

Audio 2.6

Rose collected a range of empty grocery packets, boxes and tins. She divided the class into groups of four or five and gave each group one or two items. She wrote the questions on the chalkboard but also read them out for the children who could not read very well. As she read them, each child wrote their own answers. Then she asked them to discuss them in their group and decide on a group answer for each question.

Questions about grocery items

1. What is in this tin/packet/box?
2. How do you know this?
3. Which word or words are in the biggest letters?
4. Why do you think this word or these words are the biggest letters?
5. How many words begin with capital letters?
6. Which words are written more than once in the package?
7. Which word is used the most?
8. What is the weight of this product (in grammes/kilogrammes)?
9. What do all the words and pictures tell you about this product?

While the learners were working in their groups, Rose walked around and helped the children who struggled with reading. After 10-15 minutes, she went around the groups and asked each group for one answer until she covered all the questions.

Then she asked them to discuss two more questions:

- Do you agree or disagree with what these words and pictures tell you?
- If you had the money, would you like to buy this product? Why, or why not?

In the next lesson, they worked in the same groups to design the print and visual information for the packaging of a real or imaginary grocery item.

Audio 3.2

Over the past 2 weeks, I have been collecting pictures and objects that illustrate different types of force action, drawing resources from around my home and school environment. For example, I have a screwdriver to demonstrate how to 'screw', and a sheet of ripped paper to visually show the meaning of 'tear' and 'rip'. I begin the class by demonstrating and eliciting the three key verbs (pull, push, twist).

Most of the learners are familiar with these words although a few are not sure of 'twist'. Once I've demonstrated and asked them to show me physically what it means, I write the three words on the board.

We then do a brainstorm activity where I ask my learners to call out all the action words they can think of. I make 3 'word spiders' on the board - one for each of the three verbs (push, pull and twist). We begin by using words in their home language and then move onto English.

I find using mime to demonstrate meaning is really helpful, and I check with them whether each suggestion they offer is a push, pull or twist verb to check their understanding.

Finally, I put all the pictures and objects I have collected on a table and ask the learners to label them with an appropriate verb and put them into 3 groups – one for push, one for pull and one for twist types of force.

Audio 3.3

I am the teacher of a large Grade 6 class and I had become more and more concerned that I just didn't have time to check the reading ability of all my students during normal lesson time. A few of my students are great readers and I know that I tend to use them a lot when I want a learner to read aloud from the textbook because it saves time. I needed a better way of monitoring the skills of the whole class, as there are some students I had not heard read aloud for quite some time. So, for a month, every time I listened to a learner read, I made a note of it and how they did in my mark book. I deliberately created opportunities for less confident readers to read to me individually, rather than to the whole class.

It took a few weeks, but now I have listened to all the learners in my class and I have now been able to group them into reading sets which I believe will help them improve and practise their skills. Thanks to this information, I also sometimes use learners from the top reading groups to help learners who find reading more difficult.

Audio 5.1

In 2008, Egerton Primary school teachers in Kenya were introduced to the TESSA resources. Working together they decided to make some changes in their school. They organised the desks into groups rather than rows, so learners could work together in pairs and groups.

As they started to use more active approaches to learning and teaching, they noticed that some of the children in Grade 4 were struggling with their work in social studies and science because they could not read very well.

Working together, they put a big emphasis on literacy. They created a space in the school for a library. A group of parents came in and helped to build some shelves. The Head Teacher turned to the local Church, national and international charities and with their help managed to build a collection of reading books. They used the African Storybook website to find and print stories in the local languages. Younger children had timetabled sessions in the new library and teachers from all subjects worked together to support literacy. Social studies and science teachers looked at the TESSA Literacy resources and adapted some of the activities to teach their subject.

There was much excitement around the new library and over time, teachers found that children became more confident and enthusiastic readers. One of the teachers set up a scheme where the stronger readers were encouraged to read with those who were less confident during breaks and lunchtimes.

Audio 5.2

Rita teaches Social studies in Grade 6. She was teaching '6.5.1: Elements of weather and climate' and noticed that learners had difficulties with weather words they were not very familiar with. She selected some words they were familiar with and others which were causing problems for learners.

She wrote the words and their definitions on separate pieces of paper. She asked the learners to form pairs with the person next to them. This meant that they worked with a friend and often high attainers were together and lower attainers were together. She gave each pair 10 words and 10 definitions and asked them to match the words and definitions. When they had done their words and she had checked them, they swapped their words and definitions with another pair.

Some pairs completed it very quickly, but some found it very difficult and needed a great deal of help, so it was difficult to organise. She discussed the experience with her friend who taught grade 4.

She decided to keep the pairs how they were but gave them different sets of words. The high attainers had longer more complex words, including some they had never met before and had to guess the meaning of, and the low attainers had shorter, common words.

She found it worked well. The low-attainers gained confidence and learned some common words which would help them in the future, and the high-attainers were challenged to try and read and understand new words.

Audio 5.3

Teacher Samuel was teaching his Grade 3 class about animals and where they live. He teaches them in Chitonga. Only about 25 are confident readers out of the class of 76. He found pictures of six animals and stuck them on the classroom wall. He then drew pictures of where they live and stuck those up on the other side of the room. He made some cards out of old food packets and wrote the name of an animal on half of them and the name of where they live on the other half (all in Chitonga). He gave half the class the name of an animal, and the other half the places where they live. To begin with each learner had to stand next to the picture corresponding to their animal or place. This was to check that all the children could understand the word they had been given. They then had to walk around the room and find a partner who had the name of where their animal lived. For example, 'gorilla' was matched with 'rainforest'; 'worm' with 'mud' and so on. When everyone was paired up, Samuel collected in the cards and gave them out again so everyone had a different word. He did this a few times until he was confident that all the children could recognise the words, and they knew where each of the animals might live.

At the next TGM, he explained his idea to the other teachers.

Teacher Paxina was doing science with Grade 6. She adapted the activity but wrote the words in English. Also, when the pairs had found each other, they had to discuss how their animal was adapted to where it lived. At the end, they had to write a sentence about each animal and why it lived in a certain place.