A Handbook of alternative teaching styles

D = differentiation

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Handbook of alternative teaching styles

1. Break Text into parts

If you have a large piece of text for pupils to gather information it is important that all pupils are encouraged to read and assimilate the information. In this exercise the text is split into shorter parts and either individual pupils or small groups are given different parts to read, make notes on and feed back to the rest of the group, who make notes as they listen. It is useful if a recording sheet is prepared before the lesson so students know the types of information they are looking

for.

2. Sentence beginnings and tails

Pupils are given information in any form (TV programme, text, verbal, pictures etc.). They are then given a number of sentences that have been split into two and mixed up. They have to match up the beginnings to the endings and then copy them out or up. They have to match up the beginnings to the endings and then copy them out or stick them into their books. This exercise encourages students to read for understanding.

3. Cloze sentence exercises

Students either copy out a paragraph, which has key words missing, and they fill in the missing words. An easier, less time-consuming method is to allow the pupils to fill in the missing words on the sheet. The purpose of this exercise is to encourage students to read in context and develop comprehension skills.

4. Collaborative group work - Information gathering, collating & presenting

Class is split into groups to complete a task. The task must have different parts to it. Each group member is given a different job to do, e.g. find pictures about the topic, find and collect written materials for sources, do a survey, write up notes, draw diagrams, make a tape recording. The results are collated together and presented as a folder or wall display: ensure that pupils with literacy difficulties don't always choose to draw pictures and that under-achieving pupils don't select tasks they perceive to be easy.

For a longer piece of work it can sometimes be useful to set up a contract within each group - each pupil writes down what their job is and signs the paper to show that they agree to carry out the task. It is very important that groupings are selected for specific purposes. Similar ability groupings can work but lower achieving pupils will need a lot of support if in a group together. This encourages pupils to work together, co-operate, be independent workers and take on responsibility. It also provides support for less able pupils in mixed ability groupings and allows more able pupils to explore a topic in more depth.

5. Lotto/Bingo

Have a number of questions or words on a grid relating to a particular topic. Pupils have to circulate around the class to find different pupils who can answer the questions or explain what the word means. As they find a pupil with the answer they write the name of the pupil in the square. They should only ask one pupil one question to begin with. The aim of the exercise is to encourage pupils to express themselves and listen to each other. Alternative versions of the game can be for one line.

6. Poster into pieces

Have a large poster(s) of ari aspect of a topic being studied. Cut the poster into a number of pieces (five or six). Give each group a piece of the poster and ask them to discuss and record their ideas about what the picture may be about. Continue to repeat the exercise until the picture is complete. Have a whole group discussion about what they felt at different stages in the exercise. The aim of the activity is to develop communication skills, in-depth thinking and visual perception and abstract thinking skills. It also provides opportunities for pupils to respond at a number of different levels from concrete to abstract. It is a useful exercise to use when introducing a project or to assess knowledge at the end of a project. 7. Guided fantasy

Quite adventurous but very effective results can be obtained. Ideally appropriate music should be played in the background, e.g. if about tropical rain forests, South American native Indian music. Pupils relax, close eyes whilst teacher relates a script based on a theme. It may be a description of a rain forest or simply the animals that live there or an explanation of the physical processes that cause conventional rainfall. The script should last for five to ten minutes. At the end pupils are told to think in silence for a few minutes about what they have heard. They are then given a totally free choice of how they might express their thoughts or feelings. It may be through painting or poetry, taping ideas, writing, role-play, comic strips/story boards. Obviously the need for good classroom organization is essential and all resources must be available – sugar paper, large sheets of plain paper, paints, felt tips, crayons, tape recorders,

writing paper. The exercise encourages listening skills, it provides opportunities for structured free expression, it provides opportunities for students to respond in their own learning style. It is important to realise that classes will need training in what to do and how to react and may not respond very well on the first occasion.

8. Different levels of text for the same subject

When planning lessons or units of work ask: 3

What does every child need to know?

What do most children need to know?

What do some children need to know?

Produce or find three different texts containing the same information but based at different levels in terms of the reading ages and amount of information they provide. Ensure that students have easy access to the

different materials available and explain that the work is at three levels and then allow them to make a free choice. You may have to guide lower attainers towards the easier work, although it might be easier for them if you let them decide to move onto an easier level. On the other hand you will have to ensure that underachievers take the more difficult work. When explaining the levels be careful with the language that is

used and try not to identify any pupils by name, in front of the whole class, as to which sheets they should attempt. The advantages of these activities is that all pupils are seen to be following the same course and hopefully they all achieve and keep at the same pace. The disadvantages are that it involves a lot of preparation time and it may be sensible for departments to work together to produce work at different levels so that one person is responsible for easier level work, one person for middle level and so on.

