



OPTIC: A Reading Strategy Recipe

Visual Literacy



K20 Center, Lara Searcy
Published by K20 Center

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

Grade Level	6th – 12th Grade	Time Frame	3 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts	Duration	180 minutes

Essential Question

How can using reading strategies enhance one’s comprehension?

Summary

This lesson demonstrates how using reading strategies enhances understanding of text. Students are asked to “read” a variety of texts, including art, a video, and a short story, using the OPTIC strategy. Students first make (O)bservations and (P)redictions about the text to aid in their understanding of (T)hemes and (I)nferences that will allow them to draw (C)onclusions about the text later on. Students will access prior knowledge and evidence to deepen their understanding of the text. Students then identify themes, make inferences, and draw conclusions to aid in their comprehension and interpretations of both visual and written text.

Snapshot

Engage

Students engage in understanding how to “read” text.

Explore

Students explore art as a non-print text and use reading strategies to enhance their comprehension.

Explain

Students explain how reading strategies aid in comprehension.

Extend

Students apply the OPTIC reading strategy to other texts to demonstrate how using a strategy enhances comprehension.

Evaluate

Students evaluate their use of reading strategies and comprehension.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 5)

5.3.R.1: Students will determine an author's stated or implied purpose and draw conclusions to evaluate how well the author's purpose was achieved.

5.7.R.1: Students will analyze the characteristics and effectiveness of a variety of written, oral, visual, digital, non-verbal, and interactive texts to generate and answer literal and interpretive questions to create new understandings.

5.7.R.2: Students will compare and contrast how ideas and topics are depicted in a variety of media and formats.

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 5)

6.7.R.2: Students will analyze the impact of selected media and formats on meaning.

Attachments

- [Lesson Slides—OPTIC A Reading Strategy Recipe - Spanish.pptx](#)
- [Lesson Slides—OPTIC A Reading Strategy Recipe.pptx](#)
- [OPTIC Recipe Card Template—OPTIC A Reading Strategy Recipe.docx](#)
- [OPTIC Recipe Card Template—OPTIC A Reading Strategy Recipe.pdf](#)
- [OPTIC Recipe Card The Shiner Key—OPTIC A Reading Strategy Recipe.pdf](#)
- [OPTIC Recipe Card The Shiner—OPTIC A Reading Strategy Recipe - Spanish.docx](#)
- [OPTIC Recipe Card The Shiner—OPTIC A Reading Strategy Recipe - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [OPTIC Recipe Card The Shiner—OPTIC A Reading Strategy Recipe.docx](#)
- [OPTIC Recipe Card The Shiner—OPTIC A Reading Strategy Recipe.pdf](#)
- [The Bully Reading Key—OPTIC A Reading Strategy Recipe.pdf](#)

Materials

- Choice of Non-print text/art
- OPTIC Recipe Card The Shiner (attached; two per student)
- OPTIC Recipe Card Template (attached; optional; two per student)
- OPTIC Recipe Card The Shiner Key (attached)
- Text version The Bully (linked; print and copy; individual or pairs)
- YouTube version The Bully (linked)
- The Bully Reading Key (attached)
- Pen/pencil
- Paper
- Self-stick notes
- Computer with a projector and Internet access
- White board
- Tape
- Different colored pencils/highlighters/dry erase markers (if possible)

25 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note

This lesson uses Norman Rockwell's illustration, "The Shiner," as an example of the OPTIC process. It may be advantageous to use the attached **OPTIC Recipe Card The Shiner**. The blank **OPTIC Recipe Card Template**, however, may be used with any art work and follow the same process. Consider other works by Norman Rockwell as additional examples of art/non-print text that easily lend themselves to narrative interpretation.

Begin the activity with a [Think-Pair-Share](#) to access prior knowledge. Go to **slide 4** and have each student think for a minute of a definition for "visual literacy," then write it on a sticky note. Also ask them to write on a piece of paper a list of at least three reading strategies that they currently use to help them comprehend text. When students have finished thinking, pair them with elbow partners to share their answers. Make sure they keep their lists for later in the lesson.

Move through **slides 5 and 6**. Explain to students that they are going to "read" a piece of art. This is a task that requires visual literacy, which is a set of reading skills and strategies that help people "decode, interpret, create, question, challenge, and evaluate texts" (Carry, n.d.). According to Carry, visual literacy communicates with visual images as well as, or instead of, words. "Visually literate people can read the intended meaning in a visual text, interpret the purpose and intended meaning, and evaluate the form, structure, and features of the text" (Carry, n.d.). Use **slide 7** to ask the essential question *How can using reading strategies enhance one's comprehension?*

Display the non-print text (art) that provides a story, Norman Rockwell's "The Shiner," for students to quietly observe on **slide 8**.

