

В рамках факультативных занятий в 5-6 классах по программе «Практикум по чтению» или «Художественное чтение и драматизация» можно поработать со сказкой «The Tortoises' Picnic», используя приемы сторителлинга для формирования у учащихся речевой компетенции, а также эстетических потребностей и вкуса средствами английского языка в процессе работы с яркими образцами художественной литературы.

The Tortoises' Picnic

This story can be used when the class is working on any of the following areas: family, food, weather, time, animals.

Before reading

Activity 1

First, get the class to produce the visuals that are going to be used in the story by giving them the following instructions.

Draw the three tortoises. (mother, father, baby).

Draw the food. (sandwiches, chocolates, ice-creams, fruit, orange squash or other examples of food suitable for your class).

Draw the weather symbols. (flowers for spring, sun for summer, clouds and rain for autumn, snow for winter).

Draw the trees.

Draw a basket.

Draw a tablecloth.

Activity 2

The aim of this activity is to check that the class understand the basic vocabulary. The class should respond in a physical way by actually carrying out the instructions.

Show me father tortoise.

Put him on the table.

Put mother tortoise next to father tortoise.

You are hungry.

Eat a sandwich.

You don't feel hungry.

Take the chocolates.

Put the chocolates into the basket.

Take them out.

Put them on the tablecloth.

Activity 3

Ask the class if they know the word "picnic" and then get them to tell you all the words they associate with it. Accept any of their suggestions, repeating each word clearly in context as you go along. For example: Oh! So you go to the country with your family. And you take food and chairs and a tablecloth....

Note down the vocabulary suggested by the class in the form of a diagram or word map so that the class has a record of what they know about the subject and what they are going to hear later in the story itself.

Reading

Start to tell the story and put up the pictures of the characters on the board as they are mentioned. Bear in mind the following suggestions:

1 Use gesture, mime, actions or movements to help the class understand the situations in the story. For example, put the food in the basket, take it out and put it on the tablecloth, shake the basket to try and find the tin-opener, make baby tortoise disappear behind the trees, mime being cold or hot, etc.

2 Put the pictures on the board (or wherever else you have decided to display them) in the same order as in the story. This helps the class to follow the action of the story in space and time.

3 The pictures of the main characters – the tortoises – are up on the board when you start to tell the story. Use these pictures to help the class understand the dialogues between the characters which follow in the story. So that the class can tell who is speaking in each dialogue, position yourself in front of the character who is speaking. Alternatively, turn to the left or right depending on the position of the character who is being talked to.

4 It is important to use mime to help the class understand expressions of surprise, disagreement, agreement, and to show when someone is giving orders. It is also useful in helping the class understand sentences such as they walked and walked and walked, they waited, waited and waited or they got really hungry.

THE TORTOISES' PICNIC

Once upon a time there were three tortoises - a father, a mother and a baby. One beautiful spring day, they decided to go for a picnic. They got tins of salmon, and sandwiches, and chocolates, and ice-creams, and fruit, and orange squash and put everything in their baskets and after three months they were ready. It was summer and it was sunny and very hot, and they set out carrying their baskets.

They walked and walked and walked and after three months they sat down and had a rest. They were a mile from home. It was autumn and it was cloudy and raining. They set out again and walked and walked and walked and in three months they reached the picnic place. They were two miles from home. It was winter and it was snowing and very cold. They unpacked their baskets and spread out the cloth, and arranged the food on it and it looked lovely.

Then Mother tortoise looked into the baskets. She turned them all upside down and shook them, but they were empty.

At last she said, "We've forgotten the tin-opener!"

They looked at each other and at last Father tortoise said, "Baby, you'll have to go back for it."

"What!- said the baby. - Me! Go back all that long way!"

"We can't start without a tin-opener. We'll wait for you." said Father tortoise.

“Do you promise that you won’t touch a thing till I come back?” Baby said.

“Yes, we promise,” they said, and Baby disappeared behind the trees.

And Father and Mother waited. They waited and waited and waited and a whole year passed and they got really hungry.

“Don’t you think we could have just one sandwich each?” said Mother tortoise.

“No,” said Father tortoise. “We promised. We must wait till he comes back.”

So they waited and waited and waited, and another year passed, and they got really hungry.

“It’s six years now. Let’s just have one sandwich while we’re waiting,” said Father tortoise.