9. Word searches

A lot of the time these are seen as being exercises for homework or for extension work for students who finish quickly. In fact word searches are excellent for reinforcing subject specific vocabulary, especially if students are encouraged to write out the words with their meanings as they find them or to write a sentence with the word in the correct context. They are also useful for children with literacy difficulties because it gives them practice at recognizing words and stringing letters together.

10. Blockbuster quizzes

These are exercises where pupils are given a list of questions with the first letter of the answer given as a clue, for example, What B is a good quiz to encourage pupils to remember facts? (BLOCKBUSTER). The clues can be more cryptic for more able pupils and the game can be played on the hexagon game board or simply as a list.

11. Crosswords

Clues can be given as pictures or words and can be as easy or as difficult as you want. It can be used to extend the more able or reinforce vocabulary with the lower attaining pupils.

12. Comprehension

Most worksheets and textbooks have straightforward comprehension exercises, i.e. read the text and answer the questions that are based on the text. If it is to be used as a successful teaching aid the questions must be worded in such a way as to ensure that students do have to read the text and they have to show

understanding by answering the questions in their own words. A better comprehension exercise would be to set a task based on the text, in order that the students have to use the information they have read to complete the task.

13. Anagrams

Like crosswords these can be very simple or very complicated and can be used to reinforce vocabulary. The harder ones could have an additional cryptic clue. 14. Jumbled sentences Pupils are given sentences or paragraphs with the words in the wrong order. They have to rearrange them into the correct order so that they make sense. The purpose of this exercise is to enable pupils with literacy/language difficulties to think about sentence structure as well as the meanings of the words. Subject-specific content has to be understood before the words can be rearranged.

15. Sequencing paragraphs, sentences, stanzas etc.

Just as the words in the sentences in the previous exercise were jumbled up, in this exercise the words are in the correct order but it is the sentences and paragraphs which are in the wrong

order. This is particularly good for reinforcing events that happened in a sequence, e.g. chronological order or observations from a science investigation. It can be used with pupils of all abilities but is useful again for pupils with literacy/language difficulties.

16. News report - radio/TV/newspaper

Pupils produce a report in the format of one type of medium, they have to include what they are reporting on, why they are reporting, where it happened. It can be based on fictitious work in English or factual evidence based on investigations in lessons such as Maths, Science or Geography or give an account of an historical event. It is useful because the video and radio will enable pupils with learning difficulties to express themselves and it gives the more able pupils the opportunity to work on an open-ended task where they are in more control of what is happening. It also appeals to the learning styles of those people who prefer to work verbally or in a more artistic form.

17. Interview

Pupils have to set up an interview with a character. The character can be from a fictitious piece of work the students have produced or it can be from a text that they have read. It could be with a person from history or it could be with a native Indian from the Amazon rain forest. The pupils obviously have to take on

the roles of interviewer and interviewee. Both students have to carry out considerable research in terms of the types of questions to ask and the answers that may be given. You may have to direct them towards asking general questions rather than any really specific ones. This exercise can be done with all abilities but with lower attainers it will require a lot of structure, e.g. information sheets will have to be provided so that they do not have to look for information, with eg's of questions to ask with possible answers to choose from.

18. Summarising

Pupils are given a long passage to read and then summarise into their own words. They can respond in written format or by using a tape. This requires pupils to read a complete text and then to show understanding by rephrasing it. With pupils with literacy difficulties, the readability of text is very important, but the exercise should not be avoided because summarising is a very important skill for pupils with literacy difficulties.

19. Match definitions to words

Pupils are given two lists. One list contains definitions related to a topic. The other list contains the words. The pupils have to match the words to the definitions. This is a good exercise for reinforcing vocabulary and can be used to help develop a glossary of terms in pupils' exercise books.

20. Poster

This can be done in small groups or as individuals. Pupils have to gather or are given large amounts of information relating to a theme. The information should be aimed at different ability levels. Pupils choose the information that they feel is most relevant to them, they then have to produce a poster to display the information they have gathered. Variations of this can be that different pupils are given different types of information based on a large topic and so when all the posters are displayed together they give the whole facts about the topic. This is a good open-ended task, which allows pupils to respond in different formats. Some will produce a poster with one large picture or a number of small pictures. Some may choose to simply produce lots of different pieces of text. Others may make a mixture of pictures, drawings and text. Poster size can be determined beforehand.