Pass out the attached **OPTIC Recipe Card** to each student. At the top of the card, ask each student to write their initial comprehension summary of the image.

Teacher's Note

Students will often first write a basic understanding of what they have read, as if they were asked to skim a passage without using any analysis tools or reading strategies. It is important for students to see how having a reading process enhances their comprehension, so they will later be able to compare their initial comprehension, which should be minimal, to their final narrative writing, which will be more detailed.

Explain to students that using a process and having reading analysis tools will aid comprehension and expand visual and multimodal literacies. Reading text and "reading" art both strengthen skills that aid in all aspects of reading across different media and for different purposes. Also, by using non-print text, students can be introduced to the importance and effectiveness of using reading strategies in a different way.

50 minutes

Explore

Go to **slide 10**. Discuss how OPTIC is a reading strategy that helps students make **Observations** and **Predictions**, identify **Titles/Themes**, cite evidence for **Inferences**, and draw **Conclusions** (OPTIC). Go through each step of the OPTIC process on the board with students, using the attached **OPTIC Recipe Card** **The Shiner Key** for guidance, if needed.

O: Move to slide 11. Have students conduct a [Picture Deconstruction](#), independently creating a list of ten key concrete *Observations* that are most important in understanding the visual text. These observations are the details that students would underline or highlight if it were print text. In this case, these concrete observations should be visual details only.

Teacher's Note

Be sure to ask students not to make any interpretations at this point in the lesson. Sometimes they are tempted to start incorporating inferences about who is in the art, what is going on, or where it is taking place. Guide the students to limit their observations to concrete objects they can see. Observation examples from "The Shiner" include: smiling girl, black eye, rumpled clothes, guy behind desk, word "principal" on door, Band-Aid, plaid skirt, white shirt, bench, red knuckles, bulletin board, file cabinet, and so on.

Have each student share one detail, and make a list on the board. Details that appear on the board that students do not have can be added to their lists.

P: Move to **slide 12**. Ask students for *Predictions* about what is happening in the text/art.

Teacher's Note

Most of the time, students will provide predictions without any evidence. The main difference between prediction and inference is that inference requires evidence of some sort. Make sure to label each prediction with a different color so that the inference evidence can later be assigned the same color.

1. Prediction: The man sitting behind the desk is a principal (color-coded green)
2. Prediction: The girl is in a school/office (color-coded red)
3. Prediction: There has been a fight, and the girl won (color-coded blue)

T: Move to **slide 13**. Have students brainstorm potential *Titles* for the art and share out at least three. Discuss how or if the students' titles give important information about the main ideas or *Themes* in the art. Share the real title and discuss how it brings focus to the main idea and main detail of the art. Identify the artist and time period, information that is also important to reading. Instruct students to point out which details in the picture give information about the artist, title, and time period.

Teacher's Note - Potential Example Discussion Responses For "The Shiner"

The artist's name is located in the bottom corner of the painting. He was a famous 20th Century American artist who captured American culture. "The Shiner" was painted in 1953, which can be inferred based on the style of clothing worn in the artwork, items in the illustration, and the colors used. The main detail in the art is the bruised eye, which supports why the real title of the art is called "The Shiner," a term for a black eye.

I: Move to **slide 14**. Have students make *Inferences* from the predictions by assigning evidence from the observations list. Ask students to give evidence for their predictions using their observations. Next, go to **slide 15** and have them underline supporting evidence using the same color-coding as used in the prediction step of the lesson. Discuss any important prior knowledge students may have that aids comprehension.

1. Inference: We know the man sitting behind the desk is the principal because it says "principal" on the door. He has on a tie and is behind the desk (color-coded green).
2. Inference: We know the girl is in a school because of the environment. There is a bench, bulletin board, file cabinet, and the word "principal" on the door. We know the girl could be in a private school because she is wearing a plaid skirt and white shirt (color-coded red) that looks like a uniform.
3. Inference: We know the girl was in a fight because her knuckles are red, her clothes and hair are disheveled, she has a Band-Aid on her knee, and she has a black eye. We know she probably won the fight because of the smirk on her face and the absence of the other student (color-coded blue).

C: Finally, move to **slide 16** and have students draw *Conclusions* about the art by identifying who is pictured, what has happened, and when, where, why, and how it took place. Be sure that they write their conclusions next to the words "who," "what," "when," "where," "why," and "how" on their recipe cards. Next walk them through the [Pass the Problem](#) strategy using the cards.

Show **slides 17 and 18**. Have each student pass a recipe card to the right and record something next to "who" on the card received from the student to the left, then pass the cards to the right again, this time writing something next to the "what" on the card received. Next, ask students to pass the cards again to the right and write responses next to "when." Students should continue passing the cards until each individual's card has six different answers for each category. After they return cards to the original owners, have them use these answers as prompts to brainstorm for the narratives they will write.

