results. (LAE 122,124)]

Tell them that they will learn how to summarize a story. Tell them that a summary gives the most important information from a longer selection. Have them turn to activity page 4:3. Explain this page to them and make sure they understand the skill.

Begin reading the story orally. Model how to read a paragraph, ask a question about it and find the answer. Now call on one student to demonstrate understanding of this technique.