Using stories in the classroom

Topic

'The Emperor's new clothes' by Hans Christian Andersen

Learning outcomes

- Practise reconstructing a grammatically and textually coherent piece of writing
- Use prediction skills to aid understanding of a new text
- Develop the skill of listening for gist, enabling learners to understand the main idea of authentic audio materials without being hindered by unfamiliar vocabulary
- Scan a text for information
- Form past simple object questions in writing

Age group

Aged 13–17

Level

B1

Time

90 minutes

Materials

- Worksheet – one per learner
- Reading text – one per pair
- Presentation

Introduction

This lesson is aimed at intermediate learners. It could be adapted for use with higher and lower levels.

This particular lesson uses an adapted version of 'The Emperor's new clothes' by Hans Christian Andersen, but other stories can be used in the same way.

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Procedure

1. Lead-in (10 minutes)	• Show **Slide 2** and elicit different types of leaders: king, queen, president, prime minister, emperor, etc. • Ask learners what kind of personality they think a good leader needs. • Tell them you are going to read the beginning of a story about a leader and that they need to listen very carefully as they will need to reproduce the text from memory.
2. Guided dictation (20 minutes)	• Put learners in pairs and write their names on the board. Each pair gets three chances (like in a game!). You can draw stars or smiley faces as chances. • Read the story. Tell learners to only listen carefully at this stage. • Then learners open their notebooks and list any words they remember from the story. The words don't need to be in the correct order. • Ask pairs to check their word list together. • Repeat the sequence again: learners listen to the story, then write any words they heard. • Show **Slide 3** or draw a table 4 x 8 cells on the board. Number each cell. There will be 32 cells. See **Appendix** for more information. • Ask learners to copy the table into their notebooks. Explain that they need to write the numbers very small as they'll need space to write. • On the board write 'many' in cell 1, 'years' in cell 2 and 'ago' in cell 3. • Learners copy the words into their own table. Monitor and check they've done this correctly. • Nominate pairs to guess which word from their list is next. If the word is in the story, tell them which box to write it in. See **Slide 4** for completed table. • If the word is wrong or already used, the pair loses a chance. Erase one of their chances from the board. • Keep going until all the words are found or everyone runs out of chances. Then read the story again, using the table on the board. **Note:** Confident writers could write their word on the board.
3. Vocabulary focus (10 minutes)	• Pre-teach vocabulary: show **Slide 5** or give the learners the worksheet with definitions of vocabulary and write the vocabulary on the board. Learners have to match the vocabulary with the definitions. (Vocabulary on board: *show something off*, *vanity*, *invisible*, *silk*, *confused*, *magnificent*, *procession*, *naked*.) Show **Slide 6** for the answers.
4. Prediction (10 minutes)	• Put learners into pairs. Ask them to predict how the story ends. • Elicit ideas from a few pairs. • Show **Slides 7–9** or ask learners to look at the worksheet and read the three possible ways the story might end. • Ask learners to vote for which story ending they think is correct.

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5. Listening and reading (10 minutes)

- Show **Slide 10** or give out the text.
- Read the whole story with learners following the text so that they can check their predictions.

6. Focus on question forms (10 minutes)

- Show **Slide 11** or write on the board 'Clothes', 'Every hour' and 'About the Emperor's vanity'. Ask the learners what questions would give these answers.
- Show **Slide 12** or write the questions on the board: What did the Emperor love? How often did he change his clothes? What did the thieves hear about?
- Elicit Question, Auxiliary, Subject, Infinitive on the board or show **Slide 13**.

Q	A	S	I
What	did	the emperor	love?
How often	did	he	change his clothes?
What	did	the thieves	hear about?

- Ask learners to copy the form into their notebooks.
- Remind learners that this structure is used with present simple and past simple object questions and that QASI can be an easy way to remember how to form these questions.

7. Question practice (10 minutes)

- Divide learners into two groups. Give all learners in one group a copy of question practice A (**Slide 14** or page 2 of worksheet). Give all learners in the other group a copy of question practice B (**Slide 15** or page 3 of worksheet).
- If you have a large class, learners can work in pairs or smaller groups within their larger group.
- Ask them to refer to the reading text to write questions for the answers they have.
- Once both groups have finished, elicit and check questions with the whole group (**Slide 16**).
- Create pairs, with one learner from group A and one learner from group B.
- A asks B their questions. B finds the answers in the text. Then they swap roles.
- If needed, demonstrate the pair work with a stronger learner.
- Monitor and support as needed.

Suggested questions

1. What did the thieves tell the Emperor?
2. Why did the Emperor give the thieves a lot of money?
3. What did the thieves buy?
4. Who did the Emperor send to visit the thieves?
5. What did the thieves do?
6. What did the thieves do the night before the procession?
7. When did the Emperor put on his new clothes?
8. Why did everyone say they could see the clothes?
9. Where did the Emperor go?
10. What did the child shout?

Note: Learners may come up with slightly different questions. Accept any possible

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	questions.
8. Discussion (10 minutes)	• Show **Slide 17** and/or ask learners what they think the story is about. **Notes**: Points to bring up: ○ It's important to speak the truth. ○ Don't fool yourself, and don't just follow the crowd. ○ Don't be vain.
Useful references	• Using QASI and ASI: https://test-english.com/explanation/a1/questions/ • Philosophical ideas presented in the story: The Emperor's New Clothes

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APPENDIX – Example table for guided dictation

Many 1	years 2	ago 3	there 4
lived 5	an 6	Emperor 7	who 8
loved 9	clothes. 10	He 11	liked 12
them 13	so 14	much, 15	he 16
changed 17	his 18	clothes 19	almost 20
every 21	hour 22	and 23	loved 24
to 25	show 26	them 27	off 28
to 29	his 30	people. 31	

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