21. Cartoon Strip or Story Board

If pupils are asked to give their own account of an event or a story, some pupils may prefer to respond in pictures and a comic strip or story board enables them to express themselves with words and pictures. This can also be used to help pupils structure their ideas before they start to write a piece of creative writing or reporting. Usually a sheet of A4 paper divided into eight is sufficient for most pupils to express their ideas.

22. Poem

An alternative to simply relating ideas as prose, a poem allows pupils to express themselves in a variety of ways. It enables more able pupils to play with words and it allows pupils with learning difficulties to express their ideas as a list of ideas, especially if emphasis is placed on the fact the poetry does not have to rhyme. leading poems about a specific topic is also a very good exercise to reinforce new words, as many poems contain repetition, which helps pupils to learn and remember the words.

23. I was there... (empathy)

As the title suggests this is an exercise aimed at encouraging pupils to empathise with a character either in History, Geography or in a text they have read in English. With guidance and structure less able pupils can find it possible to relate to a character in a situation they have read about. Questions such as what would you have done? Or, why did you do a certain thing? Being the character enables the pupils to get into the part of the character more easily.

24. Flow diagram/chart/grid

These are very good methods of encouraging pupils to record ideas and structuring them into a format that they can use later to produce extended writing or revision. The flow diagram is designed in such a way as pupils have to describe each step of a process in sequential order. More sophisticated flow diagrams can contain options to follow depending on the outcomes of the previous step. With training pupils can learn to use the diagrams to link different aspects of a topic together. Flow diagrams are used a lot in Technology and pupils are used to them so it should be an easy task to transfer their skills across the curriculum.

25. Lists

We all use lists for one thing or another and in a teaching situation some people prefer to learn facts in a list. It is possible to encourage learners to learn the list by using mnemonics. They make up a sentence using the first letters of each item on the list to make the words.

26. Diamond Ranking

An exercise to encourage pupils to work in groups to prioritise facts related to a topic or tasks related to a project. They are presented with 9 cards which have statements written on them. The pupils have to set the cards out in a diamond shape with the most important statement at the top, two equal statements on

the next row, three equal statements on the next row, two on the next and the least important on the bottom. This reduces the amount of arguments raised by having to rank ideas into a straightforward list with most important at top and least at bottom. The exercise encourages pupils to co-operate and it also allows pupils to see that there can be more than one correct answer to solving a problem. The teacher will circulate around the room discussing with individual groups about the reasons for their choices. If necessary a spokesperson from each group can

describe their diamond to the rest of the class, although this would not be necessary as the object of the exercise is designed to be a starting point for a unit of work or more complicated task. Alternatives could be that pupils rank the ideas individually and then have to work in twos and then in fours to decide which is the diamond they can agree on.

27. Brainstorm

As individuals or in small groups or as the whole class pupils are asked to give any ideas they can think of relating to a theme. These are written down on paper or the board but must be displayed in such a way as all the pupils in the group can see. The purpose of this exercise is to encourage pupils to share ideas and to enable all pupils to focus on a theme before doing some sort of extended work on it. The task can either be to produce some creative writing or it can be factual writing about a topic that has been covered in the previous week's work. The exercise can be used as a way of reinforcing concepts and knowledge gained from a topic. The brainstorming supports the less confident pupils in the class and provides them with a framework on which to base their writing.

28. Note-Taking

Pupils either listen to the teacher talking, and have to note down the important facts, or, alternatively they can watch a video or listen to a tape recording and make the notes. This encourages students to pick out the important facts and also develops listening skills. At first you may have to repeat some phrases more than once or stop the tape. Do not allow this to happen too often as the pupils will not get used to listening the first time.

29. Essay Writing

Sometimes we forget strategies that have been a traditional part of teaching. Writing an essay is still a very important skill to develop in all students. Those students with literacy difficulties, however, will need help in structuring the essay with as much help as possible at first. Lists of ideas to include in each section of the essay will have to be given.

30. Diagrams to label or draw

Students can be given a blank diagram on which they have to label important points. Alternatively they can be given the labels and told to draw the diagram. The diagram can relate to any topic that has been studied. The exercise is useful for developing subject specific words and helping pupils

understand what the words mean (if relevant to a diagram). The exercise also enables pupils with learning difficulties to express their knowledge in ways other than writing.

31. Graphs

An alternative way of presenting statistical information. Graphs themselves can cause difficulties for pupils with learning difficulties because they can't decide on scales to use and so on, but they do give pupils who learn in a more visual way the opportunity to record information in a more relevant form to them. This will be particularly useful when they come to revise for tests etc.

