



OPTIC: A Reading Strategy Recipe

Visual Literacy



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Published by K20 Center

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Grade Level	6th – 12th Grade	Time Frame	2-3 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts	Duration	120 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 will 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 will then identify themes, make inferences, and draw conclusions to aid in their comprehension and interpretations of the text.

Snapshot

Engage

Students will engage in understanding how to “read” text.

Explore

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

Explain

Students will explain how reading strategies aid in comprehension.

Extend

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

Evaluate

Students will 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

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

Materials

- Non-print text/art, for example Norman Rockwell's "The Shiner"
- Copies of the "OPTIC Recipe Card" ("The Shiner" and/or blank, two per student)
- 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)
- Copies of "The Bully"

Engage

Teacher's Note

This lesson will use Norman Rockwell's illustration, "The Shiner," as an example, but the blank template may be used with any art work and follow the same process. See other works by Norman Rockwell for additional examples of art/non-print text that easily lend themselves to narrative interpretation.

A [Think-Pair-Share](#) activity will be used to access prior knowledge. Each student will first think for a minute of a definition for "visual literacy," then write it on a self-stick note. Students should also write a list of at least three reading strategies that they use to help them comprehend text. When students have finished thinking, pair them with elbow partners to share their answers. Students will keep their lists for later in the lesson.

The teacher should 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.).

Display a non-print text (art) that is interesting and provides a story, like Norman Rockwell's "The Shiner," for students to quietly observe. The teacher should either show the art on a computer projector or provide individual handouts.

The teacher should pass out the attached "OPTIC Recipe Card" to each student. At the top of the card, an initial summary of comprehension of the image should be written by each student.

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.

The teacher should 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 mediums 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.

Explore

The teacher should discuss how OPTIC is a reading strategy that will help students make Observations and Predictions, identify Titles/Themes, cite evidence for Inferences, and draw Conclusions. The teacher should 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: The students will 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

The teacher should ask students not to make any interpretations at this point in the lesson. Sometimes students will start to incorporate 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 will be added to their lists.

P: 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. The teacher should 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: The students will brainstorm potential titles for the art and share out at least three. The teacher should discuss how or if the students' titles give important information about the main ideas or themes in the art. The teacher should share the real title and discuss how it brings focus to the main idea and main detail of the art. The teacher should discuss the artist and time period, information that is also important to reading. The students will identify 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: Make Inferences from the predictions by assigning evidence from the observations list. The students will give evidence for their predictions using their observations. They will underline supporting evidence using the same color-coding as used in the prediction step of the lesson. The teacher should 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 Students will draw Conclusions about the art by identifying who is pictured, what has happened, and when, where, why, and how it took place. The students will write the words "who," "what," "when," "where," "why," and "how" on their recipe cards. Students will then use the [Pass the Problem](#) strategy using the cards.

Each student will pass a recipe card to the right and record something next to "who" on the card received from the student to the left. Students will pass the cards to the right again, this time writing something next to the "what" on the card received. Next, students will pass the cards again to the right and write responses next to "when." Students will continue passing the cards until each individual's card has six different answers for each category. After returning cards to the original owners, students will 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?

Explain

Students will use their guided practice recipe cards to explain the story behind the painting.

After viewing the art again, each student will write a narrative paragraph of five to six sentences, one sentence for each of the question categories on the recipe cards. Students will describe the picture's context, the setting, characters, and plot/conflict, and support their positions with evidence from the text. This narrative will reflect their final comprehension. The teacher should read the example narrative shown below to the class, if needed. Students will use the answers from the recipe cards to help them describe the context. Students 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, they will tape their stories on their backs, facing out. Students will stand up and "mingle" until the teacher turns the lights off. While the lights are dimmed, students are to form a circle of groups of three or four. The teacher should turn the lights back on when the groups are ready. Students will read the stories from the backs of the individuals next to them in the circle. Groups will 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, other students will 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 be called to leave his desk. She already knew her punishment would be scrubbing gum off of desks (how), but Johnny 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."

Students will 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). The teacher should 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.

The teacher should 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, unsupported by evidence. However, after using OPTIC to identify main ideas, make predictions, identify themes, make inferences, and draw conclusions, students should have a more detailed, narrative description of the art. This shows that having a reading process helps enhance comprehension.

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 text. OPTIC allowed students to do what a good reader needs to do to aid comprehension: note key details (Observations), make Predictions, consider main ideas and theme in a Title, cite evidence to create Inferences, and draw Conclusions about the context.

Teacher's Note

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

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

Students 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.

As they watch the video students will note the important details on their recipe cards.

The teacher should stop the video at minute 2:08 and allow students to think and to write predictions about 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, the teacher should continue the video while students complete their "OPTIC Recipe Card." Students will then share their responses with an elbow partner.

Teacher's Note

Analysis of the text can be done individually or in pairs.

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

While annotating, students will 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.

Evaluate

The teacher should 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 self-stick notes from the beginning of the lesson. The teacher should choose a few students to read what they wrote on the self-stick notes and then have all students walk to the board and post their notes in the first column of the T-Chart. On new self-stick notes of a different color, students will write whether using the OPTIC reading strategies aided their comprehension and, if so, why and how. For the "But I Know" portion of the activity, students will 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. Students will then put their self-stick notes in the second column of the T-Chart on the board. The teacher should read select entries to the class.

Student responses should affirm that using reading strategies does enhance comprehension. The teacher should remind students that the process they have used to improve their visual literacy is similar to the reading process they use with text. The students should be encouraged to use a set of reading skills and strategies to help them decode, interpret, create, question, challenge, and evaluate texts.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The OPTIC device is a great entry-level scaffold for other literary analysis devices such as [SOAPStone](#) and [TPCASTT](#) (hyperlinks). The difficulty of the lesson or 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

- BBEntertainmentInc. (2012, June 6). "The Bully (short film)." [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/LhHIY1CnO-o>
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