Embedded Reading In Action

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What is Embedded Reading?

Embedded Reading is the use of a series of three or more readings of increasing difficulty, created from the same outline. Students are exposed to repeated versions of the text and engage in a variety of activities with the text in order to build language and gain a deeper understanding of it.

What are the Key Concepts of Embedded Reading?

1. The purpose of language, used in communication, is to **create a picture** in the mind and/or heart of another person.
2. People who read **acquire more language** and develop better language skills.
3. People who are **successful readers** read more.
4. People who **enjoy reading** read more.
5. The **scaffolding** of reading material **develops reading skills**.
6. The **success** of an Embedded Reading is dependent upon the **quality of the base reading**.
7. The base reading should be **100% comprehensible** to all students and create a clear picture in the mind of the reader.
8. The most effective scaffolded versions of the reading include a **variety of simple and complex sentences** inserted into the previous level of the reading so that the reader is constantly coming across **new information**.
9. Readings created from student-generated ideas or materials are **highly motivating**.
10. Readings can and should be approached using a **variety of techniques and activities**.

How are Embedded Readings created?

There are two ways to create an Embedded Reading. The first is a Bottom Up reading. The base reading is created first, and additional details and information are injected into each level. The second way to create an Embedded Reading is from the Top Down. This approach provides a way for teachers to make literature or other text that students perceive to be beyond their capabilities, accessible to students. (Please be sure to credit the original author.) *See "Writing" Embedded Readings for more information.

Ponder before Planning:

1. Why <u>should</u> students work with a particular text?
   (Students will want to know the answer to this question.)

2. Why will students <u>want</u> to work with this piece?
   (If there is not a good reason, it will be hard to convince them to do it.)

3. What should students <u>to be able to do</u> when they are <u>finished</u> working with this piece?
   (Use the text in whatever ways necessary in order to make that happen.)

4. What activities do students <u>already</u> do that help them to achieve the goal(s) identified in #3?
   (Adapt those to use with any version of the reading. <u>The things that you ALREADY DO SUCCESSFULLY</u> are the best place to start.)

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What are the goals of an Embedded Reading lesson?

1. To create a **successful and engaging atmosphere** for reading.
2. To engage students in a **close and thorough reading** of the text.
3. To **prepare students to comprehend text** *that the students perceive* to be beyond their level of understanding.
4. To **develop literacy skills** and to **facilitate language acquisition**.

How is an Embedded Reading Used?

Because the reading exists in several forms, the teacher has numerous opportunities, and numerous ways, to use it with students. Use your professional judgment to determine the length, number and frequency of Embedded Reading lessons in your curriculum.

The most important place to begin with an Embedded Reading is to make sure that every student clearly understands the <u>base</u> reading. In a second-language classroom this can be accomplished through any of the following:

- Illustrations
- Identification of photographs or illustrations
- Acting out the reading
- Questions about the text itself
- Questions about students' reactions to the text
- Direct translation

When the teacher is sure that the language is totally comprehensible and the reading has created a similar picture in the minds and/or hearts of the students, it is appropriate to move on to the next reading, where any of the preceding or following activities could be used:

- Identify new information.
- Consider how new information adds to or changes the reading.
- Discuss why events occurred.
- Predict what will happen or be added next.
- Compare/Contrast base reading with more detailed versions.
- Compare/Contrast the reading with other texts.
- Add details to illustrations.
- Use context clues to understand more complex language.
- Identify language which adds suspense, humor or irony.
- Change/Add a detail, sentence or paragraph.
- Discuss the thoughts, feelings, words and actions of the characters (in fiction or non-fiction).
- Discuss the thoughts, feelings and reactions of the students in regards to the text.
- Recreate the text as a script.
- Rewrite a piece of the text from the perspective of a different character.

In summary: **Choose texts carefully, scaffold for success for all students, and align with a meaningful, enjoyable VARIETY of activities.**

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