32. Diary/autobiography

Pupils are asked to write their own diary for a specified length of time or to write an account of what they have done in a specified period of time. This can be as little as a day or two to a summary of their life so far. Another version of this can be that students are asked to write the diary of a character they have read about in a novel or a piece of factual text. This requires them to empathise with the character and to show some understanding of the facts they have been taught.

33. Timeline

Students produce a line to show the events of a particular topic in chronological order. This strategy can be used with older pupils following GCSE as well as lower school pupils. They can show a time line of their lives or show that they have understood the different aspects leading up to a major world event. It is very important that adequate research time is provided for pupils. This exercise enables those pupils who learn better through pictorial clues to respond in their preferred style.

34. Letter/faxes

Pupils can be encouraged to write letters for all sorts of reasons. They can be formal ones requesting information from an outside agency. It is important that if finances allow, the letters are actually posted in order that the students can receive replies. The letters can be based on fiction, in order to show their understanding of a character from a novel, or they can write a letter imagining that they are the character writing to another character in the story. It is important that pupils are encouraged to set the letter out in a standard form with an address in the appropriate place and so on. The exercise encourages pupils to empathise with characters. It gives pupils

practice at writing letters and encourages them to understand facts they have learnt. Faxes are a way of encouraging pupils to use IT and can encourage them to be precise when requesting information and so on. In the future one will be able to e-mail letters in the same way, hopefully to real people who will be able to respond almost immediately.

35. True or False

Pupils are given a list of statements which they have to say are true or false. These exercises can be set at a variety of different levels depending on the ability of the pupils. It is good for assessing pupils at the end of a unit of work in a method that is a variety from ordinary questions.

36. Form Filling

A variety of different forms can be obtained in order that pupils experience filling in forms. Depending on the age they can be passport forms, driving license application forms, job application forms. At a younger level they can be forms produced by the teacher for fictitious jobs or membership to clubs and so on. The idea can also be taken into a further dimension in terms of pupils filling in a job application for the job of a particular character that they have studied, e.g. the job of William the Conqueror or a geologist investigating earthquakes. They would be required to explain their knowledge of the subject and so on.

37. Questionnaire

A popular method of pupils finding out information for statistical analysis. It is very important that pupils are made aware of what it is they want to find out. If given a free rein on devising the questionnaire they can very often include irrelevant questions. It is also important that the target group for the questionnaire is thought about and explained to the pupils. Once the information has been gathered discussion is required regarding how the information is to be displayed.

38. Describing pictures and photographs

Pupils are given a photograph or a picture or a number of photographs and asked to describe what the image shows. This can be done at a number of different levels. Pupils can be given a totally open question. "What can you see in the picture?" This can be followed up with supplementary questions based on possible events leading up to the photograph or prediction as to what is going to happen. On the other hand the questions can be closed. "How many people are in the picture?"

The purpose of the exercise is to develop observation skills and to promote discussion. Using photographs with open questions is very good for more able pupils.

39. Brochure, guidebook, leaflet

Students are asked to produce a brochure describing a particular theme, object or place. The finished product should contain writing, pictures, diagrams and so on. An alternative could be that students, having completed a unit of work, have to show understanding of the topic by producing an instruction leaflet on how something works. A variation on this is asking pupils to produce a leaflet/information sheet on a particular theme for pupils.

40. Biography

Students are required to produce a biography of a real person they have been studying or a character in a novel that they have read. This can be left as a very open exercise to enable the more able pupils to carry out research or it can be quite tightly structured with a lot of support materials being provided for those pupils with learning difficulties.

41a) "Broken Information" Exercise

Give out cards with information on. Students must link up with others who have similar information.

(This forces involvement of everyone - and transmits information in an active way, involving analysis and discussion.) - Example of set of cards.

b) "Titles"
When all similar information has been grouped - produce a title. (This involves synthesis, analysis, intuitive/critical, interpretation skills - depending on materials.)

c) "Application"
Using the information, complete a chart (giving focus/talking point) or do a ranking exercise etc.

42. "Questions"/Research

I) Give out a passage. Children read this individually (could be passages - same information/different words). Collect in passages. Have a pile of questions based on the text and give one to every person. They read the question to the group and then try to answer it. The group has to decide whether the answer is acceptable. At the end, any questions nobody can answer means everyone refers to the passage again.

ii) This can be continued/extended. For example, having read a passage about war, students may be given four options which a family in an area likely to be attacked might take (such as stay put/hide/run with belongings/run without), based on the information in the passage. Again, if there isn't enough relevant information, they must do some research. Once a decision is made, new information is supplied. How does this affect the decision? At the end, draw lesson together by putting advantages/disadvantages for each of the four options on a chart (called "a focusing sheet").