1. Who is the girl? name, age, grade
2. What did she do? She got in a fight with [other student's name].
3. When did the fight occur? during lunch/recess/break/before school/after school/season/time/day
4. Where did the fight occur? in the lunchroom/hall/classroom/bathroom/playground
5. Why did she get in fight? because . . . [reason]
6. How is she going to be punished? What punishment is the principal going to give her? How long will it last?

35 minutes

Explain

Explain to students that they should use their guided practice recipe cards to explain the story behind the painting.

Move through **slides 20-22**. After each student views the art again, have them write a narrative paragraph of five to six sentences, one sentence for each of the question categories on the recipe cards. Ask them to describe the picture's context, the setting, characters, and plot/conflict, and support their positions with evidence from the text. This narrative reflects their final comprehension. If needed, read the example narrative below to the class. Students can use the answers from the recipe cards to help them describe the context. Tell them that they must include specific details and imagery, as well as evidence from the art, to support their inferences and conclusions.

After students have written the narratives, have them tape their stories on their backs, facing out. Students will stand up and "mingle" until the lights are turned off. While the lights are dimmed, have students form a circle of groups of three or four. Turn the lights back on when the groups are ready. Ask them to read the stories from the backs of the individuals next to them in the circle. Groups should then select a volunteer to read one of the stories from the group to the whole class.

As the selected student from each group reads a story to the class, have the other students close their eyes and try to visualize the images presented in the narrative.

Example Narrative

On a warm, spring day (when), Sally Jane (who) was walking to her English class (where) when she saw Johnny (who) standing by the water fountain. Johnny was the biggest boy in their seventh grade class, and he was constantly calling her "Freckles" (what). Sally vowed that if Johnny called her "Freckles" one more time, she would show him what 70 pounds of her tomboy frame could do (why). As she approached Johnny, Sally Jane closed her eyes, expecting the whispered name. Johnny wasn't expecting that as soon as he said "Freck—," she would jump on his back. By the time he got to the second syllable, "—les," she had one hand around his eyes and the other grabbing his long, brown hair. He staggered, slamming her against lockers, trying to pull her pigtails to get her off of his back. The moment Ms. Campbell ran to the classroom door, Sally jumped off Johnny's back and ran to the principal's office before he could even call her to his office. She already knew her punishment would be scrubbing gum off of desks (how); Johnny, however, didn't yet know his—a bald spot that would be left after removing the wad of gum Sally Jane had hidden in her hand before she grabbed his hair. Now, whenever he called her "Freckles," she just smirked and called him "Baldie."

Go to **slide 23**. Have students look back to self-assess and answer how their initial comprehension, prior to using OPTIC, was different from their final comprehension (question three on the recipe card). Call on students to explain how using the reading strategies enhanced comprehension.

Have students do a [Think-Pair-Share](#) to discuss the differences between their initial comprehension and final comprehension, as reflected in their narrative essays.

Lead a class discussion on how, at the beginning of the lesson, first observations were probably vague. For example, one initial observation might have been that the girl in the illustration got into a fight, which is unsupported by evidence. However, after using OPTIC to identify main ideas, make predictions, identify themes, make inferences, and draw conclusions, viewers/readers should have a more detailed, narrative description of the art. This shows that having a reading process helps enhance comprehension.

50 minutes

Extend

At the end of the lesson, the class will discuss how having a reading process to analyze art is similar to using a process to analyze print text. OPTIC allowed students to do what a good reader needs to do to aid comprehension: make key Observations, extend Predictions, consider main ideas and theme in a Title, cite evidence to create Inferences, and draw Conclusions about the context.

Teacher's Note - Discussion of "The Bully"

OPTIC can be applied to any text selection, whether it is art, video, or literature. If you want to continue with the theme of bullying, you can use both the video and the text version of ["The Bully"](#) (hyperlink) by Roger Dean Kiser.

Move to **slide 25**. Pass out the attached OPTIC Recipe Card Template to each student. Students will now apply the OPTIC reading strategies to a video text through a [Think-Pair-Share](#) activity.

Explain to students that they will extend their practice of visual literacy reading strategies using the [YouTube video version of "The Bully"](#) (hyperlink). It is important to note that this video contains minor language that some students may find offensive. The teacher should preview the video to decide if it is appropriate for the class. The video runs slightly over seven minutes.

Embedded video

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=LhHIY1CnO-o>

Go to **slide 26**. As they watch the video, have students note the important details on their recipe cards.

Stop the video at minute 2:30 and allow students to think and to write predictions about the characters Roger Kaiser and Tony Claxton, how the title provides information about a possible theme and what evidence or prior knowledge they need in order to make inferences. When students have completed their predictions, continue to play the video while they fill out their **OPTIC Recipe Card Template**. Ask them to share their responses with an elbow partner.

