

'The sick girl' - Acting Connectives

Devised by Judith Evans at Rushey Mead Primary School in Leicester. This is an activity which demonstrates that what is good for bilingual children can also inspire all the others. This activity was produced for years 5/6.

The address of this activity is <www.collaborativelearning.org/sickgirlconnectives.pdf>

Many Gujarati speaking bilingual children find connectives very challenging to organise, partly because of the way connectives change the position of the main verb. They need lots more practice than a couple of dryish worksheets. They benefit from plenty of opportunities to use connectives orally, and to explore the effects of changing connectives, and the relationship between the clauses.

The activity can be whole class or with small sentence strips and words the children can work in pairs or slightly larger groups to act out the sentences they make. They can also be encouraged to produce a cartoon for their connected sentences and put them together in a display which will fulfil a plan/target which attempts to "ensure that children apply this learning in their writing (and reading" as the grammar book puts it.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF BASIC PRINCIPLES BEHIND OUR TEACHING ACTIVITIES:

The project is a teacher network, and a non-profit making educational trust. Our main aim is to develop and disseminate classroom tested examples of effective group strategies across all phases and subjects. We hope they will inspire you to use similar strategies in other topics and curriculum areas. We run teacher workshops, swapshops and conferences throughout the European Union. The project publishes a catalogue of activities plus lists in selected subject areas, and a newsletter available by post or internet: "PAPERCLIP".

*These activities were influenced by current thinking about the role of language in learning. They are designed to help children learn through talk and active learning in small groups. They work best in mixed classes where children in need of language or learning support are integrated. They are well suited for the development of speaking and listening. They provide teachers opportunities for spoken language and other assessment.

*They support differentiation by placing a high value on what children can offer to each other on a particular topic, and also give children the chance to respect each other's views and formulate shared opinions which they can disseminate to peers. By helping them to take ideas and abstract concepts and move them about physically they help to develop thinking skills.

*They give children the opportunity to participate in their own words and language in their own time without pressure. Many activities can be tried out in mother tongue and afterwards in English. A growing number of activities are available in more than one language, not translated, but mixed, so that you may need more than one language to complete the activity.

*They encourage study skills in context, and should therefore be used with a range of appropriate information books which are preferably within reach in the classroom.

*They are generally adaptable over a wide age range because children can bring their own knowledge to an activity and refer to books at an appropriate level. The activities work like catalysts.

*All project activities were planned and developed by teachers working together, and the main reason they are disseminated is to encourage teachers to work effectively with each other inside and outside the classroom. They have made it possible for mainstream and language and learning support teachers to share an equal role in curriculum delivery. They should be adapted to local conditions. In order to help us keep pace with curriculum changes, please send any new or revised activities back to the project, so that we can add them to our lists of materials.

Instructions for whole class activity

1. Hold up the large sentence sections: "the girl was sick" , "she ate ten ice creams". (We've provided strips for the group activities but the large strips are best written in felt tips on a long strip of card.)
2. Hold up "because" between the sentences and ask children to act them out. (My preference is to make model ice creams and model sick but you can decide how motivating props would be.)
3. Replace *because* with *after* - again act out and discuss meaning.
4. Try swapping the two clauses and discuss the different meaning. i.e. she ate ten ice creams after the girl was sick.
5. Replace *after* with *before* - act out and discuss.
6. Replace *before* with *whenever* - act out and discuss this failure to learn from experience.
7. Replace *whenever* with *unless* - act out and discuss this interesting medical condition.
8. Replace *unless* with *while* - act out (and this should provoke a reaction!)

Material for group work

The girl was sick

She ate ten ice creams

because

after

before

whenever

unless

while

and

even

though

so