43. Information exercise

Everyone writes down the question to something they know the answer to but don't expect anyone else to know. Papers are folded and given in. Everyone picks out a question and circulates to find the answer. Everyone asks a question about something that happened which they've told nobody in the group about so far. Will lead to sharing of experiences quickly.

44. Observation Schedules

During group work, have an observer watching how the group operates. A schedule might look like this:

Activities	Name of Group Members			
	John	Viv	Eileen	Kathleen
. Contributing ideas				
. Building on ideas of others				
. Providing humour				
. Encouraging others				
. Asking for guidance				
. Assuming leadership				

The group members could also have personal task profiles. e.g. the activities above dotted about a sheet. They circle the statement if they think it applies to them, put a dotted circle round it if they would like it to and ignore it if they feel it's inappropriate to them. You could have some empty circles too – for students to add statements they think appropriate to their involvement. The observer should feed back to the group and each person considers this feedback in the light of their own profiling. This encourages awareness of how groups operate and can promote successful team-work.

45. "Stations" exercise

Four "stations" - colours - student go and sit by one that appeals to them. They tell each other why they went there. Explain to the group.

Four "stations" - countries - repeat as above. (People start to share information about themselves in their range of reasons).

Four "stations" - beliefs - (theism/agnostic/humanist). Repeat process.

Four "stations" - political — (ecologist/conservative/socialist/liberal). Repeat process.

Students are encouraged to move about if they agree with the reasons stated by a group (e.g. an ecologist may be a socialist too). You can apply the exercise format to a wide range of labels". E.g. you could have stations for food preferences or entertainments they like. You could have swot/brainbox/rebel/conformist as your four stations! It's better to choose topics such as preferences and/or values rather than beliefs - less threatening e.g. a character from the text has a dilemma. Identify options. Students choose preferred option (in role of character) and justify their decision to the other groups. Groups could be asked to make notes. Another idea iš to ask students to sit under "alien" labels and to justify their positions. Also groups could prepare questions for other groups to answer.

46. 'Standpoint Taking" exercise

Put eight seats in a circle facing out. Eight others come and face them. The inside circle is "for" something.

The outside circle is against" it.

1) Rehearse for and against arguments (2 mins)

2) Outsider moves out round one place. Repeat (1) with new partner.

3) Repeat (2) concentrating on important points.

4) Outsider moves on but now you have to change sides (having heard these arguments three times you should be able to use them!)!

Students must listen to do this well. Sometimes their original standpoint will be changed by what they hear. Debriefing should include - difficulties/reactions to process and drawing out of key arguments for/against.

47. Snowball

a) Individuals think about an issue or problem possibly making notes.

b) Share with partner.

c) Share with group/team.

d) Share with class.

48. Review

Of what happened last lesson (must be at start of lesson) could be done as group then share with class who then evaluate.

49. Hot seating

Individually, or collectively, taking on role of a character to answer questions posed by rest of group, who may also have a role, e.g. detectives, scientists, etc. The learning features of this activity are highlighting character's motivation and personality disposition. Encouraging insights. Making readers participants in the action. Encouraging reflective awareness. The "Hot Seat" is changed at regular intervals.

50. Key Points

Invite groups to identify four key points of the lesson.

51. Key Words

Those constantly referred to in the unit/topic. Define the words in groups, so that all the group have a full understanding.

52. Group Questions

Each member of the group writes down one point they are not clear about. Pool the questions, discuss them as a group. Later one group member to ask the questions to the teacher and/or the rest of the class.

53. Answer first - leave first

Good settler, particularly before break/dinner/home time. Three to four minutes asking questions. First table/group/individual to answer correctly leaves first.

54. Classroom layout

Arrange tables so that they are around the edges of the room with the pupils sitting with their backs to the centre of the room. When working they are less likely to be distracted by others. They have easy access to the centre of the room where resources may be located. They can turn chairs around to face the centre of the room when whole group discussion, role play etc. is needed. This has proved extremely beneficial for drama, reading, "the hot seat", and a general feeling of "space" and confidence to be able to move the children without fuss.

55. Visiting speakers

Real visits arranged through "writers in school" scheme, or imagined as in framing questions to ask the author or in correspondence with author.

56. Reading logs

Exercise book or folder containing rough jottings, reflection, personal connections, experiences.

57. Cloze

An extract represented with deletions in text in order to focus on author's style and vocabulary. In groups, class make suggestions about deleted words by drawing on their understanding of style and language used in text so far. Can also be used to highlight adjectives or verbs. The learning features of this activity are highlighting stylistic/linguistic features of text, drawing attention to syntax. Encouraging hypothetical/speculative talk as well as problem-solving activity. Developing reflective awareness of how a text is constructed, encouraging awareness of selection and alternatives.