They picked up the sandwiches, but just as they were going to eat them, a little voice said, “Aha! I knew you would cheat.” And Baby tortoise popped his head out of a bush. “It’s a good thing I didn’t go back for the tin-opener,” he said.

Activity 1

To check understanding of the basic content of the story, it is a good idea, particularly with beginners, to ask some questions with short Yes/No answers. For example:

Are they going for a picnic?

Does baby go back for the tin-opener?

Have they got the tin-opener?

After six years are they hungry?

With slightly higher levels, you can ask or questions, such as:

Are they tortoises or snakes?

Are they carrying baskets or bags?

Are they going for a picnic or a walk?

Are they hungry or thirsty?

With higher level classes, you can ask more complex questions, including Wh-questions which require more complete answers. For example:

Who are the characters?

What are they carrying in their baskets?

Where are they going?

What have they forgotten?

Activity 2

Another way to work with the story is to tell it wrongly by substituting new words for what you think is key vocabulary. The class must say Stop! every time they hear a mistake and then provide the correct word. For example:

Once upon a time there were three frogs, a mother, a father and a grandfather. One beautiful winter day they decided to go for a walk...

After reading

Activity 1

This activity helps to check the class's understanding of the sequence of the story. Divide the story into six parts, summarise the key moments from each part and write them on six separate strips of paper. Get the class to stand in random order in groups of six. They have to reconstruct the story in the correct order, each reading their part and saying if it goes before or after the parts the rest of the class have got.

Check the class understand the basic concepts of before and after by asking questions such as Louise, do you go after Alex? The groups themselves can report back to the class at the end of the activity, for example, I go after Paul and before Laura. With beginners, you can use pictures drawn by the class instead of sentences.

Put them up on the board in the correct order as you read the story. The pictures can show, for example:

- 1 The three tortoises and the basket
- 2 The food on the tablecloth in the snow
- 3 Mother tortoise emptying the basket

4 Baby tortoise going off to find the tin-opener

5 Mother and father tortoise waiting

6 Mother and father tortoise about to eat a sandwich while baby tortoise's head appears between the bushes

Activity 2

Get the class to make simple puppets of the characters and objects in the story or give out different parts of the story written on card (tortoises, food, seasons). Get the class to hold up their puppet or card as the corresponding character or part is mentioned in the story. Each pupil should carry out the actions and gestures of the character or part they represent. Role-play activities help to improve the general understanding of the story and the aural comprehension of certain elements in particular.

Activity 3

This activity aims to help the class memorise parts of the story and to practice rhythm and intonation. The process of memorising language is helped if the sentences are written in an imaginary space. By showing movement, actions and the physical location of language, the class can start to view language as a concrete, rather than abstract thing. Pretend to be surrounded by four imaginary walls, one in front of you, one behind and one to the left and right of you. You can also show the class through gesture that it is impossible to pass through the walls. Start to write a sentence on one wall, saying it out loud as you write. For example, They set out for a picnic. Then mime rubbing it out. Repeat this several times and then get the class to tell you the sentence as you begin to write it. Do this with three other sentences on the three other imaginary walls. For example:

And they got really hungry.

And they got tins of salmon.

They put food in a basket.

These four sentences have the same number of stressed syllables and the same sentence stress. This means that when they are said together they produce a rhythm

which the class can mark by clapping their hands. Get the class to act out the sentences which contain repetition and which are used as a link to other sentences.

For example:

And they walked and walked and walked.

And they waited and waited and waited.

The class will find memorising the lines and the intonation easier as you repeat the writing of the sentences on the walls, speeding up the process each time.

You can create 'poems' from any story following this technique, provided you make sure that the sentences you select have the same stress, rhythm and number of stressed syllables.

Activity 4

This activity practises simple maths. Give out copies of the picture of the food and prices and ask appropriate questions.



1 Look at the food and the prices. The tortoises buy three tins of salmon, six sandwiches, a box of chocolates, three ice-creams and a bottle of orange squash. What is the cost of the picnic food?

2 You've got ten pounds. What can you buy in the supermarket?

3 The tortoises walk a mile in three months. How many miles can they walk in six months/nine months/a year?

Other activities

Get the class to express a range of meanings using words taken from the story and by practising different intonation and using gestures. For example, Me? or What! (to show surprise, ask a question, make an offer).

Get the class to draw weather symbols for the different seasons. Display them in the classroom, changing them every day to fit the real weather conditions.

