

Using Imaginative and Literary Texts to Develop Creativity, Critical Thinking and Cultural Awareness : "Where go the boats?" (Secondary 1 – 3)

In this exemplar, instead of giving a detailed explanation and interpretation of a reading text from the teacher's perspective and asking the learners to do highly controlled writing exercises, the teacher makes use of a poem to :

- encourage learners' free expression of feelings, ideas and creativity
- develop their critical thinking and cultural awareness
- provide opportunities for learners to appreciate the beauty of the English language
- foster learner independence

through learning activities such as:

- collecting pictures and information about rivers
- reading the poem and discussing in groups their responses to the poem
- comparing rivers and activities carried out near them, and justifying their preferences regarding rivers
- writing poems based on a model and writing free poems

Learning and Teaching Process

- In groups, learners collect pictures and information about rivers in different parts of the world to find out the features of rivers and the activities carried out near them.
 - Learners discuss the following questions, which reinforces their understanding of rivers and the life and activities of people around them.
1. Do you remember the colour of the rivers in the pictures?
 2. Do the rivers move quickly or slowly?
 3. What will happen if you put paper boats onto these rivers?
 4. What activities can you see on the rivers or near them?
 5. How important are the rivers to the people living nearby?

Impact on Learning

Learners

- engage in self-access learning, make choices about what they want to find out and take responsibility for their own learning
- inquire and communicate
- extend their knowledge of other cultures and develop critical thinking



- Learners read the poem, "Where go the boats?" by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894).

Where go the boats?

Dark brown is the river,
 Golden is the sand.
 It flows along for ever,
 With trees on either hand. 4

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Away down the river,
 A hundred miles or more,
 Other little children
 Shall bring my boats ashore. 16

- In groups or individually, learners draw pictures of the river as the poet has described it, and discuss their drawings.

Learners

- draw upon their knowledge and skills to respond and express their ideas/feelings in art and in language
- communicate their responses and ideas
- show appreciation of others' work
- develop critical thinking and creativity



- Learners compare the river described in the poem with one of the rivers they discussed earlier, and present the differences and similarities of the rivers to the class.

Similarities / Differences

- Flow of the river
- Activities
- Importance to the life of the people



Learners

- develop reasoning and critical thinking through making comparisons
- extend their cultural awareness

- Learners write creatively four lines on one of the rivers they came across earlier, based on the model of the first stanza, and present their poems with pictures. Their peers respond by giving reasons for their appreciation and preference.

- Extended tasks such as:

- Learners write creatively poems on anything of their choice and display their poems on the class bulletin board for their peers to provide comments; or
- They find more poems or other texts about rivers or boats and share among themselves.



Learners

- develop creativity, critical thinking and cultural awareness
- respond to others' work by providing feedback
- engage in more independent learning