58. Prediction

Formal: extract is "cut up" into sections, groups speculate on what's going to happen in next section by reference to text in section before. Informal: breaking the reading in order to invite speculation on where the narrative is going.

The learning features of this activity are confirming and giving confidence in learner's existing sense of story. Developing logical sequencing skills. Encouraging close reading and awareness of contextual clues; to provide evidence from text.

59. Active comprehension

Groups frame their own questions about a passage and select key question to explore as a group or to offer to rest of class. The learning features of this activity are developing ability to frame appropriate questions. Encouraging readers to adopt an active, interrogative attitude to the text.

60. Spider diagrams

To map out ideas, further questions relating to key question, or factors affecting a key event; or relationships between central characters and other characters; or relating events to central theme. Finding patterns and relationships of meaning in a complete text. Drawing attention to structure and form; identifying themes and issues underpinning the text.

61. Maps

Representing journeys or a particular environment - building, street, etc. Whole wall maps with room for quotations, pictures, events to be pasted on to form spatial relationship. The learning features of this activity are: making the text "concrete", visualizing the text, awareness of structure, developing sense of place, tracking events, matching events to places.

62. Family trees

Particularly when many characters are involved in narrative. "Tree" may represent blood ties, may have theme to do with who knows who; how people have met; what interests they serve or promote, etc. The learning features of this activity are aiding the reader. Providing a structure to facilitate reader's progress with text. Holding the structure of the book; looking for relationships in the text.

63. Storyboard for TV/film

Series of drawing representing the way the camera would portray an event or passage from the book - camera angles, close-ups, long shots etc. The learning features of this activity are translating from one medium to another, working in familiar forms; selectivity of symbol. Matching images to event. Enabling reader to "realise" perspective on the text.

64. Advertisers

Promoting the book "as if" the group were advertisers - choosing what to highlight about the book; target audiences, form of advertising, bookshop posters, jacket illustrations blurbs, etc. The learning features of this activity are developing critical awareness. Highlighting concepts of audience, register, writer's intentions etc., selecting appropriate symbols, images, quotations, "marketing" literature, providing motivation and sustaining interest.

65. Illustrators

Discussing or illustrating of text, jacket covers, etc. Emphasis on matching form of illustration to sense of text. The learning features of this activity are working as "experts" rather than as learners. Emphasis on style and atmosphere of text. Selecting events or moments to capture. Justifying and making decisions in relation to how the text should be represented. Close reading.

66. Casting directors

What sort of actor would have the right "image" for the character in the book - tall/short; assertive; young; deep voiced, etc.?

The learning features of this activity are filling out" characters; making inferences; stereotypic/original interpretations; collective image of how a character would appear; dwelling on aspects of character.

67. News

Incidents from the story written as news; front pages with a composite of stories relating to central event. Emphasis on reporting from outside the event; what should be selected as "news". The learning features of this activity are translating events into familiar forms. Popularising the text. Reporting and journalistic conventions. Creating a distance between characters' perceptions of events and the readers'.

68. Investigate Journalism

In form of a documentary exposing an issue, or presenting an issue that is important in the book - maybe a number of related items drawing on background material beyond that offered in text; public inquiry, expose, etc. The learning features of this activity are emphasising issues in book. elating text to other material dealing with same theme. Presenting, selecting, arranging material. Authorial intention and bias. Airing values, making judgements.

69. Diaries or journals

Written "as if" by characters in book, reflecting their reactions to events of the narrative. daily diaries, log of a journey, prison journals or extra installments for journals and diaries that appear in the story. The learning features of this activity are: personalizing characters and events, imagining what people and events would be like, as an aid to reflection, filling out the text, active participation with narrative.

70. Time line

Representing temporal relationships between events, places, characters, etc., as a linear sequence. Events in a character's life, frequency and proximity of events within time span of book. The learning features of this activity are drawing attention to sequencing and structure. Establishing cause and effect relationships. Providing a framework of book's events for quick reference.

71. Alternative narrators

In groups, re-telling events from point of view other than that used by author - peripheral characters, third person, first person. Carrying on the re-telling in a variety of different registers, etc. The learning features of this activity are highlighting characterisation. Offering fresh perspectives on story. "Playing" with text. Demonstrating relationships between viewpoints and attitudes. Emphasising selectivity of style and language in the original form.

72. Costume/set design

Deciding on how a character, or groups of characters, should be costumed, including personal props. Or how a set should be designed for a particular event or place in the text. Designs discussed, illustrated, made or written as notes. The learning features of this activity are: dwelling on aspects of character and awareness of descriptive imagery, making people and places more concrete and immediate, attention to detail c contextual clues, establishing cultural context.