Teacher's Note - Text Version of "The Bully"

If convenient, make copies of the story "The Bully" from the text on the link below. One copy per pair, allows analysis of the text by twos, or print one story for each member of the class.

Display **slide 27**. After viewing the video, pass out copies of the of [the text version of "The Bully"](#) (hyperlink). Read the story aloud with the class. See "The Bully Key" attachment for guidance, if needed. Have students apply OPTIC reading strategies to the printed text by underlining key details (observations), making predictions, looking at the title/theme, citing evidence for inferences, and drawing conclusions.

While they annotate, show **slide 28** and have students label all of the who, what, where, when, why and how elements that appear in the text, then write a descriptive summary that includes all of them.

Example Summary: "the Bully"

Late one morning, Roger (who) was having breakfast at the Huddle House restaurant in Brunswick, Georgia (where). A woman and her husband, Tony, were also there and recognized Roger from high school. At first, Roger didn't remember Tony, because he looked so different from when he was the bully of the seventh grade geography class in 1957 (when). Roger eventually remembers that Tony made fun of his big ears and the fact that he lived in an orphanage. When Tony and his wife leave the restaurant, Roger notices that Tony is confined to a wheelchair and struggling to get into his van. Roger helps Tony get into his van. Tony assumes Roger is judging him for his past actions, (why) because he feels the helplessness Roger must have felt in high school. Even though Roger remembers what Tony did in the past, he remains positive, grateful that Tony has someone who loves him.

20 minutes

Evaluate

Go to **slide 30**. Create a T-Chart on the board for the [I Used To Think... But Now I Know](#) instructional strategy. Students will refer back to their sticky notes from the beginning of the lesson. Choose a few students to read what they wrote on the sticky notes and then have all students walk to the board and post their notes in the first column of the T-Chart. Move to **slide 31**. On new sticky notes of a different color, ask students to write whether using the OPTIC reading strategies aided their comprehension and, if so, why and how. Display **slide 32** for the "But Now I Know" portion of the activity. Have students write how the OPTIC process was the same, but also how it differed across the tasks of comprehending the illustration, the video, and the short story. Then have students put their sticky notes in the second column of the T-Chart on the board. Read select entries to the class.

Explain that student responses affirm that using reading strategies does enhance comprehension. Remind students that the process they have used to improve their visual literacy is similar to the reading process they use with text. Encourage them to use these reading skills and strategies to help them decode, interpret, create, question, challenge, and evaluate texts across media.

Teacher's Note - Pacing

This 5E lesson is designed for three class periods, but several of the sections are dense enough to each take up a whole class session. The facilitator could choose to do this, particularly if students need more time to comprehend the material and the strategies involved.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The OPTIC device is a great entry-level scaffold for other literary analysis devices such as [TPCASTT](#). The difficulty of this lesson on analysis can be increased at each grade level or changed to accommodate different students.

IEP—Students with exceptionalities can participate in the guided practice part of this lesson without having any prior content knowledge or skills. Adaptations of the independent practice could include using only the brainstorming section or the video renditions of the story. Students with visual impairments may need access to a hard-copy of the artwork used in the lesson.

ELL—ELL students can practice vocabulary using the artwork by identifying objects they know or by listing objects in their native languages.

GT—Students who are gifted and talented can turn their narrative responses into creative stories that use more elements of plot and characterization. They can also select or create their own non-print texts/artworks and write narratives to share with the class.

Reading Proficiencies—Students at various reading proficiencies will benefit from the scaffolding of the reading process and comprehension strategies.

Differentiation—This lesson can be modified for use with a large group, small group, or for independent implementation.

Supplementary/Enrichment Activities—Students can select other non-print texts and independently go through the OPTIC process for additional reading process/comprehension practice.

Resources

- Carry, D. (n.d.). Visual literacy: Using images to increase comprehension. ReadingRecovery.org. https://readingrecovery.org/images/pdfs/Conferences/NC09/Handouts/Carry_Visual_Literacy.pdf
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I used to think . . . but now I know. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f50639f2>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Pass the problem. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f506c28b>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Photo or picture deconstruction. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f5065b32>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Think-pair-share. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f5064b49>
- Kiser, R. (n.d.). "The Bully." <http://www.eastoftheweb.com/short-stories/UBooks/Bull.shtml>
- Rockwell, N. (1953). "The Shiner" [Illustration]. Saturday Evening Post. (1953). http://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/2009/08/29/art-entertainment/beyond-the-canvas-art-entertainment/school-daze.html/attachment/cover_9530523
- "The Bully." (2012, June 6). BB Entertainment Inc. (Video). YouTube. <https://youtu.be/LhHIY1CnO-o>