73. Correspondence

Writing letters from characters to imagined people outside the text, or between characters, or between peripheral characters about behaviour or personality of a central character. The learning features of this activity are becoming actively involved with the people and events in text. Demonstrating comprehension of aspects of characters. Commentating on text as a reader but from character's viewpoint.

74. Waxworks/still images/photos

Group work to produce tableaux representing gesture, spatial relationships, body language at a particular moment, or to illustrate a quote; others can guess which moment or line is being

presented and why. The learning features of this activity are freezing action to allow time for detailed discussion and reflection on the significance of the selected moment. Allowing a greater variety of forms of communication to represent group's meanings, beyond verbal forms.

75. Alternative chapters

Planning in talk or writing "missing chapters" that fill out the original, or foreground peripheral characters not present in the central events. The learning features of this activity are developing sense of alternatives and emphasising role of writer. Matching new material to existing forms in text - vocabulary, syntax, register, conventions, etc.

76. Springboarding

Fiction is used as a starting point and focus for detailed analysis of an important issue. Fiction compared against factual material relating to the issue, or in comparison with other fiction which has an alternative bias on the issue. The learning features of this activity are book used as a starting point for issue-based teaching. Story helps to personalise the issues and allows for effective response to issue. Developing empathy for characters faced with an issue from a different perspective to reader's e.g. disability, race, gender, poverty, etc.

77. Soundtracking

In groups, composing and performing sounds to accompany a sequence of action or to establish a sense of place. The learning features of this activity are emphasising descriptive imagery. Matching non-verbal form to sense of text. Developing sense of "atmosphere" and the "environment" of the book.

78. Thought-tracking

Creating "interior speech" for each character at critical moments or in crucial passages of dialogue. Contrasting inner dialogue (what is thought) with outer dialogue (what is said). The learning features of this activity are encouraging reflective awareness of characters' feelings and thoughts. Recognising characters' relationships with others. Making inferences. Bringing readers into closer, more active participation with events and characters. Encouraging readers' insights into character.

79. Visual interrogation

Drawing introduced as a means of making sense of a problematic passage. Building an image from clues in text. Accurately portraying textual description. Collective drawing. Representing negotiated consensus of how some thing, place, or person would appear. The learning features of this activity are using alternative iconic form to gain access to the text. Discovering from others as a result of mutual activity. Matching intuitions and hunches to what's actually represented in the text. Providing accessible forms for less able reader.

80. Starting in the middle

As a way into book, or introduction to new section - a message, letter or fragment of text is presented and group asked to build speculations as to meaning, context, consequence. The learning features of this activity are motivating readers' interest prior to reading of whole text. Encouraging intuitive speculation about narrative, characters, style. Extending range of possibilities offered by text. Looking for clues, problem-solving activity.

81. Cultural contexts

Reconstructing and inferring a broader cultural context for characters or events, type of housing, likely occupations, cultural pursuits, class/gender attitudes - how far are the events and characters socially constructed? How would a change of cultural context affect the effects? The learning features of this activity are identifying social and cultural pressures and influences on characters and events. Identifying cultural and social assumptions underpinning book. Identifying authorial bias, purpose and intention. Filling out the world of the book. Testing credibility of book's context, examining stereotype and social cliché.

82. Meetings/courts/inquiries

Improvised re-enactments of crucial meetings in story, or imagined meetings in story, or imagined meetings to deal with issues or events ¡n story, or as post mortem to events, or to establish motivations, consequences as in court case. The learning features of this activity are bringing readers into active participation with text. Examining pressures and conflicts affecting decisions in book. Examining cause and effect relationships.

83. Activities for "reading" photographs

Photographs are a popular teaching resource as they focus children's attention and stimulate talk. They can be used both to acknowledge the children's own experience and to introduced wider experiences. When teaching about places which are unfamiliar to the children, photographs can bring these places alive in the classroom.

84. A selection of images

Every photograph is a selection of some kind, selection by the photographer, the publisher and the viewer. Children need to build up skills in "reading" photographs, asking questions about the story behind the photograph, understanding that the messages which photographs give are influenced by their own attitudes and perceptions. As these may sometimes be negative, we need to support this work with awareness raising activities about images, such as those suggested here.

We also need to be aware and sensitive about how we mediate the pack as teachers, as our own impressions may be "caught" by the children. Setting up open-ended learning situations in which we allow children to discuss the photographs in pairs or small groups without teacher interpretation, can encourage children to express and explore their own ideas. For this reason we would recommend that you do not discuss the photographs one by one with the whole class but use activities where children work in small groups.

Teachers sometimes express concern about using photographs of unfamiliar places or parts of the world about which children may have stereotyped images. Will a child make a racist remark about art individual or a group of people or another country? As teachers, we encourage open-ended questions but we are sometimes nervous about getting unexpected or difficult responses from children. If a child makes a racist or insensitive remark in the course of using photographs, the remark can be used as point of learning.

It is possible to criticise the comment without criticising the child. The photograph has not provoked racism, but allowed for the expression of what is already felt. Such comments are best handled within classrooms where a code of conduct concerning such issues has already been negotiated. The following are some suggestions for activities that can be used with the photographs. It's often best to start with activities which can help the children look closely at what is in the images.

*Kim's game

Lay out the set of photographs on a table and ask the children to look at them for one minute. Then all but one close their eyes and the person with their eyes open turns over one photograph. Which photograph has been turned? The one who guesses can turn over next time. Alternatively, remove the whole set of photographs and try and remember what the set consisted of.

*Twenty questions

Display the set of photographs. Ask a child to select one but not to reveal that choice to others. By asking twenty questions, the group or class can identify the correct picture. The only answers that can be given are "yes" and "no".

*Connecting photographs

Give a group of children two photographs and ask them to make as many connections as they can between them. To do this they will have to observe closely.

*Memorising

Working in small groups, children study a photograph for about a minute. They then turn it over and brainstorm everything they can remember about it.

*Sorting photographs

Give a group of children about six photographs and ask them to sort them into two groups, using whatever categories they choose. They then can label each group, thus indicating their criteria for sorting. Groups who are familiar with sorting could try three categories.

*Questioning a photograph

Questioning a photograph can be a useful way of building on observation skills. It is probably best demonstrated first by the teacher with the whole class. Each group needs one photograph placed in the centre of a large sheet of paper. Ask them to write as many different questions as they can think of about the photograph. These should be written on the large sheet of paper with arrows going to the appropriate edge of the photograph. Children who can write in more than one script/language could do a dual language brainstorm. Through an activity like this, children can begin to see that many questions do not have clear-cut answers and that many answers are based on opinion, although they might sound factual.

*Describe and draw

You might find it is worth demonstrating this activity first. Working in pairs, one child agrees to be the describer and the other the drawer. The describer has one photograph and has to describe that photograph in detail to her partner without letting her partner see it. Her partner draws what she thinks it looks like from the description. Compare it to the original, how is it different? What was omitted from the description? What was made up? This activity drew out all kinds of interesting perceptions from the children who were involved in trialing the photographs. This activity leads easily into the following one.

*Adjectives

Display the set and write on the board as many adjectives as the children can think of about the pictures. Include both 'negative" and 'positive" adjectives. Give each pair a sheet of paper with the numbers of the photographs on and ask them to record next to the number the adjective or adjectives that they think

most appropriate. Discuss the choices. Was there a tendency to use the same words or different words on a photograph? bid some photographs only have negative words? Does anyone disagree with the labels given?

*Bubbles

Making speech bubbles for characters in the photographs can be fun as well as drawing out perceptions. Give each pair or small group a photograph that has at least one person in it. Ask them to cut out a speech or thought bubble from paper for some of the characters and write in them what they think they are thinking or saying. These can be used as a basis for writing captions. This works especially well for the photographs with more than one character.

*Captions

Ask each pair to write a list of short captions for their photograph, then select one caption that they like best. Write it on a strip of paper and display it with the photograph. bid the children see different things in the same picture? Which caption and picture match the best? What do you think the person who wrote this caption was thinking?

*Cropping

Photocopy some photographs and cut them so each pair photo can have a part of one photo. Can they guess what might be in the rest of the photo? What clues did you find? Can they draw the rest of it? Compare this drawing with the complete picture? How did the complete picture differ from what you expected? Are there any parts of the completed picture that would have completely changed their guess? Does this activity show you anything about your expectation: stereotypes or images?

*Selection

This is a good activity for introducing the photograph as a whole. Display the photographs on the wall or on a desktop and give each child three coloured stickers. Ask them to look carefully at the whole set of photographs and then choose three. The criteria for selection should be kept as simple as possible e.g. "choose the pictures that you like or which surprise you. Place your stickers on your choice of photographs: find a partner and explain your choices".

*Additions

Any group of photographs or pictures is a selection, whether it is published pack or a teacher's choice. A useful activity to help children realise this is to display a photopack and ask them to say which photographs they would add to it to make it more representative. This is an excellent way of drawing out children's images.